

Contact: www.itstwelve15.co.uk/contact



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Our ref: **Twelve15 Catering Service News Update**

7 September 2021

Dear Head Teacher and Business Manager,

I do hope you are keeping well and the new academic year has got off to a good start.

I am sharing this update to highlight the extent of the current workforce crisis in the hospitality sector and its consequential impact.

The sector is under “immense pressure” with “chronic labour shortages” up and down the supply chain which has been widely publicised on recent national news. Covid has exacerbated the problems, so too Brexit, but there are a number of factors that have coalesced to create the current crisis. These include a reliance on migrant labour, negative perceptions of the sector, skills shortages and competition from other businesses. ONS figures show UK job vacancies at a record high, with the hospitality sector reporting a 10% vacancy rate – equal to 200,000 roles.

As part of the food service industry, Twelve15 is no exception to the current situation. With 100 vacancies having been advertised repeatedly with no success, there is simply insufficient interest to fill the vacant roles. This is placing considerable strain on the business, which in turn can result in impacting the service provision to our customers.

In readiness for return to business as usual, we realigned staffing needs at Easter and have been recruiting since then in readiness for service delivery. A dedicated team have been working throughout the Summer term and holiday period to ensure that we had a timely, end to end, solution for getting new staff on board. To date, this activity has revealed a disappointing 14% success rate, despite the attractive package offered, including LGPS and the national living wage.

As this situation shows no sign of abating in the short term, we are having to consider resourceful ways of delivering the service. Where this pressure is impacting on your setting, we will talk to you about solutions including food preparation and service style. We would also like to explore all potential opportunities there may be within the school community, whether that be through paid or volunteer groups or community support networks that may be in place. To ensure our usual high standards of Health & Safety are maintained, we would ensure all relevant training & compliance matters formed part of any arrangement.

Inserted below is the link to access our job adverts. Your support in cascading this to the school community would be very much appreciated given the wide network that you reach.

[Surrey County Council - Search for a job \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://surreycc.gov.uk)

Our priority is to ensure business continuity, placing significant importance on the provision of the school meal for pupil wellbeing. In addition, we highly value the team members that we do have and are extremely mindful of the pressures that are placed on them when resourcing is inadequate. These two factors are uppermost in our minds when we consider solutions. By working together, we are confident that students & pupils will continue to receive a tasty, nutritious lunch each day.

I hope this update has been informative and helpful. If you have any further questions or clarifications, please do not hesitate to get in touch at [Contact – Twelve15 \(itstwelve15.co.uk\)](https://itstwelve15.co.uk) and select 'Something else' in the drop down options. Otherwise I will write again with any further updates as they arise.

With my kind regards,



Sarah Atkinson
Head of Twelve15

cc: Tracey Killick, Catering Services Manager, Strictly Education4S
Jane Duffton, Service Manager, School Relationships Team