



SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS' HR WORKPLACE MEDIATION

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Introduction to Southwark Schools' HR Workplace Mediation Service

If you have been experiencing a conflict in your school, you may wish to consider mediation to best resolve it. This guide explains what workplace mediation is, how it can benefit your school and staff, and the mediation service that Southwark Schools' HR offers.

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What is workplace mediation?

Mediation is a conflict resolution method where a neutral third-party steps in to help resolve workplace disputes constructively. This process fosters a safe space for communication, aiming to rebuild effective working relationships.

Mediators guide a structured process that helps all parties reflect on and discuss their past, present, and future needs.

By promoting open and honest dialogue, workplace mediators often enhance awareness, understanding, and empathy among the parties involved.

The resolution outcomes are determined by the parties themselves, not the mediators, ensuring that the solutions are self-generated and agreed upon.

Ultimately, workplace mediation offers a fair and balanced approach to conflict resolution, encouraging sustainable and mutually beneficial outcomes.

When may mediation be appropriate?

Conflicts in the workplace can arise as a result of many situations. Some sources of conflict include:

- Bullying and harassment
- Discrimination
- Clashes of personality
- Poor performance
- Staffing changes
- Poor attendance and timekeeping

It can often be the more subtle behaviours that, over time, if not addressed can lead to a workplace dispute.

The CIPD's 2020 research into managing conflict in the modern workplace found that almost nine in ten employees reported good working relationships with colleagues. However, a third of workers had experienced some form of interpersonal conflict over the past year and 15% reported being bullied over the past three years^[i]

Without the correct resolution, conflicts can impact morale and team relationships, and may cause increased workplace stress, time off work, resignations and dismissals.

[i] CIPD (2020) *Managing conflict in the modern workplace*.

What is the role of a mediator?

- Offer confidential, unbiased, and non-judgmental support to everyone involved in the dispute.
 - Encourage all parties to commit to the mediation process early on.
 - Create a safe and constructive space for open and honest discussions to resolve differences.
 - Help participants move beyond their fixed positions by considering their personal interests and needs.
 - Ensure everyone has a fair chance to discuss the causes and impacts of the conflict.
 - Involve all parties equally in the mediation process and manage it safely and effectively.
 - Assist all parties in exploring all issues thoroughly and support them in generating and evaluating various solutions.
 - Help participants develop mutually beneficial solutions.
 - Keep necessary records and conduct evaluations as needed.
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What are the benefits and advantages of mediation?

Employees...

- feel more in control during the resolution process.
- are able to express their feelings and be heard without judgment.
- have a significant role in deciding the outcome, leading to mutually beneficial solutions.
- can discuss past issues while focusing on future improvements.
- experience less stress, anxiety, fear, and harm, improving overall wellbeing.

Leadership teams...

- will find issues are resolved quickly, saving time and resources.
- feel supported by the organisation.
- are able to focus on more productive tasks once conflict is resolved.
- have reduced levels of stress.
- experience better trust and commitment between employees and the organisation

Schools...

- have lower costs.
- experience better communication at all levels.
- find that conflicts are resolved positively and effectively.
- have fewer lost hours due to stress and illness.
- free up staff for more productive tasks.
- are able to challenge prejudice, inappropriate behaviour, and bullying constructively.
- foster a positive culture.

Teams...

- build mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding.
 - have fewer lost hours due to stress and illness.
 - boost productivity.
 - have enhanced teamwork, harmony, and synergy.
 - eliminate suspicion, gossip, fear, and anxiety.
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What does our workplace mediation service include?

Our workplace mediation service offers a non-confrontational approach to resolving conflicts and disputes. By tackling the root cause of issues, our skilled mediators can help you avoid the stress, reputational damage, and high costs of legal proceedings, while also preventing future disputes.

We offer mediation services to schools both within and outside of Southwark. Our process is entirely voluntary, confidential, and empowering, allowing parties to reach their own solutions through facilitated discussions.

Our services are effective for resolving conflicts at all employee levels. Typically, our mediations are completed in one day, with six months of follow-up support provided.

One session of mediation is suitable for where there are 2 parties involved in the conflict. For where there are more than 2 parties involved in a conflict, there will be an additional cost per additional party.

Meet our TCM Accredited team

We are pleased to announce that our team has achieved the prestigious 'TCM Accredited' title. This accolade highlights our dedication to excellence in workplace conflict resolution and our mastery of the unique models delivered by The TCM Group, renowned worldwide.

Our training means that we uphold the highest standards. With this accreditation, our team is globally recognised for their knowledge, competency, and expertise in modern workplace conflict resolution.

As TCM Accredited Mediators, we are not just practitioners; we are leaders in mediation and ADR, committed to maintaining the highest standards and delivering exceptional results.

Trust our team to bring excellence and expertise to every conflict resolution scenario.

How is mediation structured?

Our mediators follow the FAIR mediation model™:

Facilitate: to make the process of dialogue easier.

Appreciate: to build empathy and understanding between the parties.

Innovate: to encourage practical and creative problem solving.

Resolve: to help the parties reach a resolution to the conflict.

Stage 1

Pre-mediation: referral and assessment

Stage 2

Mediation day: First individual meeting with parties

Stage 3

Mediation day: Second individual meeting with parties

Stage 4

Mediation day: Joint mediation meeting with parties

Stage 5

Post-mediation: follow up, evaluation and reflection

The principles values and ethos of our workplace mediation

Voluntary

Employees choose to participate in mediation based on their understanding of it. They should not be forced or pressured into it. Mediation only works if entered freely.

Confidential

Confidentiality is crucial in FAIR mediation, promoting open and honest dialogue. Mediators handle information sensitively and do not give advice or evidence in disciplinary panels or tribunals.

Non-judgmental

FAIR mediators do not judge or blame. They value each participant's perspective equally and do not make demands. This approach reduces stress and fosters understanding and empathy instead of blame.

Impartiality/equality

Mediators do not take sides and strive to remain unbiased. They ensure all parties are equal throughout the process, helping to balance any power differences.

Self-determination

Mediation empowers people to take control of their conflict outcomes. Mediators encourage participants to make their own decisions and help them evaluate options without imposing their own views. They use active listening and skillful questioning to guide the process.

How much does our workplace mediation cost?

A session of mediation is suitable for resolving a conflict involving two employees.

If the conflict involves more than two employees, there is an additional cost per employee.

We offer a discount if you require mediation sessions for more than one pair of employees.

Service	Cost
1 session of Mediation	£700.00
2 sessions of Mediation	£1,200.00
3 sessions of Mediation	£1,750.00
Additional half-day of mediation	£350.00
Conflict involving more than two employees.	£100.00 per additional employee

Please get in touch with us if you would like to find out more about our workplace mediation service.



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