

# An Audit for the First HR Committee Meeting of the Academic Year

## Back to School Toolkit 2025/26

As the new academic year begins, governors on a school or trust's Resources Committee have important responsibilities to address.

To assist with these crucial tasks, we've developed a comprehensive audit to help you stay compliant and ensure your people policies are up to date.

## Appointing Employees and Contracts of Employment

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Does the employer have a policy on the recruitment and selection of employees, and does it incorporate statutory safer recruitment requirements? Has the policy been updated to reflect the updates to KCSIE on online checks for shortlisted applicants?			Our updated EPM Model Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure is available on our website.
Do the appropriate senior employees involved in appointments have an understanding of their legal responsibilities in relation to appointing employees?			Relevant guidance documents can be found on our website. Training can be accessed via our EPM Updates, bulletins, webinars, guides, articles, and videos.
Have all the senior employees who may interview prospective employees received training in recruitment and selection? It <b>is a statutory requirement</b> that at least one person on each interview panel has completed safer recruitment training.			We provide different options for training – including for those sitting on panels or supporting in pre-employment checks. Find out more <a href="#">here</a> .
Does the organisation have a policy on the induction of employees?			The EPM Model Staff Induction Policy is available on our website.

## Appraisal and Capability

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
<p>Have two or three governors undertaken performance management training?</p> <p>Have any governors identified to undertake performance management received appropriate training?</p> <p><i>(Two governors are usually identified to undertake the performance management of the Headteacher/Principal)</i></p>			Training can be accessed via our EPM Updates, bulletins, webinars, guides, articles, and videos.
Has the Governing Body adopted/reviewed an Appraisal and Capability Policy for teachers in accordance with statutory requirements?			DfE and EPM model policies and guidance are available on our website.
Has the Governing Body considered performance management for support staff?			The EPM Model Appraisal and Capability Policy, which is applicable to all employees, is available on our website.
<p>Has the Governing Body delegated the power of dismissal to the Headteacher and/or set up a committee with delegated power to dismiss employees?</p> <p>Whilst this action may not have taken place, as part of the committee arrangements, it may be more appropriate to identify a committee if it becomes necessary. This would then ensure there is no conflict of interest for governors.</p>			Further guidance can be found on our website.

<p>Has the Governing Body set up an Appeals Committee with delegated power to hear any appeal?</p> <p>It would be possible to establish the committee if required and ensure that governors do not have any conflict of interest or have been part of a previous committee/meeting where performance management and outcomes were discussed.</p>			<p>Further guidance can be found on our website.</p>
<p>Are the Appraisal and Capability Policies available to employees in a Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?</p>			<p>Once the policy has been adapted/adopted by the Governing Body, it should be made available to employees.</p>

## Child Protection and Whistleblowing

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Have the Governors adopted the revised statement of procedures for managing allegations against employees and volunteers?			This is available on our website.
Has the School's Child Protection Policy been kept up to date?			Seek advice from your Designated Officer if necessary.
Are senior colleagues and relevant governors aware of the statutory and non-statutory guidance relating to safeguarding in employment matters, in particular KCSIE?			See all documents on our website. Particularly those relating to safeguarding and safer recruitment in the Guidance and advice section.

## Data Protection and Personal Information

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Does the School comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 requirements?			Guidance can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office: <a href="http://www.ico.org.uk">http://www.ico.org.uk</a>
Does the School have a Data Protection Policy?			The EPM Model Data Protection Policy is available on our website.
Does the School have a Privacy Policy/Notice which sets out how they handle employee data?			A link to the DfE Model Privacy Notice for School Workforce is available on our website.
Does the School have a procedure for dealing with Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs)?			The EPM Model Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) Procedure is available on our website. Guidance can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office: <a href="#">Information Commissioner's Office</a>
Are the relevant policies and documents available to employees in a Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			All relevant documents should be made available to employees.
Has the School appointed a Data Protection Officer?			It is a requirement for schools to have a Data Protection Officer. Further information is available on our website and from the Information Commissioner's Office: <a href="#">Information Commissioner's Office</a>

## Discipline, Dismissal and Grievance

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Has the Governing Body minuted the adoption of disciplinary rules and procedures for misconduct?			Relevant documents and guidance are available on our website.
Has the Governing Body delegated the power of dismissal to the Headteacher and/or set up a committee with delegated power to dismiss an employee?			We have produced a booklet, available on our website: 'Guidance and Advice on Misconduct and Disciplinary Hearings'.
Has the Governing Body set up an Appeals Committee with delegated power to hear any appeal?			We have produced a booklet, available on our website: 'Guidance and Advice on Misconduct and Disciplinary Hearings'.
Do the Headteacher and the Governors on the Appeals Committee and the Disciplinary Committee have a sufficient understanding of the role they might be required to play?			We have produced a booklet, available on our website: 'Guidance and Advice on Misconduct and Disciplinary Hearings'.
Are the disciplinary rules and procedures available to employees in the Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			Once the policy has been adapted/adopted by the Governing Body, it should be made available to employees.
Has the Governing Body adopted the updated Code of Conduct?			The EPM Model Code of Conduct for Adults is available on our website.
Has the Governing Body minuted the adoption of the Grievance Procedure?			The EPM Model Grievance Procedure is available on our website.

Is the Grievance Procedure available to employees in the Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			Once the policy has been adapted/adopted by the Governing Body, it should be made available to employees.
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## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Do the Headteacher, senior colleagues and governors on the HR Committee understand the application of the Equality Act 2010?			Relevant information and policy documents are available on our website. We provide webinar training and face-to-face training to senior colleagues.
Does the Governing Body have a policy on equity, diversity and inclusion?			The EPM Model Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for Staff is available on our website.
Does the Governing Body have a policy on bullying and harassment?			The EPM Model Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy is available on our website.
Is the Governing Body complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty and the 2011 equality regulations?			The EPM Model Public Sector Equality Schemes are available on our website.
Is the Governing Body complying with its legal responsibility to publish Gender Pay Gap information? If this is not legally required for your School, are you choosing to publish the information?			The EPM Guidance on Gender Pay Gap reporting is available on our website.
Are the policies on equal opportunities available to employees in a Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			Once the policy has been adapted/adopted by the Governing Body, it should be made available to employees.

## Family Friendly Matters

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Is the information about all types of parental and carer leave and pay, available to employees in the Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			Various applicable policies, guidance and forms are on our website.
Does the Governing Body have a policy on flexible working?			The EPM Model Policy for flexible working is on our website.
Do the Headteacher, governors and other employees, as appropriate, have a sufficient understanding of how to manage flexible working requests and the reasons to reject such a request?			Advice should be sought from your EPM People Adviser.

## Governance

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Has the Governing Body minuted decisions on the committee structure that will deal with HR matters?			It is important to keep a record of governors delegated by the Governing Body to carry out particular responsibilities.
Do all members of the HR Committee and senior staff have a general understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Governing Body acting as or on behalf of the employer?			There are links to key documents on our website. Training can be accessed via our EPM Updates, bulletins, webinars, guides, articles, and videos.
Has the Governing Body set terms of reference for the HR Committee?			Model Terms of Reference for the HR Committee are on our website.
Has the Governing Body reviewed the Scheme of Delegation to ensure it is fit for purpose and aligned to policies?			It is important to ensure that your scheme of delegation is accurately reflected throughout your policies.

## Health and Wellbeing

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Has the Governing Body adopted a Health & Safety Policy?			A model policy should be obtained from the School's Health & Safety provider.
Is the Health & Safety policy available to employees in the Staff HR policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			Once the policy has been adapted/adopted by the Governing Body, it should be made available to employees.
Has the Governing Body considered employee wellbeing, and do you have an Employee Wellbeing Policy or Statement of Intent? Have you considered how you manage workplace stress issues for employees?			Relevant guidance and documents are available on our website, including a Model Employee Wellbeing Policy, Model Statement of Intent, and Model Stress Management Policy, and Stress Risk Assessment Guidance.

## Job Descriptions and Job Evaluation

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Do all employees have current job descriptions? Are senior colleagues aware of the importance of job evaluation and the legal status of job descriptions?			Sample job descriptions are available on our website.
Has a job evaluation scheme been adopted by the School (where the LA is not the employer)?			
Does the Trust have a licence in place to use its JE scheme, where applicable?			

## Paying Employees

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Has the Governing Body adopted a Pay Policy for the current academic year?			The updated EPM Model Pay Policy will be available on our website following the publication of the 2024/25 STPCD.
Do senior managers and relevant governors understand the Pay Policy and current 'School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document'?			Training can be accessed via our EPM Updates, bulletins, webinars, guides, articles.
Has the Governing Body set up a Salary Review Committee and a Salary Review Appeals Committee?			Training can be accessed via our EPM Updates, bulletins, webinars, guides, articles, and videos.
Is the Pay Policy available to employees in the Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			Once the policy has been adapted/adopted by the Governing Body, it should be made available to employees.

## Sickness and Other Leave of Absence

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Does the Governing Body have a policy on discretionary leave of absence? Is it available to employees?			The EPM Model Policy for Leave of Absence is on our website.
Does the Governing Body have a policy on managing sickness absence and ill health? Is it available to all employees?			The EPM Model Policy and Procedure for the Management of Sickness Absence is on our website.
Do the Headteacher, governors and other employees, as appropriate, have a sufficient understanding of how to approach issues of ill health and potential medical incapability?			Advice should be sought from your EPM People Adviser.

## Termination of Employment

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Would the Headteacher and appropriate senior employees/governors on the HR Committee have a sufficient understanding of how to deal with identifying and managing a reduction in employees?			A step-by-step guide to handling employee reductions is available on our website.
Does the Governing Body have a policy on managing a redundancy situation?			The EPM Model Redundancy Handling Policy is available on our website.
Does the Governing Body have a policy on managing organisational change?			The EPM Model Organisational Change Policy is available on our website.



## Trusts and Academies

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Has the Governing Body/Board of Trustees considered becoming an Academy or expanding your MAT, where appropriate?			Relevant EPM model guidance is available on our website.
Has the MAT board adopted a Scheme of Delegation?			
Are all governors/trustees aware of the Academy Trust Handbook, where appropriate?			There are links to key documents, including the Academy Trust Handbook, on our website.

## TUPE

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Do governors understand when the TUPE regulations apply in a business transfer or service provision change?			Advice, guidance, and training are available through your EPM Lead People Partner.

## Working with Trade Unions

Topics	Yes/No (evidence)	Action required: Who? When?	Notes/Documents
Do governors understand those areas on which they should consult employees and does the School have a consultative mechanism?			Advice, guidance, and training are available through your dedicated EPM team. We can provide advice regarding a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC).
Is a statement of which trade unions are recognised in the Staff HR Policies Handbook or on the School's intranet?			A model statement on membership and recognition is on our website.

By addressing these key areas, your Resources Committee can ensure your School or Trust is fully prepared for the new academic year. If you have any questions or need further support, don't hesitate to contact your dedicated HR Advisory team at EPM. We're here to help.