



# Adopted Guidance for Employees

## Facing Redundancies at your School

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# **Facing Redundancies at your School**

## **Guidance for Employees**

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**Staff responsible: Executive Principal**



**Vale of Evesham School**

Recognised school for cognition and learning - enabling excellence in the community

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Everyone involved recognises that a potential redundancy situation is one of the most serious staffing issues to face the staff, management and Governors of a school. Therefore, your Governing Body has adopted a procedure that provides a framework to ensure a fair and consistent approach to dealing with potential redundancy.

This leaflet has been developed to help you, as a member of staff, understand the procedures being used and so that you are aware of your rights and responsibilities.

At the time of the issue of this leaflet it is important to realise that **no** final decisions have been made and no individual member of staff has been identified as compulsorily losing their job.

## **THE PROCESS SO FAR**

Examples of what may constitute a redundancy situation in school are as follows; (this list is not exhaustive):

- The total number of staff has to be reduced for example due to falling rolls
- There was an overcapacity in one area which could not reasonably be sustained
- A particular subject area is no longer being offered, reducing the need for teachers of that subject
- Restructuring resulting in fewer posts.

Your Headteacher has looked at the school's budget and needs of the curriculum, together with the staffing structure and numbers on roll, and has calculated that there is likely to be a need to lose one or more posts. This has been identified as a potential redundancy situation because the need for staff to do a particular kind of work has ceased or diminished.

The Headteacher will have discussed the situation with the Chair of Governors and informed School Representatives of the appropriate unions, if there are any.

## **THE NEXT STEPS**

The Headteacher and Governors will be following the procedure adopted, which means that there is now a commitment to:

- Meaningful consultation and engagement aimed at informing decisions
- Finding alternatives to redundancy where possible
- Informing and supporting employees through the change process
- Fair and consistent treatment
- Timely decisions.

All those concerned will now have the opportunity to understand what is going on and have the opportunity to contribute their input to meaningful discussion. The procedure is summarised as a flowchart at Appendix 1. (A copy of the full procedure is available from your Headteacher.)

It is not usually possible to immediately identify who is to be made redundant; this may appear to prolong the uncertainty and anxiety but it is crucial to ensure fairness and consistency. To begin with, all staff may potentially be at risk, but as the process moves on particular posts will be identified. Your Governing Body has been asked to approve an objective set of selection criteria, related to the needs of the school, which will also be discussed with trade unions. The criteria will be shared with you to ensure all staff are aware how posts and/or individuals will be identified and selected for redundancy.

Throughout this process, whether you feel yourself to be at risk or not, you have the right to make your contribution, either at meetings or to the Headteacher in person or in writing. Remember, the aim is to avoid the need for redundancy if at all possible.

Your Headteacher will be particularly keen to hear from you if you are interested in volunteering for redundancy or early retirement, or if you are aware of any factors which may assist the process of avoiding redundancy (for example, if you would like to reduce your working hours). Please note however that there is no guarantee that this will be agreed.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q** *Can I put forward suggestions to avoid redundancies?*

**A** Yes. As an individual, collectively, or through a Trade Union, suggestions to avoid redundancies are actively encouraged.

**Q** *What sort of alternatives to redundancy may be considered?*

**A** Individuals may feel that this is an opportunity for them to work differently which may in turn resolve any potential redundancy situation. Consideration will be given to all suggestions which may include holding open any vacant posts, reduction in hours, job-sharing, early retirement, voluntary redundancy. In addition some individuals may consider that this is an appropriate time to look for a different employment opportunity and choose to resign if they secure a job elsewhere. Others may be planning to leave or retire in the near future anyway.

**Q** *Is redeployment to an alternative job an option?*

**A** Redeployment within your school can be considered in some cases. If you feel you have the skills and experience to undertake a different job that is available within your school, please talk to your Headteacher.

**Q** *What should I include in my skills audit?*

**A** The purpose of the skills audit is to give information to the Headteacher to allow him/her to consider possible alternatives to redundancy and to apply the selection criteria. You need to be honest about your experience, abilities and responsibilities including, where appropriate, roles within the school which you could perform with additional training.

**Q** *How will individuals be identified for redundancy?*

**A** Your Governing Body has agreed a selection process. This is based on objective criteria, and is the reason you may be asked, or have been asked to complete a skills audit. The Headteacher will apply the selection criteria to the pool of employees at risk in order to identify those who will be invited to make representations before a hearing of the Decision-Makers.

**Q** *Who makes the final decision on selection?*

**A** The Headteacher will present the reasons for identifying particular individuals to the Decision-Makers' hearing (made up from a selected panel of Governors). Employees selected for redundancy are given an opportunity to make representations at this hearing. There is also an opportunity to appeal against the decision of the Decision-Makers' Committee and a different panel of Governors forms the Dismissal Appeal Panel. Employees have the opportunity to make representations at the appeal hearing. There is no further right of appeal.

**Q** *Can I find out what I am entitled to if I were to be made redundant?*

**A** Yes. If you are identified as being at risk of redundancy you can, at any time, request an estimate of your entitlements from School Employee Services (SES) using the pro forma at Appendix 2. This request does not commit you to volunteering to take redundancy, nor the school to accept your request for voluntary redundancy.

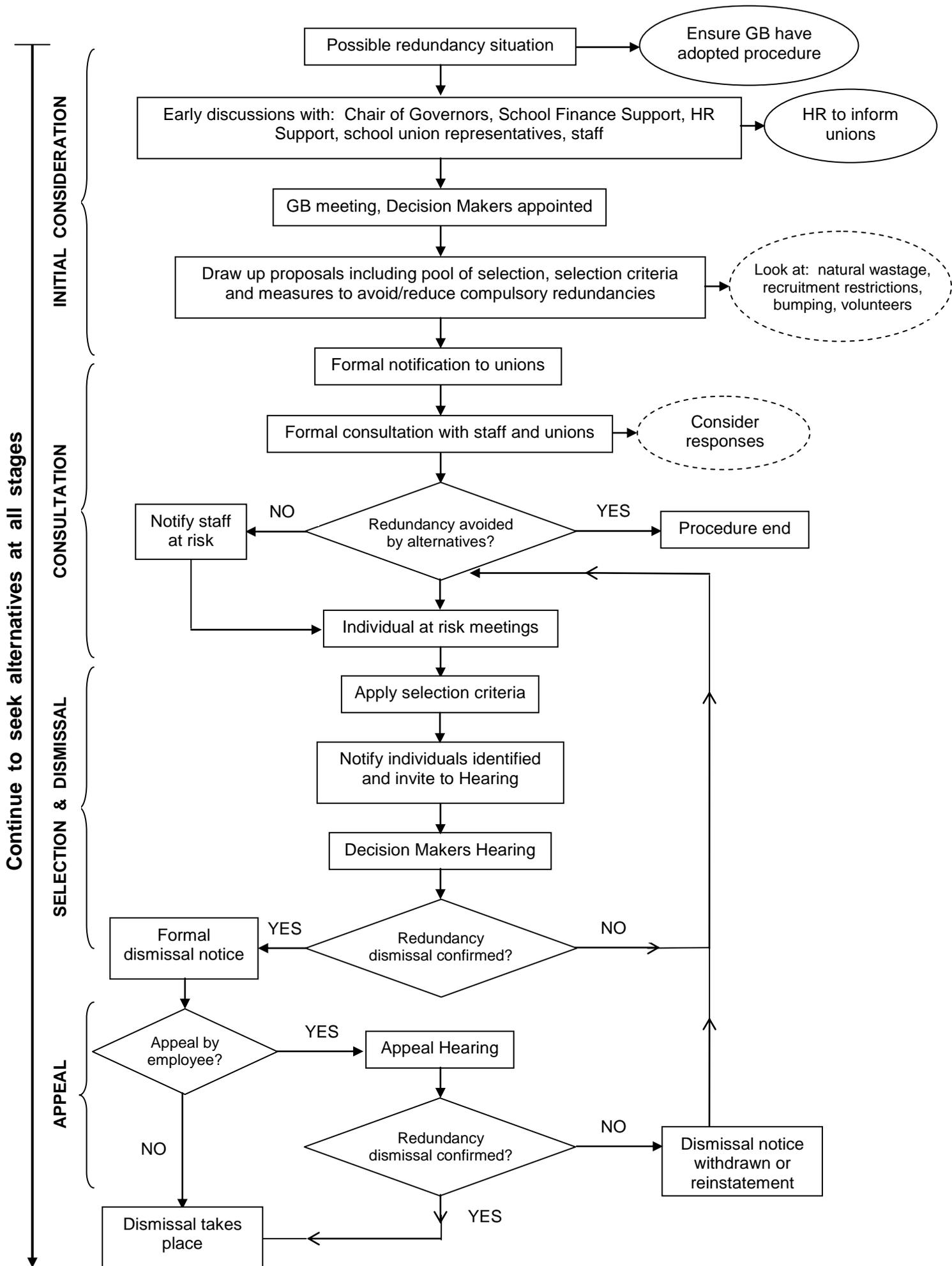
**Q** *When will I be given notice?*

**A** If you are selected for redundancy you will not be given notice until after the decision of the Decision-Makers' Dismissal Committee. You will be given your statutory or contractual notice, whichever is the greater.

**Q** *Where can I get further information?*

**A** Your main source of help and information is your Headteacher. If you have any questions, thoughts or suggestions, see him/her. The recognised trade unions have been informed and they will also be able to assist you and give you advice throughout the process. HR Consultancy for Schools will also be in a position to provide relevant information. You should be aware of a nominated contact during this process; if not you can contact the Human Resources team on 01905 766188.

**Redundancy in Schools Flowchart**



If you are considering volunteering for early retirement or voluntary redundancy you can get a **confidential** estimate of your benefits by sending the slip below to Team Manager, School Employee Services, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP, or via telephone on 01905 846112.

This estimate does not commit you in any way to volunteering for redundancy nor make you more vulnerable to being identified for redundancy; it simply provides information to allow you to assess your financial position. Please note that an offer of voluntary redundancy may be refused if it does not aid the school's situation.

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School: .....

Your name: .....

Your home address: .....

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Please send me an estimate of my benefits if I take early retirement/voluntary redundancy with effect from .....(insert date - normally the end of the Spring, Summer or Autumn Term).

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....