Safer Recruitment Policy

[Heritage MAT]

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1. 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.

1.1 Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our Trust'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.

1.2 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.

1.3 Shortlisting

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

1.4 Seeking references and checking employment history

- We will obtain references on all short-listed candidates. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.
- Where the employment record is incomplete or there are concerns about the
- references, further checks may be carried out. The Principal will inform the candidate
- that contact will be made with other employers (or the same employer for more detail).

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

1.5 Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out for all recruitment. 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.

2. 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;
- Obtain an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including checking the Children's Barred List through the DfE (Teaching Regulation Agency) for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this on file per the regulations. Please see separate policy on the Disclosure and Barring Service;

- Check the Children's 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 work directly with students, by that teaching or support staff;

- Undertake an online search on publicly available information about candidates who are offered a post;

- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK within the last 5 years. Where available, these will include:

For all staff, including teaching positions - criminal records checks for overseas applicants

  - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional
  - regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked;

- 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.
- We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

- Where the employment record is incomplete or there are concerns about the
- references, further checks may be carried out. The Principal will inform the candidate that contact will be made with other employers (or the same employer for more detail).

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in the school, for teaching, training, instructing, caring
- for or supervising children; or

- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in the school 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.

3. Existing staff

- All staff complete an annual declaration for disclosure of criminal offences.

- If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with
- children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member
- of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated
- activity to one that is.

- 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 (please see definition at the end of this document) ; or

    - The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or

    - 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

4. 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.

5. Contractors

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 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 used directly by the school.

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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Governors/Trustees/Members

All governors, trustees, and members 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.

All members / trustees / governors will also have a section 128 check.

The Chair of Trustees will have their DBS check countersigned by the Secretary of State.

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

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 12of the Education and Skills Act 2008). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
- Identity;
- Right to work in the UK;
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Interview process

All interviews will be conducted using safer recruitment principles. This will include a question on safeguarding in every externally advertised post.

Appointment will be subject to all of the above criteria being satisfactorily met.

Glossary of Terms

Relevant conduct in relation to children
A child is a person under 18 years of age.

Relevant conduct is:

- endangers a child or is likely to endanger a child;
- if repeated against or in relation to a child would endanger the child or be likely to endanger the child;
- involves sexual material relating to children (including possession of such material);
- involves sexually explicit images depicting violence against human beings (including possession of such images);

- is of a sexual nature involving a child.

A person's conduct endangers a child if they:

- harm a child;
- cause a child to be harmed;
- put a child at risk of harm;
- attempt to harm a child;
- incite another to harm a child.