Safer Recruitment Policy

Document Control Page

Revision History

Date	Type of change	Initials	Purpose of Revision
September 2023	Minor	SB	Date changed in footer
September 2024	Minor	SB	Date changed in footer
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Date Approved by WGB Committee: September 2026

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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the school's strategic approach to recruitment and selection activity and to establish a consistent framework for the application of these activities.

1.2 The Governing Body recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people. The school is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection activities are undertaken in a fair and transparent way and that appointments are based on the candidate judged to be most suitable. The aims, therefore, of this policy are to:

- attract and appoint the highest calibre of applicants;
- ensure safe and equitable recruitment and selection is conducted at all times;
- deter, identify and reject prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.

1.3 This document is available to all members of school staff and to any prospective applicant. The Governing Body welcomes any comments or contributions to this policy.

2. Legal context

2.1 The Governing Body recognises that recruitment and selection is governed by many statutory provisions, too numerous to list separately, and is committed to ensuring that all legislative requirements are met in the application of this policy. However, particular reference is made to the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, as the fundamental basis for recruitment in maintained schools.

2.2 This policy does not form part of any employee's contractual terms and conditions and any links within this document to other documents are for ease of use and do not form part of this policy.

3. Delegation of authority

3.1 In respect of the position of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, the responsibility and authority to appoint lies with the Governing Body. Where such recruitment activity is required the Governing Body will convene a recruitment and selection panel in accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. Where a panel of governors is convened, the Governing Body will ensure

members of the panel have knowledge and understanding of the school's needs, the appropriate experience and training in recruitment and selection, including safer recruitment training, as well as the confidence in carrying out the process effectively. The selection of appropriate governors is a matter for the Governing Body to consider carefully with advice from the Local Authority and, where applicable, the Diocese, as necessary. Unless statutory legislation has been contravened, the Governing Body will normally endorse the recommendation for appointment made by the selection panel.

3.2 In respect of all other posts the Governing Body has delegated responsibility and authority to appoint to the Headteacher.

4. Equal opportunities

4.1 The Governing Body is committed to providing equality of opportunity at all stages of the recruitment and selection process and ensuring that candidates are treated fairly and lawfully throughout the process. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation or trade union membership.

4.2 All disabled applicants who indicate that they consider themselves to have a disability on their application and who meet the minimum criteria for the role will be guaranteed an interview.

4.3 Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

5. Vacancy determination and initiating recruitment activity

5.1 Where a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher vacancy arises, the Governing Body will notify the Local Authority, and where applicable the Diocesan Authority, that such a vacancy exists. Liaison with the District Manager will normally take place at the outset of this process.

5.2 The Governing Body will review such a leadership vacancy in accordance with the current needs of the school, including the Headteacher's pay range, job description/person specification and the key tasks the new Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will need to address, having regard to school improvement.

5.3 Subject to the delegation of authority detailed in section 3.2 (where authority to appoint has been delegated to the Headteacher), where a vacancy relates to any other position within the school's existing staffing structure, it is the Headteacher's responsibility to determine that a vacancy exists and to review whether any such vacancy is to be filled or reviewed before initiating any recruitment activity.

5.4 Where the Headteacher wishes to create a new position which is in addition to the agreed staffing structure of the school, he or she will present a case for such a position to the Full Governing Body for approval. Once approved, the Headteacher can initiate recruitment activity.

5.5 Where it is decided that the school requires the engagement of a casual worker, the Casual Worker Policy will be followed.

6. Planning for recruitment

6.1 Where the recruitment activity concerns Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher posts, the Governing Body will ensure that the Local Authority is advised that the vacancy exists and is to be filled, in accordance with its obligations under the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. The Governing Body will seek advice from the Local Authority where this is available. The Governing Body will ensure that Local Authority rights to attend proceedings related to recruitment and to offer advice are respected pursuant to the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.

6.2 Prior to undertaking recruitment activity for vacancies other than the Headteacher, the Headteacher will, working with a senior manager as appropriate, ensure that there is a review of the job description and person specification and ensure that this document is an accurate reflection of the role to be filled.

6.3 The Governing Body and/or Headteacher will make a determination as to whether a role is to be filled on a permanent, fixed-term, temporary or any other basis, taking into account any advice received from Education Personnel Services.

7. Advertising vacancies

7.1 It will be normal practice for all vacancies to be advertised unless there is a good reason not to do so. Advertisement may be either internally (for example on school noticeboards or on the school intranet site) or externally (such as via the Education Jobs website), depending on the type of vacancy, the nature of the contract which exists and the current nature of the recruitment market. When advertising externally, the school will ensure that school staff are aware, to allow current members of staff to apply, should they wish to do so.

7.2 Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher vacancies will be advertised unless the Governing Body has good reason not to do so. Where the Governing Body makes a determination not to advertise, it will minute the reason for this decision. The vacancy will be advertised in such a manner as the Governing Body considers appropriate taking into consideration the best way of reaching the target audience and the level of exposure the advertisement will receive. Advice will normally be sought from the Local Authority, and where applicable the Diocesan Authority, before deciding not to advertise.

7.3 Advertisements will include a safeguarding statement, highlighting the school's commitment to child safeguarding in an effort to deter any unsuitable candidates, an equal opportunities statement and a statement regarding the declaration of convictions, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended), along with the necessary information needed to attract suitable candidates to the post and to the school.

8. Shortlisting and selection processes

8.1 The Governing Body recognises that it is a legislative requirement (School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009) that at least one member of a selection panel must have completed safer recruitment training. A selection panel will not be convened without at least one panel member having been appropriately trained in safer recruitment.

8.2 For the position of Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, the selection panel will consist of a minimum of three governors (excluding the Headteacher or, as the case may be, the Deputy Headteacher), working with a Local Authority representative. For all other posts the panel will normally consist of at least two senior members of staff.

8.3 The shortlisting and interview panels will normally be made up of the same members of staff to ensure consistency and fairness.

8.4 During the shortlisting process all applications will be assessed equally against the same criteria, without exception or variation. All applications will be carefully scrutinised, with particular care paid to any gaps in employment; repeated and/or regular/frequent changes in employment; and anomalies or discrepancies in information contained within the form. Any such concerns will be taken up with the candidate at interview and will be satisfactorily resolved before any firm offer of employment is made.

8.4 For Headteacher appointments, the Governing Body, or its appointed selection panel, will notify the Local Authority of the shortlist for the post. Where the Local Authority makes representations regarding the shortlist of candidates, the selection panel recognises its statutory obligation to consider those representations and where it has recommended the appointment of the person about whom the representations have been made, the Chair of the selection panel will notify the Local Authority and Governing Body in writing of the reasons for this decision.

8.6 References will be requested prior to interview, to enable the panel to compare the information received against the candidate's application form and their answers at interview, as well as allowing for any discrepancies to be explored at interview. References requested at this stage of the process will exclude requests for health information.

8.7 The selection process for shortlisted candidates will, as a minimum, consist of a face to face selection interview with an interview panel, with other selection activities (such as classroom observation; group activities; written work) determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post.

9. Outcome of selection processes

9.1 A selection decision will be made based on a fair and thorough assessment of the skills and abilities demonstrated by all the candidates against the requirements of the person specification/job description during the selection process.

9.2 Any offer of employment made to the preferred candidate will be made conditionally, in writing, subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks (in line with 10.0).

9.3 In Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher recruitment, the selection panel will make a recommendation to the Governing Body for the appointment of one of the applicants, with the determination of whether to appoint sitting with the Governing Body and not the selection panel.

9.4 For all other appointments, the power to appoint is in accordance with the delegation of authority detailed in section 3.1 and 3.2. The chair of the selection panel will report any appointments made under such delegation to the Governing Body.

10. Pre-employment checks

10.1 The Governing Body recognises its statutory responsibility to carry out pre-employment checks for all new staff as well as to update the Single Central Record prior to new staff commencing employment.

10.2 These processes will be undertaken in accordance with the school's Fitness and Suitability for Work Policy and Overseas Criminal Records Policy as well as guidance contained in the Manual of Personnel Practice, with further advice sought from Education Personnel Services as necessary.

10.3 The selection panel will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of prospective employees based on checks and evidence, which may include the following where appropriate: DBS checks, barred list checks, prohibition checks, right to work and identity checks, together with health declaration, references, application forms, interview information and checks of relevant academic and professional qualifications.

10.4 The selection panel will assess all information gathered from pre-employment checks as the information is received, in accordance with the Fitness and Suitability for Work Policy. Any unsatisfactory pre-employment checks may lead to the consideration of withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment. Where consideration is being given to withdrawing an offer on the basis of pre-employment checks, advice will be sought from Education Personnel Services.

10.5 The candidate will not normally commence employment until all relevant pre-employment checks have been completed and must not start until at least the candidate's identity and right to work in the UK have been established. In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may determine to allow an individual to commence employment in regulated activity prior to the receipt of a DBS check. In these circumstances, all other checks, including a separate barred list check where appropriate, must have been completed and he or she will not be left to work unsupervised. A risk assessment will also be carried out to determine whether other safeguarding measures may need to be put in place.

10.6 For volunteers the school will undertake the appropriate checks in line with the guidance in the Manual of Personnel Practice.

10.7 Individuals who have lived or worked outside of the UK will be subject to the same pre-employment checks as all other staff. In addition, further appropriate checks, such as an overseas police check, will be made as necessary in accordance with the school's Overseas Criminal Records Policy, in order to sufficiently establish the individual's suitability to be appointed.

10.8 For individuals who work at the school via an employment agency, the school will obtain written notification from the agency that the necessary checks that the school would normally otherwise perform have been carried out, prior to engaging the individual. The school will also check that the individual arriving at the school for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

10.9 For trainee/student teachers who are salaried by the school, the school will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. For other trainee/student teachers, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks and for the school to ensure that such checks have been undertaken prior to deployment within the school.

11. Offers of employment

11.1 Offers made prior to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks must be made on a conditional basis. Conditional offers of employment must only be confirmed once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

11.2 Contracts of employment will be received by the individual within 8 weeks of the first day of their employment and therefore pre-employment checks are required

to be satisfactorily completed within 8 weeks. Where such checks are not completed within this timeframe, and the withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment is being considered, the Fitness and Suitability for Work policy will be followed.

12. Retention of recruitment records

12.1 For unsuccessful applicants, all paperwork gathered as part of a recruitment exercise will be kept confidentially and securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), for a period of 12 months after the interview date to ensure that if there are any claims raised, the school is able to rely on its records to justify its judgment and decision. After this period these records will be confidentially disposed of.

12.2 For staff appointed to work at the school, information gathered during the recruitment process will be used to form part of the employee's personnel file and, where applicable, will be mandatorily recorded on the school's Single Central Record.