

Church Hill C of E Junior School

'Let Your Light Shine' (Matthew 5:16)



Together Everyone Achieves More


Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy 2025

Signed by: 

Date: ..21/4/25.....

Approved by Governor

Date:08/04/25.....

Signed on behalf of the Governing body: 

(Chair of Governors)

Next Review Date: March 2027

Purpose

This policy has been designed to assist our school with the appointment of **all** vacant positions within our organisation. It should be noted that whilst there is separate recruitment guidance for Head Teacher/Principal posts, pre-employment checks for such posts remain the same as those required for teaching posts.

This document, and its associated guidance, will assist all those responsible for the recruitment process to ensure appropriate mechanisms for **safer recruitment** and selection are in place. This document also sets out best practice, taking in to account relevant legislation, the requirements of regulatory inspections (i.e., Ofsted) and the organisation's commitment to Equality and Diversity.

Equal Opportunities

Everyone involved in recruitment and selection processes must be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that anyone wishing to apply for a position at the school has an equal opportunity to do so.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments must be put in place for any candidate who has identified that they have a disability and require adjustments to be made to enable them to fully participate in the process. The candidate should be consulted with well in advance of any adjustments required/ made, these may include (but are not limited to):

- ensuring the interviewing room has a wheelchair ramp;
- providing a skills test printed in large font;
- providing additional time to complete a test or prepare a presentation

Criminal Convictions

Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent a person from being employed within a school and applicants should not be treated unfairly if they have a previous conviction. Whilst a criminal record cannot be disregarded, the school must seek advice to ensure a fair and consistent approach when considering an applicant's suitability for the role they are applying for.

Personal Relationships

Where an employee who is involved in any part of the recruitment process has a personal relationship with an applicant, they should declare this from the outset. Such employees must then **not** be involved in:

- the recruitment processes;
- providing a reference or acting as a referee for that person where possible;
- making decisions relating to pay in respect of that individual;
- making decisions related to or the management of the employee's performance;
- any conduct issues that arise that may involve the employee.

The recruitment panel should also check the application forms as candidates must also declare whether they have a personal relationship with any current members of staff.

Recruitment and Selection Process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

1. Review the Vacancy:

Recruitment takes place either as a result of an existing post becoming vacant or the creation of a new post owing to changing organisational needs. To ensure good practice, we will consider the following points:

- Is this a new post or an existing post?
- If an existing post, is this post still required?
- Can the school afford to recruit to the post within both current and future budgets?
- Are the working hours/times/grade of the post still appropriate?
- Is there an up-to-date Job Description and Person Specification?
- Is recruitment to a permanent/fixed term/full time/part time position?
- Do you require supply cover in place whilst recruiting to a permanent position?

2. Prepare a Recruitment Plan

We will ensure a realistic timetable is prepared for the recruitment process allowing sufficient time to:

- Agree a "Recruitment Panel", usually comprising of three members. **At least one panel member must have undertaken Safer Recruitment training.**
- Create/review the job description & person specification to ensure they are both fit for purpose.
- If a new post, does this need to be evaluated to check the grade (for a non-teaching post).
- Prepare the job advertisement (part salaries should be clearly stated on the advert)
- Prepare any additional recruitment literature that will be sent out to applicants, i.e. the Job Pack
- Diary dates set aside for any potential informal visits to the school.
- Agree dates for:
 1. When the advert will be published and the duration of the advertising period;
 2. Closing date for the advert;
 3. Shortlisting meeting;
 4. Inviting candidates to interview;
 5. Applying for employment references;
 6. The selection/interview days i.e. venue, candidate activities, panel questions;
 7. Start date for successful applicant.

NB. All members of the panel should participate in every stage of the recruitment process.

3. Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children

- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

When compiling the job advert, the following should additionally be included:

- A message about the culture of the school and the type of person needed for the role
- Details of the key knowledge and skills required to undertake the role
- For roles designated as "Regulated Activity" it is essential that the information sent to candidates makes it clear that references will be sought in advance of the interview
- The closing date by which all completed applications should be sent to the school
- The advert should be placed in such a way that the best range of prospective candidates can access it which best reflects the community that the school serves
- If advertising posts for overseas workers, additional rules apply in terms of the recruitment process and advertising the role. See associated guidance for more details

4. Application forms

Our application forms will:

- › Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- › Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

5. Shortlisting

As soon as possible after the closing date, each member of the recruitment panel should receive a shortlisting pack (via the agreed method) which should include a copy of all the application forms (minus the equal opportunities form), a job description and personnel specification and the shortlisting grid in order to carry out the shortlisting exercise. All members of the panel should:

- Take part in the shortlisting process.
- Complete a separate shortlisting grid for each individual candidate. This promotes fairness and consistency whilst also providing an audit trail.
- Check that any additional information sent with the application is not considered as part of this process, unless this information was expressly requested by the recruitment panel, i.e a supporting letter outlining the individual's suitability for the role.
- Ensure that all essential criteria (to be assessed by the application form) have been satisfied. Where this is not the case, the applicant may not be shortlisted.

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- › Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- › Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- › Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching

- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information

› Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

6. Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- › Not accept open references
- › Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- › Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- › Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- › Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- › Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- › Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

7. Invitation to Interview

Following the shortlisting meeting, arrangements should be made to write out to those individuals shortlisted inviting them for interview. This letter should detail the following:

- That the applicant has been selected to attend a recruitment process.
- The location, date and times of the interview.
- Outline the interview process, detailing any tests or assessments the candidates will be required to undertake.
- The requirement to bring relevant identification documentation to the interview day.
- The requirement to provide original documents verifying any qualifications essential for the job.
- The requirement to complete a Criminal Records Self-Disclosure form (this form should be sent with the invite letter).
- That, where necessary, on-line candidate search may be performed and the reasons for this.
- Details of who to contact should the applicant require any reasonable adjustments to allow them to attend and be able to fully participate in the interview process.

If a candidate advises that they are unable to attend for interview on the date specified, the panel has discretion to reschedule their interview date, however, the interview panel **must** remain the same.

8. Interview Preparation

It is essential for the recruitment panel to meet prior to the interviews to agree the format of the interview process. The panel must decide:

- What tasks or activities they will ask candidates to perform, i.e. in tray exercises, presentations or teaching a class.
- The questions to ask – all questions should be agreed in advance and should include a safeguarding question and a question on equal opportunities.
- Agreement should be made on how the panel will explore any gaps in employment history and any other concerns identified during shortlisting process.

It is important that methods used to test candidates are appropriate and proportionate to the duties of the role applied for and designed so that candidates are able to demonstrate their suitability for the role.

The chair of the panel is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are made for the smooth running of the interview process, including:

- All relevant documentation is prepared and distributed to panel members prior to interview.
- The suitability of the venue - taking into consideration any additional or special requirements such as access or any additional adjustments requested by the candidates.
- Any car parking spaces, refreshments etc. are arranged.
- Arranging the checking of the candidates identity documents.
- Arranging checking and copying of any additional documentation required at interview.
- Ensuring the interview timetable allows sufficient time between interviews for:
 - * Overruns;
 - * Panel Discussion;
 - * Breaks;

9. Interview and selection

The Chair of the panel is responsible for ensuring that the interview is conducted fairly and that all candidates are treated equally. The Chair should ensure that all panel members participate fully and the views of all panel members are considered at all stages.

Panel members must score each candidate independently and agree whole panel scores after each interview.

At the **start** of the interview, the Chair should:

- Welcome each candidate;
- Introduce the other panel members by name and job role;
- Give an overview of the interview process;
- Explain that notes will be taken during the interview by the panel members;

At the **end** of the interview, the Chair should:

- Give an opportunity for candidates to ask questions;
- Give an indication of timescales for decision and feedback;
- Ensure that all the relevant documents have been received and checked, e.g. evidence of qualifications.
- Ensure hard copies of any forms received electronically are signed by the candidate.
- Explore any issues raised by the Criminal Records Self Declaration form, and
- Explore any issues raised as a result of any on-line checks conducted on the candidate.

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- › Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- › Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- › Record all information considered and decisions made

10. Decision Making – Appointing the Preferred Candidate

All aspects of the selection process should be considered when making decisions to appoint a new employee, the successful candidate should have:

- Met all the essential criteria on the job description;
- The highest aggregated score, taking into account their scores for any additional tasks that they have been asked to complete as part of the selection process.
- There are satisfactory explanations for any previous criminal conviction or issues identified via the on-line searches.

It is also helpful for the panel to decide on a reserve candidate in case the first candidate declines the job offer.

Interview notes for all candidates (both successful and unsuccessful) must be retained for a period of 6 months, in case they are required in connection with an Employment Tribunal claim or have been requested by a candidate under the Data Protection Act. After this stage the documents for unsuccessful candidates must be destroyed.

11. Informing the Successful Applicant

The chair of the panel should contact the successful candidate as soon as possible to advise them of their appointment.

A **conditional** offer should be made to the successful candidate. It should be explained that the post is not confirmed until all pre-appointment vetting checks are satisfactorily completed.

It is good practice that all the other candidates be informed they have been unsuccessful and offered the opportunity to obtain feedback on their application or performance at interview. It is best practice to speak to unsuccessful applicants in person, usually via a phone call, but if the chair of the panel has been unable to reach a candidate, they should receive a written outcome stating that they have been unsuccessful.

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- › Verify their identity, including birth certificate
- › Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- › Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- › Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- › Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- › Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- › Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher

- › Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach
 - Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

* Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- › Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- › Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- › Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- › There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- › An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- › There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- › We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
- › We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- › We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- › The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- › An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- › An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- › Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- › Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- › Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- › Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors and Members

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- › A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008).
- › Identity

- › Right to work in the UK
- › Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Single Central Record

Schools must keep a single central record of all employment checks carried out.

The single central record must cover the following people:

- All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school;
- All other staff who work in regular contact with children in school or college, including volunteers;
- For independent schools, including academies and free school, all members of the proprietor body.

Ofsted will check the School's single central record during their inspection visits with the expectation that it will meet at least the statutory requirements.

Transfer of undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE)

Employees who are TUPE transferred into the school, or from a school to academy or from an academy to Multi Academy Trust, must have their documentation checked within 60 days of the transfer. Head teachers should follow the required checking process set out in the associated guidance.

Schools should be aware that sponsor licenses are non-transferable from one employer to another under TUPE Regulations. In such circumstances the school must make an application for either a sponsor license or to extend the existing sponsor license. An application must be made with 20 working days of the move taking place.

If the school does not make a valid application to become a sponsor within 20 working days or does make an application, but this is refused, all of the migrants who have transferred, except those that can be sponsored under any existing licences, will have their leave, or worker authorisation shortened to 60 calendar days.