



## Testimonial: BIRCH-HR

The Romero Catholic Academy has engaged with BIRCH-HR from Autumn 2017. Due to budget pressures in the Secondary school, an Integrated Financial Curriculum planning toolkit was completed. As a result of this, clear areas were identified, and a staffing restructure was needed for both teaching and non-teaching staff. Whilst we had an HR Manager at the time, she had tendered her resignation. We therefore recruited external Specialist and experienced HR support from BIRCH-HR to oversee the process from January to May 2018.

We were very pleased with support given by BIRCH in preparing paperwork, support for the meetings with employees and unions alongside reporting to the Board as and when appropriate. Where redundancies were made, there was expertise to hand and excellent advice to ensure that we were compliant through the process and support was given to individuals at a very difficult time. Nicola, the nominated Senior HR Consultant has also given advice on how to revise policies, e.g. Redundancy policy to tighten procedures and practice following issues that came to light.

Since this time, whilst we have been in transition to our new centralised staffing structure for HR, Nicola in particular, has provided invaluable support. We have now deployed BIRCH-HR for the staff in Cardinal Wiseman on a range of HR enquiries and she has consistently provided high quality advice and support with individual cases.

Furthermore, we were given significant support on the harmonising of pay scales, the application of HR CES policies and model policies for those not produced by the CES.

Nicola, our nominated Senior HR Consultant has given exemplary advice around the distinctiveness of being a Catholic school within the company and training has been given to our HR Advisors. She has a wealth of experience particularly around the CES policies which has been very welcome when applying this to our MAC structure, which includes eight schools, a TSA and Shared Services Team.

Helen Quinn

**Catholic Senior Executive Leader**

