



Safer Recruitment for Schools Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy is to be read in conjunction with school policies and procedures on child protection, redeployment and guidance on pre-employment checks including references and criminal record disclosures. Management guidance on this policy is provided but does not form part of this policy.

1.2 The purpose of this model policy is to set out the minimum requirements of a safer recruitment process that aims to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

This policy covers the recruitment and selection of all staff that come within the remit of the governors of a school with delegated staffing responsibilities.

2. POLICY STATEMENTS

Policy statements could be included in:

Publicity materials, recruitment advertisements, candidate information packs, person specifications, job descriptions and induction training.

Recruitment and selection

Example: The school is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing children in the school with a high quality education. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to the school's performance and fundamental to ensuring the best life chances for each child.

Safeguarding

Example: The governors of this school are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Equal opportunities

Example: No employee or applicant will be unlawfully disadvantaged on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, language, disability, religion, age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, parental or marital status. This policy will be applied consistently to all.

3. APPOINTMENT TO HEAD AND DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER POSTS

3.1 There are statutory requirements for the appointment of head teachers and deputy head teachers. These requirements change from time-to-time and will take precedence over local or school policy. The governors will seek advice when appropriate.

3.2 The governors will be responsible for the safe recruitment and all checks carried out for these roles.

4. IDENTIFICATION OF RECRUITERS

4.1 Subject to the availability of training, the school will move towards a position in which at least one recruiter has successfully received training in safe recruitment practices.

4.2 The Governors are responsible for recruitment and selection of all employees, however this responsibility is delegated to the head teacher for recruitment of staff outside the leadership group including the following:

- Supply teachers and staff acquired through an agency;
- Teachers and support staff required for a temporary contract for a period of 4 months or less (unless renewing a contract which has already been in place for 4 months);
- Support staff for all posts;
- Volunteers

[Each school should give details of what (if any) recruitment has been formally delegated to the head teacher- examples given above.]

4.3 The head teacher is responsible for the safe recruitment and vetting checks carried out on all workers in the school except the head teacher and deputy head teacher.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF A VACANCY TO BE ADVERTISED

5.1 Each time a vacancy occurs the school will take the opportunity to review the school staffing structure and the duties of the post bearing in mind the school development plan, pupil requirements, improving efficiency and the budget available for the foreseeable future.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

6.1 All adverts for posts – whether in paper publications or on-line – will include the statement:

“All post holders are subject to a satisfactory enhanced criminal record disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).”

[In addition to the above, governors may also choose to include in their advert, a statement about the employer’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children or other statement see above in section 1.]

Example: The governors of this school are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

6.2 Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

- job profile and person specification;
- the school’s child protection policy;
- the school’s safer recruitment policy;
- the policy for recruitment of ex-offenders;

- the selection procedure for the post; and
- an application form with explanatory notes to help with completing the form.

6.3 The job profile for each post will detail the extent of the relationship/contact with children and the degree of responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children that the post holder will have. The person specification will include specific reference to suitability to work with children.

6.4 All prospective applicants must complete, in full, an application form. The governors will not accept a job application without an application form.

7. SHORT LISTING

7.1 This will be carried out by the same panel who will be interviewing the candidates. The short-listing of candidates will be against the person specification for the post. All candidates will be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

7.2 All applications will be scrutinised to ensure they are fully and properly completed; that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies; to identify any gaps in employment. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

7.3 Any anomalies, gaps in employment and unclear career or salary progression will be explored fully at the interview stage with confirmation from references and other appropriate sources.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 References will be taken up before the selection stage, so that any queries can be identified and clarified with the applicant at interview or as soon as possible. In the event that references for the preferred candidate are not available for the panel at the interview, a job offer will **not** be made subject to satisfactory references. In this case, the selection decision will be deferred with the panel adjourning and reconvening when the written references are available.

8.2 Two references will be sought directly from the referees. References or open testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted instead of two references obtained directly from the referees. References from relatives will never be accepted.

8.3 Where necessary, the chairperson (or nominated member) of the recruiting panel will contact referees by telephone or email in order to confirm authenticity and/or clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of the key points of these conversations.

8.4 Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept in the event of telephone exchanges.

8.5 Where an applicant is not currently working with children, but has done so in the past, a reference will also be obtained from the last employer for whom the applicant was employed to work with children.

- 8.6 Referees will always be asked specific questions about:
- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
 - any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children;
 - the candidate's suitability for this post.

8.7 For appointment to posts involving responsibility for money, stock or accounts, the reference(s) should specifically address this.

8.8 The references for the preferred candidate will be checked to ensure all questions have been answered. If there are unanswered questions or the answers are vague or unspecific, the referee will be contacted to provide answers or clarification as appropriate. The information will be recorded and compared with the application form to ensure consistency. Any discrepancy in the information will be taken up with the applicant.

8.9 Information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case and Legal and/or HR advice may be requested. Discretion and independent judgement will be exercised by the recruitment panel.

9. THE INTERVIEW

9.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.

9.2 Interviews will always be face-to-face.

- 9.3 Candidates will always be required:
- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
 - to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters;
 - to declare and discuss any information that is likely to appear on a criminal record disclosure;
 - to demonstrate their attitude towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;
 - to demonstrate his or her ability to support the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

9.4 In the event that references have not been obtained prior to interview, the candidate will be asked if there is anything he/she wishes to declare in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to his or her referees so that any issues can be resolved at the earliest possible stage.

10. EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

- 10.1 All successful applicants are required:
- to provide proof of identity;
 - to complete a criminal record disclosure application form **before** starting work and receive satisfactory clearance – see attached guidance on DBS procedure;
 - to provide **original** certificates of qualifications;

- to complete a confidential health questionnaire and to comply with any request from the Council's occupational health unit;
- to provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK;
- to be registered with the GTCW and to maintain that professional registration if required.

10.2 Other workers at the school

The governors will only use those agencies, contractors and organisations (including the local authority) which operate a safe recruitment procedure and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. Any information disclosed as part of the criminal record disclosure will be treated confidentially. The head teacher will carry out identity checks when the worker first arrives at the school.

11. STORAGE OF RECORDS

11.1 Staff records will be kept securely and confidentially and only accessed by those who need to have access as part of their job responsibilities. This is especially important for criminal record disclosure information where it is a criminal offence for it to be passed to anyone who does not need it in the course of their professional duties.

11.2 The school staff record will show whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity check;
- Qualifications check;
- Right to work in the UK;
- References received, along with a note of any telephone conversation with a referee;
- Enhanced criminal record disclosure certificate number, date of disclosure and name of counter signatory;
- Overseas criminal record check documentation (where appropriate);
- Copy of risk assessment for starting work prior to criminal record disclosure (where applicable).

Where one or more of these checks have been carried out by the local authority, a confirmation that these have been completed will be kept on the staff record.

11.3 The record will show the date on which each check was completed and will show who carried out the check. The school staff record will be kept up to date and ready for inspection e.g. by Estyn, as required.

11.4 When a member of staff leaves the school employment the staff record containing the application form, references, notification of satisfactory pre-employment checks including those in 11.1 and any other appropriate information will be transferred to the local authority for archiving electronically.

[The governors may decide on the above instead of or, in addition to, archiving them in the school]

12. INDUCTION

12.1 All staff and volunteers new to the school will receive induction training that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices.

12.2 Regular meetings will be held during the first 3 months of employment between the new employee and the manager..