



Safer Recruitment Policy

Contents

1. Context
2. Aims & purpose
3. Our commitment
4. Roles and responsibilities
5. The procedure
6. Personnel file records
7. Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks

Policy history:

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Linked policies and procedures:

Policy Name	Policy Family	Review Date	Board / Committee	FGB Approval Required

1. Context

All policies should be read within the context of our mission statement: Ministerium Tuum Imple (2 Tim 4:5) – Love, Serve, Do the Best that is Possible.

2. Aims & purpose

We aim to:

Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

3. Our Commitment

As a school we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff, potential staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

We recognise the value of and seek to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. We actively promote equality for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates including those with criminal records. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. We will uphold our obligations under law to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical / mental disability or offending background. The exception to this is the case of Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers and Head of Religious Education who must be Catholic.

All paid posts and volunteering within the school are deemed as regulated activity and therefore exempt from the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974, and require all applicants to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent and have an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclose including barred list check via the Data and barring Service (DBS).

The school will:

- Select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- Ensure all those involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance of circumstance of offences
- Ensure that appropriate staff who undertake recruitment appointments have received safer recruitment training and successfully completed an approved Safer Recruitment training assessment, which is renewed on a tri-annual basis
- Implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role
- Undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment
- Keep and maintain a single central record (SCR) of recruitment and vetting checks in line with Department for Education (DfE) requirements
- Ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. The school will monitor the compliance with these measures

- Require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the school to notify the school in writing of the offence and the penalty immediately.
- Adhere to the latest guidance published in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer. Open references and personal statements are not acceptable on their own.
- Verification of the candidate's identity in line with the requirements of The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
- Verification of the Right to Work
- A satisfactory Enhanced DBS clearance and barred list check
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers and other professional / registered roles
- Verification of successful completion of induction period (for those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999 and all support staff)
- Searches of social media accounts.

2. Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Governing Board to:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with current DfE guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other leaders involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document as appropriate
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment procedure
- Ensure there is a member of each selection process who has completed safer recruitment training
- Promoting a safe culture of safer recruitment throughout the school on a continual basis

It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document.

It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safer recruitment pre-employment checks.

3. The Procedure

For every appointment the school is committed to the principles of safer recruitment:

1. Deter
2. Identify and Reject

3. Prevent and Reject

Advertising

- To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible, normally this will entail an external advertisement via the school website. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement only may be considered appropriate.
- Job Descriptions and Person Specification will have been reviewed and updated in advance of a recruitment advert
- A safeguarding policy statement shall be included in the advert
- Job Descriptions and Person Specification will have been reviewed and updated in advance of a recruitment advert

Applications

- The school uses standard application forms which satisfy the criteria for Safer Recruitment. CVs will only be accepted alongside an application form, a CV on its own will not provide adequate information.
- The school requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on the application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview or as part of the conditional offer if further information or clarity is required.
- Applicants should be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (eg: General Teaching Council (GTC) for England).

Shortlisting

- At least two people will carry out the shortlisting process.
- Consideration is to be made against any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns
- An online search is to be undertaken as part of the due diligence process once shortlisting has completed.

References

A minimum of two references shall be sought for each candidate. References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after shortlisting, the only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any confirmed offer of employment being made. One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.

References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied - open references or testimonials are generally not acceptable.

The school will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend in the absence of other professional references. References will be sought for at least 2 years of previous employment history.

Only references from a trusted authoritative source and seniority will be acceptable, unless in exceptional circumstances and agreed by the Headteacher on behalf of the Governing Board.

Reference requests will specifically ask about the referee's relationship with the candidate whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes that the person might be unsuitable.

Referees will also be asked to confirm details of:

- The applicant's current post, salary and attendance record, as appropriate
- Performance history and conduct
- Any disciplinary procedures in which the sanction is current
- Any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of others (did say Children here), including any in which the sanction has expired and the outcome of those
- The suitability to work with children, and provide facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns / allegations that meet the harm threshold.
- Details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of these concerns

References will be compared to the application form to ensure that the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant at interview, or following a conditional offer being made if received after the interview date.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

Self-declaration of convictions by job applicants

Our policy requires shortlisted applicants for all posts (including volunteers) to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and include any cautions and pending prosecution.

Such declarations will be made on the application form. The Headteacher will hold an open and measured discussion at the time of interview or alternative suitable time on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of employment.

Interviews

The selection process will always include the following:

- Face to face professional interview including a question related to safeguarding children (in line with Safer Recruitment Training)
- A young people panel or activity with children, an exception to this is for the appointment of part-time Housekeeping.
- Lesson delivery (for teachers only)
- Discuss any information that may have been found following the online search

Any discrepancies shall be scrutinised at the interview.

Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status.

Successful applicants for all posts will be required to provide proof of identity by producing documents following an initial offer in line with those set out in The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Similar information is also required to undertake a DBS check on the preferred candidate.

Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the Headteacher or designated representative. Any offer of employment will be made subject to the satisfactory completion and provision of identity and right to work documents, Enhanced DBS, references and health check.

Short-listed candidates will also be required to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation. The school will verify that candidates have actually obtained any qualifications legally required or deemed essential for the job and claimed in their application by asking to see the relevant certificate, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body / institution. If the original documents are not available, the school will require sight of a properly certified copy.

Commencement of Employment prior to DBS check being received

In unusual circumstances it is permitted to commence employment prior to receiving a completed satisfactory Enhanced DBS. However, a risk assessment must be completed and approved by the Headteacher in advance and the employee will not be left unsupervised at any time.

Employment Offer

All offers made following a recruitment process are conditional.

It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred candidate, however, with the exception of DBS disclosures, the checks detailed above must all be completed BEFORE a person's appointment is formally confirmed. In the case of DBS disclosures, the certificate must be obtained before or as soon as practicable after their offer of appointment.

Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed / received a contract of employment will be issued. The contract will be issued on the first day of employment.

Record Retention / Data Protection

The school will retain all interview notes on all applicants in line with GDPR, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The retention period will allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to the Employment Tribunal.

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and implementation of GDPR in May 2018, applicants have a right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process.

Applicants who wish to access their interview notes must make a subject access request in writing to the Chair of the panel / Headteacher within 6 months of the interview date. A charge for photocopied documents will be applied.

Copies of DBS certificates and records of criminal information disclosed by the candidate are covered by UK GDPR/DPA 2018 Article 10. A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications will be kept on their personnel file.

4. Personnel file records

The school will retain the following information which will make up part of the personnel file, for the successful candidate:

- Application form
- References
- Disclosure of convictions form (if applicable)
- Proof of identification
- Proof of the right to work in the UK
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Proof of registration with General Teaching Council (for teaching staff) or other registrations for other professionally recognised roles
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable)
- Completed pre-employment health questionnaire, reviewed by the school and Nurse as necessary and referred to Occupational Health if a further medical report is required
- Evidence of the satisfactory Enhanced DBS clearance

5. Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks

In line with DfE requirements, the school will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The central list will record all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff, supply agency staff whether employed directly or through an agency, volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, e.g. a specialist sports coach or artist.

The central record will indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity checks
- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job
- Additionally for those applying for teaching posts, registration check with the GTC
- Checks of right to work in the United Kingdom
- DBS Enhanced Disclosure including barred list check
- Further overseas records, where appropriate
- It shall also indicate who undertook the check and the date on which the check was completed or the relevant certificate obtained
- In order to record supply staff provided through an agency on the record, the school will require written confirmation from the supply agency that it has satisfactorily completed the checks described above. The school does not need to carry out checks itself except where there is information contained within the disclosure.
- Standalone Children's Barred list check