

Safer Recruitment Policy

RIDGEWAY EDUCATION TRUST

Approved by the CEO: 28 September 2023

Review date: September 2024

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Ridgeway Education Trust follows the procedures established by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. For further information, please refer to the Safer Recruitment Toolkit, available here: <http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/node/358> Ridgeway Education Trust is committed to recruiting suitable people to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the Trust.

The following staff and governors are currently Safer Recruitment trained:

DGS

Paul Smith (Chair of Governors)
Jill Judson (Vice Chair of Governors/RET Trustee)
Georgina Littler (Headteacher)
Frances Adley (PA to the Headteacher)
Carole O'Connor (Head of Mathematics)
Martha Hawes (Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead)
Sarah Roberts (Deputy Headteacher)
Adam Tamplin (Assistant Headteacher)

Didcot Sixth Form

James Cross (Director of Didcot Sixth Form)

SBS

Conor Byrne (Chair of Governors)
Mitt Nathwani (Governor)
William Manning (Headteacher)
Helen Cliff (PA to the Headteacher)
Caroline Fitzgerald (Data and Exams Manager)
Fiona Foster (SENDCo)
Graeme Irwin (Deputy Headteacher)
Maz Tottman (Assistant Headteacher)
Matt Wood (Head of Year 7 & i/c Transition)

SCCEPS

Rita Atkinson (Chair of Governors/RET Trustee)
Rachel Hornsey (Headteacher)
Lisa Knight (Assistant Headteacher)

Central Trust

Ruth Elliot (Chair of Trust Board)
Stephen White (Vice Chair of Trust Board)
Rachael Warwick (CEO)
Catherine Steele (COO)
Jane Emmott (RET Data Lead)

- Every selection panel will include at least one person who has completed safer recruitment training.
- Every job advertisement and applicant information pack will include the skills, abilities, experience, attitude, behaviours and safeguarding responsibilities (as per the job description and person specification) required for the post and a safeguarding statement including reference to the requirement for an enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check.
- The job advert will detail, where applicable, whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order

1975, 2013 and 2020, which means that when applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found in the [DBS filtering guide](#).

- Applicants will be required to complete an application form and an equality monitoring form, and all appointments will be subject to satisfactory professional references and an enhanced DBS check.
- Every interview will be conducted by a minimum of 2 members of staff and will include questions relating to safeguarding, regardless of whether the post involves significant contact with children.
- Governing bodies must act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence, including criminal record checks (DBS), barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with interview information and references.
- The details of all staff, including temporary staff and interns, will be recorded on the school's single central record.
- The induction for all new staff will include information about appropriate staff conduct, safeguarding, child protection and whistleblowing procedures from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school in question.

1. RECRUITMENT & SELECTION CHECKLIST

This document has been designed with reference to the requirements of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (September 2023)

PRE-INTERVIEW	Initials	Date
<p>Planning Timetable decided: person specification and job description and other documents to be provided to applicants reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc.</p>		
<p>Vacancy advertised Advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy, i.e. statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and need for successful applicant to be enhanced DBS checked, while at the same time ensuring that gender neutral language is used and applications are promoted from a diverse body of potential applicants.</p>		
<p>Applications on receipt Scrutinised; any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment to be noted to explore if candidate should be considered for short listing.</p>		
<p>Shortlisting and professional references</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise (those who shortlist will carry out the interview for a consistent approach). Implement use blind shortlisting where practicable to do so. Consider any 		

<p>inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them. Explore all potential concerns. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children and physically sign a hard copy of the declaration on their arrival at interview.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteacher's PA/School Business Manager to carry 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. • References to be sought directly from referee on shortlisted candidates; ask recommended specific questions; include statement about liability for accuracy. A reference must always be obtained from the candidate's current (or most recent) employer and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed. Where a candidate has not worked previously, a reference may be taken from their most recent employment establishment. A risk assessment may be implemented in certain cases. 		
<p>Invitation to interview Includes all relevant information and instructions – remember to ask all interviewees to bring evidence of their qualifications, documents for DBS and identity checks</p>		
<p>INTERVIEW</p>		
<p>Interview arrangements At least 2 interviewers: panel members have authority to appoint: have met and agreed issues and questions/assessment criteria/standards</p>		
<p>Interview Explore applicants' suitability for work with children as well as for the post</p>		
<p>Interview The interview panel will agree structured questions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children • exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role • probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this. 		

Interviews should be used to explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children. Interviewers should take brief, factual notes during the interview, being mindful that candidates have the right to request sight of notes taken during the interview. All candidates (teaching and support staff) will be asked whether an Enhanced DBS check will raise any issues of which the school should be aware. The interviewer will explain the context of why this question is being asked. If 'yes', further consideration on a case-by-case basis should be carried out.		
Identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents: copies of documents taken and placed on file; where appropriate applicant completes application for DBS Disclosure (check whether applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service)		
PRE-APPOINTMENT CHECKS		
Conditional offer of appointment Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of mandatory safeguarding pre-employment checks ¹ , as applicable, and for non-teaching posts includes a probationary period (usually 6 months)		
References – checking Liaise directly with referees and ensure that a professional reference is obtained from the candidate's current/most recent employer. We will not accept open references. Interview panel to view references after seeing all candidates and making a provisional decision, in order to remove (un)conscious bias from the decision. Interview panel will compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate, resolving any concerns before the appointment is confirmed		
Identity (if original ID documentation could not be checked on the day of interview)		
Qualifications (if not verified on the day of interview)		
Overseas Check/Right to work in UK (if required) Overseas police check for any individual who, within the last five years, has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom, whether they are a British citizen or not. Please see additional information on page 8		
DBS – apply for an enhanced check		
Prohibition order check, if this is a teaching post. If it is a management position, a prohibition from management		

¹ See paragraphs 230-248 and footnotes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)

(section 128) check will be carried out. Ensure the date and outcome are recorded on the SCR		
Safeguarding – Risk Assessment Headteacher’s PA/School Business Manager to notify the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) that an appointment is to be made. If the DBS has not been received by the time the new employee starts work, the DSL will ensure an appropriate risk assessment is in place until the DBS has come through. If the DBS has not arrived within two weeks of the employee starting work, the Headteacher’s PA/School Business Manager will chase a completion date for the DBS		
DBS Barred list – to check that the person is not prohibited from taking up the post		
Health – Candidate to be requested to complete a health questionnaire prior to employment commencing, which includes assessment of physical and mental fitness for the role. If the health questionnaire has not been received by the time the candidate starts work, HR will contact the candidate to request completion as soon as possible		
QTS – check the teacher has obtained QTS (unless otherwise agreed with the Headteacher).		
Statutory induction year(s) completed – check to be run on DfE website.		

2) SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD OF RECRUITMENT/VETTING CHECKS

Checklist

The Single Central Record (SCR) for each school and for the Trust must include (as a minimum) the following in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The SCR must indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained.

1. an identity check. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website
2. a barred list check
3. an enhanced DBS check/certificate
4. a prohibition from teaching check
5. further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK (see section 4)
6. a check of professional qualifications, where required
7. a check to establish the person’s right to work in the United Kingdom
8. DfE/QTS checks including section 128 for management positions (senior leadership and Governing Board)

For supply staff we require written confirmation from the supply agency that satisfactory checks have been completed including the DBS number. ID will be checked on arrival at school.

For contractors/employee of the contractor, we require an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity and an enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity. We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival.

For volunteers, we will obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.

All Members, Trustees and Governors will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity or without barred list information if not working in regulated activity. The Chair of Trustees will have their DBS check countersigned by the Secretary of State. In addition, they will have a section 128 check, an identity check, a right to work in the UK check and any other checks necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

Whilst there is no statutory duty to include on the SCR details of any other checks, the schools and Trust are free to record any other information they deem relevant. For example, checks for childcare disqualification, and safeguarding and safer recruitment training dates. The Trust and schools' SCRs are kept electronically with restricted access.

Copies of DBS certificates are not kept by the schools or Trust, but the DBS number, outcome and date of issue are kept on SIMS/SCR. A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications are kept on the personnel file.

3) PRO-FORMA LETTER TO REFEREES

Date

Dear

Post Title:

..... has been shortlisted for the above post at this school and has given your name as referee.

I enclose a copy of the information supplied to candidates together with a referee questionnaire. I should be grateful if you would complete and return the attached referee questionnaire regarding’s suitability for this post, bearing in mind the attached information. In accordance with guidance on safeguarding children, please also comment on’s suitability to work with children. Interviews are being held on so a response by that date would be appreciated. Signed references should be emailed in confidence to the (Headteacher’s PA/School Business Partner).

May I take this opportunity to remind you that you have the responsibility to ensure the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission and that relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant. Please note that employees have the right to see their personal files. Your reference may therefore, be seen by the applicant, if appointed.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you in advance for your assistance. If you have any queries, please contact, on

Yours sincerely

4) INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE LIVED OR WORKED OUTSIDE THE UK

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges. This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK.

In addition, any further appropriate checks should be made so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include, where available:

- criminal records checks for overseas applicants (guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>)
- obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked. Advice about which regulatory or professional body applicants should contact is available from the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom, UK NARIC (link available here: <https://www.naric.org.uk/>)

Where available, such evidence can be considered together with information obtained through other pre-appointment checks to help assess their suitability. Where this information is not available, alternative methods should be sought of checking suitability and/or a risk assessment should be completed that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment. Although sanctions and restrictions imposed by another regulating authority do not prevent a person from taking up teaching positions in England, the circumstances that led to the restriction or sanction being imposed should be considered when deliberating on a candidate’s suitability for employment. Further information can be

found in DfE Guidance: Recruit teachers from overseas
(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/recruit-teachers-from-overseas>)

5) RIGHT TO WORK

Employers must check that all job applicants have a lawful immigration in the UK (if they are not British Citizens) before entering into employment, to avoid being liable for a civil penalty.

There are two types of right to work checks: an online check and a manual check. The type of check employers are required to conduct will depend on the status of the job applicant.

An online right to work check is required for all BRC, BRP and FWP holders, as well as individuals who only hold digital proof of their immigration status in the UK.

To carry out an online right to work check, employers will need the applicant's date of birth and their share code, which they will have obtained online. For further information for employers on how to use the online services, guidance is available on GOV.UK:

[Employer right to work checks supporting guidance](#)

To complete the online right to work check, employers will enter the job applicant's details by visiting the 'checker' side of the service on GOV.UK:

[View a job applicant's right to work details](#)

Appendix 1

Shortlisted candidate self-declaration

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 shortlisted candidates are asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records. Further information can be found at: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Please indicate whether you:

	Yes	No
Have you been cautioned or convicted of any offences against a child?		
Have been cautioned or convicted of any criminal offences?		
Have been barred from working with children by the Disclosure Barring Service?		
Are prohibited from teaching?		
Are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school?		
Have committed an offence overseas which would constitute an offence had it been done in the UK?		
Have had any involvement with the children's local authority social care in respect of a child/children under your care?		
Have been refused registration or had registration cancelled in relation to childcare or a children's home or have you been disqualified from private fostering?		

If applicable:

- If you have lived outside the UK in the past 5 years, please give details below.
- Please provide information below about any criminal offences committed overseas at any time in the past which would constitute an offence had it been done in the UK.

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I confirm and understand that I will immediately notify the school should any of the above apply to me during the course of my employment at the Trust/school

Name (please print)	
Signature	
Date	

APPENDIX 2

FLOWCHART OF DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS AND BARRED LIST CHECKS

