



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

VERSION 2

MAY 2024

Safer Recruitment Policy

Kingfisher Schools Trust has a statutory duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout the schools in Kingfisher Schools Trust and to support the creation of a safer culture by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people across the Trust.

Purpose

In line with the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Trust's policy reflects four stages of staff recruitment

1. **Deter:** The deterring of unsuitable candidates by rigorously promoting the Trust's safeguarding policy and its processes in all stages of recruitment
2. **Reject:** By receiving adequate information at an early stage to be able to reject any unsuitable candidates and prepare a short list of only those applicants who are deemed safe to recruit
3. **Prevent:** Through interview, which may include practical tests as well as a formal interview, learn about the candidate to prevent unsuitable candidates being employed. Any gaps in the information provided within the application should be rigorously explored at interview
4. **Observe and Supervise:** Once a new member of staff or a volunteer has started work, induction periods will be used to observe their behaviours and attitudes and, once the induction period is complete, a system of ongoing supervision and appraisal will be implemented. A Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy, understood by all staff and volunteers, will be in place. Safeguarding training will be provided and there will be a general ethos where safeguarding is prioritised.

Responsibilities

Kingfisher Schools Trust will:

- monitor each school's compliance with this policy and associated recruitment procedures
- ensure that sufficient individuals involved in recruitment are fully trained in Safer Recruitment processes
- ensure that each school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
- promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process
- ensure all relevant recruitment vetting checks, including use of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), have been undertaken and are recorded, where there is a requirement to do so.

Pre-recruitment

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Safer Recruitment Policy will be accessible to all prospective applicants, current employees and stakeholders of Kingfisher Schools Trust.

As outlined in the Scheme of Delegation, all roles will be advertised and awarded to the best candidate.

Kingfisher Schools Trust will ensure fairness and transparency throughout the recruitment process, in line with the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Advertisement and applications

Kingfisher Schools Trust advertises all vacancies on My New Term, along with any other advertising platforms (as appropriate). A job description and person specification will be included on every advert. All adverts will confirm our commitment to Safer recruitment. Closing dates for vacancies may be altered if a sufficient number of applications are received.

Applicants will be required to complete the My New Term application form in full. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

The application process will ask candidates for:

- Information to allow full identification, including their eligibility to work in the UK
- Full employment history (without gaps or anomalies)
- Relevant qualifications obtained with dates and awarding bodies
- Details of their suitability for the post
- Confirmation of their suitability to work with vulnerable groups, including children
- Contact details of at least two referees and the applicant's consent / non-consent for referees to be contacted prior to interview
- Self-declaration of any convictions and/or cautions

Shortlisting

Application forms will be reviewed by at least two members of staff, referring to the job description and person specification and ensuring all required information has been completed.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated with confidentiality.

Kingfisher Schools Trust will carry out online searches as part of our due diligence checks, to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online, which may then need to be explored further at the interview stage.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview (where consent is given on the application). 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 a reference is obtained from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. If this is an educational establishment, we will ask for a reference to be completed by the headteacher/principal.
- › 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. The headteacher will have responsibility for deciding the suitability of received references.

Interviews

- All candidates will be asked to provide proof of identity at the interview stage.
- For all appointments, even if there is only one applicant, formal interviews will be carried out.
- Interview panels should be as diverse as possible. There will normally be three members on the panel, one of whom must have accredited 'Safer Recruitment in Education' Training, particularly if the employment involves a 'regulated activity'**.
- Records of the interview notes for unsuccessful candidates should be kept securely for a period of 6 months.
- Interviewers should fully explore any safeguarding concerns or gaps in employment history
- Interviews may include carefully designed and supervised activities in line with the job description to determine a candidate's suitability for the post
- A record of all information considered and decisions made will be kept in line with our data retention policy.

Feedback

Feedback should be offered to all candidates, both successful and unsuccessful.

Pre-employment

Copies of pre-employment checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files.

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken for all appointments:

- Employment References
- Proof of Identity
- Enhanced DBS and Barred List checks. DBS checks will be initiated before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. The Safer Recruitment Employment Risk Assessment form will be completed by the Headteacher if a person will be due to start work before the DBS certificate is available.
- A separate barred list check will be carried out if a person will be due to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- A declaration that there has been no disqualification under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006, where appropriate to the role
- Teacher Prohibition Order, where applicable
- Section 128 Checks, where applicable
- Right to work in the UK
- Fitness for work
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, any further checks which the Trust considers necessary
- Professional qualifications, as appropriate.

Kingfisher Schools Trust are aware that candidates may refer to the DBS Sensitive Applications route where appropriate.

The successful candidate will receive a verbal offer of employment, prior to receiving a written offer, which will always be conditional and subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks (as above).

Post appointment

Confirmation of the pre-employment checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

The employee will receive a contract which will contain full terms and conditions of the employment.

New employees will undertake appropriate training and induction relevant to the role.

Single Central Record

In line with statutory regulations, schools within Kingfisher Schools Trust will keep an up-to-date Single Central Record (SCR) which will be in an agreed format and reviewed regularly. Schools within the Trust will allow the Trust and any other eligible stakeholders to access the Single Central Record, whilst ensuring that the information is held securely.

The following stakeholders will be included on each school's SCR;

- Employees who are contracted to work at the school
- Supply staff
- Teacher trainees (on salaried routes)
- School Improvement Board members and School Committee members
- Volunteers
- Agency, self-employed, regular contractors and third-party staff

Central team employees, Trustees and any trust-appointed stakeholders (who are engaged in regulated activity), will be included on the Trust SCR.

The Single Central Record will record the following information:

- Proof of identity
- Enhanced DBS and Barred List
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, where appropriate to the role
- Teacher Prohibition checks, where applicable
- Section 128 checks, where applicable
- Right to work in the UK
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, any further checks which the Trust considers necessary
- Professional qualifications, as appropriate

The Trust will send out an annual letter of assurance to schools in relation to Trustees and Trust central team staff.

Volunteers:

Recruitment to voluntary positions within the Trust will be in line with this policy. During the process, the Trust will take into consideration:

- the nature of work with children and young people
- requirement for pre-employment checks

Visitors

Schools will keep a visitor-log, however these do not need to be noted on the Single Central Record if they are infrequent. Visitors should sign into the school and show photographic ID, proving who they are. A DBS is not required providing the visitor is supervised at all times by a member of school staff.

Agency Staff

When the Trust uses agency staff, a written letter of assurance must be obtained from the agency confirming that they have carried out all the appropriate pre-employment checks, and viewed the relevant certificates, with this information being recorded on the Single Central Record.

Each school must check that a member of agency staff presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

Schools should ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information).

For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) will be required. In considering whether the contact is regular, it is irrelevant whether the contractor works on a single site or across several sites.

Under no circumstances should a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. Headteachers are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

If an individual working at a school is self-employed, the school should consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

Schools should always check the identity of contractors on arrival at the school.

****'Regulated activity' when working with children is defined as:*

- a. Unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on wellbeing, or drive a vehicle only for children*
- b. Work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: e.g. schools, colleges, children's homes, childcare premises.*

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