

THE HIGHFIELD SCHOOL

Safer Recruitment and Recruitment Protocol

This protocol has been reviewed by the Leadership of The Highfield School to ensure that it reflects the values of the Co-operative Movement.

1. Introduction

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

- Undertake the recruitment process in line with statutory regulations and within the safer recruitment framework;
- 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.

NB: This protocol applies for all contractual appointments. When appointing a voluntary worker, the safer recruitment process should be followed in terms of, as a minimum, a satisfactorily completed application form, references, DBS clearance and induction.

2. Statutory Requirements

There are some statutory requirements for the appointment of some staff in schools – notably Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers. These requirements change from time-to-time and must be met.

3. Governing Body Responsibilities

- The Governing Body is responsible for the appointment of all staff in the school. For most posts, this function will be delegated to the Headteacher
- At least one governor should be present for the appointment of members of the leadership team, with 3 governors needed for appointment of Deputy Heads, excluding the Headteacher.

4. Responsibility delegated to the Headteacher

- For other appointments in the school, the Headteacher will usually appoint a panel from within the current staff;
- Governors may be invited to join the interview panel if this is deemed to be desirable by the Headteacher.

5. Identification of Recruiters

Subject to the availability of training, the school will maintain a position in which at least one recruiter has successfully received accredited training in safe recruitment procedures.

6. Inviting Applicants

6.1 Advertisements for posts, whether internal, in newspapers, journals or on-line, will include the statement:

“The Highfield School is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.”

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

- Letter to applicants;
- person specification;
- job description;

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- the school's child protection policy and Safeguarding Children sheet;
- an application form;
- school details.

6.3 All prospective applicants must complete, in full, an application form. A CV without a completed application form will not be acceptable.

7. Short listing and References

7.1 Short-listing of candidates will be against the person specification for the post

7.2 Where possible, references will be taken up before the selection stage, so that any discrepancies can be probed during the selection stage.

7.3 References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted.

7.4 Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

7.5 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 of such exchanges.

7.6 Where possible, all references are required to be specific to the post applied for and one must be from the last known employer.

7.7 Where the last known employment was a casual appointment, an additional reference should be sought, wherever possible, from the last known permanent appointment.

– Hotmail, Yahoo etc email addresses are not acceptable

7.8 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.

7.9 School employees are entitled to see and receive, if requested, copies of their employment references.

8. Secretary of State Prohibition Orders (teaching roles)

8.1 In all cases where an applicant is to undertake a teaching role of any kind a Prohibition Order check will be made using the Employer Access Online Service. It is anticipated that this will be performed at the shortlisting stage but will in any case be made before any offer of employment is made.

8.2 Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting.

8.3 Prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). Pending such consideration, the Secretary of State may issue an interim prohibition order if it is considered to be in the public interest to do so.

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9. The Selection Process

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. Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face interview (which may be via visual electronic link).

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 any information that is likely to appear on a DBS check;
- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

10. Employment Checks

10.1 All successful applicants are required:

- to provide proof of identity
- to complete a DBS application using HertsGuard and receive satisfactory clearance
- have a satisfactory certificate of good conduct relating to time spent living outside of the UK, where applicable
- to pass a prohibition from teaching check if relevant
- to provide actual certificates of professional qualifications, as deemed appropriate by the school
- to complete a confidential health questionnaire and be deemed mentally and physically fit to perform the role
- to provide proof of their right to live and work in the United Kingdom
- to complete a childcare disqualification declaration

10.2 Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status.

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the school will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification required for the position and claimed in their application form.

10.3 Fitness to undertake the role

A confidential pre-employment health questionnaire must be completed to verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.

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10.4 Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK

When appointing a UK citizen who has lived overseas or a non UK citizen, a Certificate of Good Conduct must be obtained (where possible) from the embassy of the country the applicant has specified they have spent a significant period of time in. This must happen where the applicant has lived or worked (including studying) in a foreign country for a period of 6 months within the last 5 years.

There are a number of exemptions to this:

- If the applicant is currently employed by the school and has already provided the certificate, which can be used for future appointments providing that there is no break in service.
- Applicants that have spent time overseas as part of Her Majesty Service i.e. Army, Navy, Airforce.
- Applicants that are seeking asylum will be unable to provide such documentation, as contacting the embassy may jeopardise their safety.

If an applicant is unable to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct, evidence must be presented to show that an attempt to obtain a copy has been made.

Any costs incurred for obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct must be met by the individual and will not be reimbursed.

If an applicant is unable to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct then a Risk Assessment Form must be completed and signed off. All other pre-employment checks must be completed. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 states “in addition, schools and colleges must make any further checks they think appropriate so that should any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These further checks should include a check for information about any teacher sanction or restriction that an EEA professional regulating authority has imposed, using the NCTL Teacher Services’ system”. Alternative checks could include references obtained from all employers abroad in the last five years that clarify that there are no disciplinary records in regard of safeguarding and that the previous employer has no concern regarding the potential employee working with children in a safeguarding environment (see paragraph 7.8). If the outcomes of these references are satisfactory then a risk assessment can be considered to progress the employment process and meet statutory guidance.

10.5 Childcare Disqualification Declaration

Where relevant, all applicants must complete a self-declaration form provided by the school in relation to the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2009. This is to cover circumstances where the individual has a conviction that may result in them being barred from working with children or someone living at the same residential address is barred from working with children. Where a positive declaration is made a waiver must be applied for from Ofsted, and be satisfactorily granted, before the applicant may commence work.

This applies to:

- Early Years Provision - staff who provide any care for a child up to and including reception age. This includes education in nursery and reception classes and/or any supervised activity (such as breakfast clubs, lunchtime supervision and after school care provided by the school) both during and outside of school hours for children in the early years age range; and
- Later years provision (for children under 8) - staff who are employed to work in childcare provided by the school outside of school hours for children who are above

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reception age but who have not attained the age of 8. This does not include education or supervised activity for children above reception age during school hours (including extended school hours for co-curricular learning activities, such as the school's choir or sports teams) but it does include before school settings, such as breakfast clubs, and after school provision.

11. Offer of appointment

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks, prohibition checks, childcare disqualification checks and waivers, copies of qualification and proof of identity.

12. Single Central Record

The school must keep a single central record, referred to in the regulations as the register. The single central record must cover all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school. Confirmation that these checks have been carried out along with the date the check was undertaken/obtained must be logged on this record for all employees of the school.

13. Induction

13.1 The school recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The school will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff.

10.2 All staff who are new to the school will receive induction training that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices, including Child Protection, PREVENT, FGM awareness, and Online safety.

10.3 Regular informal meetings will be held during the first 3 months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s).