



Recruitment Policy

Document Control

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Revisions

Version	Para No.	Description of Change	Approved On
2		Updated with the latest KCSIE where applicable	
3	9	Updated with the latest KCSIE – addition of social media checks to advertising	
3	14	Addition of social media checks to pre-employment checks	
3	All	Rebranded for Meridian Trust	
		Replace Policy and Scrutiny Committee with Finance & Resource Committee	

Meridian Trust

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy has been adopted by Meridian Trust to provide a policy framework for the recruitment and selection of staff to all posts within the approved staffing structure of each school. All schools within the Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment.
- 1.2 The Trust fully understand their responsibilities in ensuring that recruitment procedures are free from unlawful discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Trust also fully appreciate the importance of fair, open and effective procedures to enable the school to recruit people with the right skills, aptitudes, and attitudes.
- 1.3 The Trust will ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Disqualification under the Childcare Act (DUCA) and related updates, the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- 1.4 The Trust fully understand their responsibilities in managing the personal data of job applicants in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- 1.5 All staff, Academy Councillors and volunteers are expected to share a commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable groups and, as part of that commitment, follow 'Safer Recruitment' guidance in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education – statutory guidance for schools and colleges.
- 1.6 As part of our commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable groups, Enhanced DBS checks and/or Barred List checks on all posts must be carried out where they are required.
- 1.7 All staff and Academy Councillors involved in recruitment and selection decisions are required to work in ways that are always entirely consistent with this policy.
- 1.8 The school will ensure that Safer Recruitment training is provided for all staff and Academy Councillors involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and that it is appropriate to their role.
- 1.9 It is a statutory requirement for maintained schools that all selection panels must include at least one member who has successfully completed safer recruitment training. This forms part of the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.

2.0 Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 This Policy applies to all employees of Meridian Trust.
- 2.2 This policy also applies to volunteer roles recruited to Meridian Trust such as Trustees, Academy Councillors, parent helper etc.
- 2.3 Elements of this policy will also apply to staff hired to work within Meridian Trust from agencies such as cover staff and consultants.
- 2.4 The Academy Heads, Executive Principals, Directors, Chief Operating Officer (COO) and/or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) are responsible for the appointment of staff covered by this Procedure
- 2.5 The aims of this policy are:
 - to secure high quality provision to support students' learning by attracting and retaining staff of the highest quality;
 - to secure effective and positive leadership at all levels;
 - to enable the Trust to select staff based on their ability to undertake the role and to make a distinctive contribution to the life of the Trust, and their potential for further development;
 - to remain competitive with local schools and academies, particularly when seeking to appoint to positions for which high quality candidates are scarce;
 - to promote a positive image of the Trust;
 - to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students always.

3.0 Adoption Arrangements and Date

- 3.1 This policy was adopted by Meridian Trust in September 2019 and updated 2022.
- 3.2 This policy will be reviewed by the Finance & Resource Committee every year or earlier if there is a need.

4.0 Equal Opportunities Statement

- 4.1 This Trust is committed to ensuring that each stage of the recruitment and selection process is accessible to all. We will review the recruitment policy and procedure regularly to ensure that it takes account of the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate against applicants on the grounds of race, religion or belief, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sex, or sexual orientation.

5.0 Prevent

- 5.1 The Trust has a duty under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (“the CTSA 2015”) to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.
- 5.2 In carrying out its obligations under ‘Prevent’ the Trust will assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology within the context of the recruitment process.

6.0 The Vacancy

- 6.1 When a member of staff leaves the Trust, the Academy Head and/or Executive Principal should assess whether their role needs to be replaced by reviewing how the role meets the Trust’s present and future needs.
- 6.2 Where an increase in student numbers or change in curricular provision generates the needs for additional staff, it is the Academy Head’s responsibility to assess the level and nature of that need and whether that can be resourced within the annual budget.
- 6.3 The Academy Head should consider whether a vacancy could be efficiently filled through an alternative arrangement including giving due consideration to how best to protect the continuity of students’ learning.
- 6.4 Consideration should also be given to the working hours and contractual arrangements for each post to ensure that posts are open to applicants wishing to work on a part-time or job share basis where possible and practical.

7.0 Job Description

- 7.1 The job description is a statement of purpose and scope and defines both the job role and expectations. It will:
- Summarise the job purpose/impact.
 - Set out key responsibilities and accountabilities.
 - Set out reporting and line management arrangements.
- 7.2 An up-to-date job description and person specification will be available for each vacancy advertised.
- 7.3 Managers will refer to the Professional Standards for Teachers and to the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document (which sets out the expected attributes of Main Scale, Post Threshold, Advanced Skills and Excellent Teachers) when creating job descriptions for teaching posts.
- 7.4 All job descriptions should clearly state the post holder’s responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

7.5 All new posts for support staff will be job evaluated by the Core Trust HR team before advertising. Any significant changes to job roles for existing vacant posts will also be evaluated before advertising.

8.0 Person Specification

8.1 The person specification is a description of the qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills, competencies, and other attributes of the ideal person to fill the role.

8.2 It will classify each attribute as either 'Essential' to do the job or as a 'Desirable' attribute for the post holder to have and indicate how each attribute will be assessed e.g. application form, interview, reference, test etc.

8.3 All attributes should be measurable and quantifiable and should take care not to unlawfully discriminate against groups of people, either directly or indirectly.

9.0 Advertising

9.1 Vacant posts will be advertised in a fair, open and honest manner and will be advertised by means of a formal notice to all staff as a minimum. This may at times, due to operational reasons be restricted to a certain group of staff (specialist for example). In times of largescale redundancies, vacant posts maybe advertised on a limited basis to those at risk of redundancy in the first instance.

9.2 In exceptional circumstances a decision may be made to not advertise a vacant role and instead to appoint directly. This may be considered in cases where urgent cover is required, where delayed appointment may have a detrimental impact on the business or, where there is a naturally deputising role in the Trust.

9.3 The Academy Head should consider whether to advertise the post both internally and externally and by what method (recruitment platforms, school newsletter, EPM website, social media etc.). The main considerations should be the comparative probabilities of securing a candidate of the highest quality and comparative costs.

9.4 A copy of the advertisement should be circulated within Core/Academy/School concurrently with the appearance of any external advertisement. In addition, any individual may be notified personally of the existence of the vacancy and advertisement.

9.5 Where recruitment for a post is judged to require specialist recruitment techniques, an external agency or consultant may be engaged.

9.6 To demonstrate to potential job applicants our commitment to Safeguarding and the welfare of children, the following statement should be included on any relevant advertisements and documentation sent out to applicants:

'The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All appointments will

be subject to pre-employment checks, including an enhanced check with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), as well as social media checks.'

- 9.7 Please refer to the separate guidance 'Recruiting for a Headteacher' for all Head of School, Academy Head and/or Executive Principal posts.
- 9.8 In line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), all adverts should include a link to our privacy notices for candidates which can be found on our [website](#).

10.0 Applications

- 10.1 An information pack should be prepared prior to the appearance of an advertisement. Where a recruitment platform is being used this may be displayed on there or available for download. In all other cases the information should be available to potential candidates in an alternative format.
- 10.2 The information pack provides a valuable opportunity to show a very favourable image of the Trust to many more people interested in the work of the Trust that it will be possible to invite for interview, so it should be of high quality and include:
- background information describing Core/Academy/School;
 - contextual information relating to the role and its position within the staffing structure;
 - a copy of the Trust's standard application form which includes a brief statement on equal opportunities;
 - job specification;
 - person specification;
 - equal opportunities monitoring form.
- 10.3 All applicants must complete the relevant application form in full to enable the panel to shortlist in a fair and objective manner. The application form will include an explanation that all posts in school are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs (including those regarded as 'spent') must be declared unless they are considered a protected offence. N.B. The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide those certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be considered. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.
- 10.2 Failure to declare relevant information may disqualify the candidate from the appointment and, if appointed, may render the individual liable to immediate dismissal without notice
- 10.3 The application form should also state that providing false information may be an offence and could result in de-selection. All applicants are required to sign and date the declaration.

- 10.4 The school may reasonably decide to reject an application where incomplete and/or ambiguous information is provided. Applications by CV or letter alone must be followed up with a completed application form before consideration for interview.

11.0 Shortlisting

- 11.1 The Academy Head/Executive Principal or nominated member of the leadership team should decide the size and composition of the shortlisting panel. It is recommended that at least 2 people are involved in the shortlisting process, one of whom must have successfully completed the Safer Recruitment training and assessment in accordance with DfE guidance. The composition of the panel should reflect the level of role being advertised for.
- 11.2 All shortlisting decisions will be made with clear reference to the skills and qualities set out in the person specification using an agreed method of scoring against the essential and desirable criteria. Each candidate will be considered on their own merit and shortlisting panels are reminded that positive discrimination (i.e. giving preferential treatment to applicants from under-represented or disadvantaged groups regardless of their ability to do the job) is unlawful.
- 11.3 The equal opportunities monitoring form will be separated from the main application form to reduce any likelihood of conscious or unconscious bias.
- 11.4 The notes of the shortlisting panel and details of the scoring will be retained for six months from the appointment date in line with the school's document retention schedule.

12.0 References

- 12.1 In order to comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education, it is the policy of the Trust that all references will be taken up before interview. This will be done either by letter seeking to verify the skills, experience, competencies, and employment history of the applicant, or by a standard reference form. Where this has not been possible any offer of appointment must be on a conditional basis.
- 12.2 On receipt, references will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. Any discrepancies or anomalies should be noted and addressed during the applicant's interview.
- 12.3 Specific questions should be included to explore the applicant's suitability to work with children and, if the referee has any concerns, they should be asked to give their reasons.
- 12.4 In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, reference requests sent prior to an offer of employment will not request details of attendance or absence; however, further information may be requested following the applicant's acceptance of an offer of employment.
- 12.5 References will be sought from the current or most recent employer and references will only be obtained directly from the referee: testimonials or open references (those addressed 'To

whom it may concern') will not be considered. Referees will be provided with a copy of the job description and person specification to assist them in their response. Where the current or most recent employer is a school, the reference must be obtained from the Academy Head or Headteacher only. A minimum of 2 references must be obtained.

- 12.6 Where a candidate is not currently working in a school or childcare setting but has done so in the past, one reference should be from their most recent children's workforce employer in line with Safer Recruitment guidelines.
- 12.7 We will seek to confirm whether the candidate has been subject to any formal disciplinary procedures within the last two years and to establish any details, outcomes or 'live' sanctions which are in place.
- 12.8 In cases where there have been disciplinary concerns which involved children or safeguarding that have been substantiated, the referee will be required to confirm details.
- 12.9 In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, cases in which an allegation is proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious should not be included in employer references.

13.0 Interview and Selection

- 13.1 The school is committed to ensuring that all interviewees are assessed according to their ability to meet the criteria of the job description and person specification and to fulfil their obligation regarding keeping children safe.
- 13.2 The arrangements for interviews affect how the Trust is perceived by both successful and unsuccessful candidates. Where candidates will be required to undertake activities, for example teaching a sample lesson or making a presentation, the Selection Panel should have a clear rationale, including how the outcomes relate to the job or person specifications, and the shortlisted candidates should be fully informed of the requirements with enough notice to plan their approach and prepare resources or presentations.
- 13.3 Applicants may have indicated on their application form that they have a disability and, to promote fairness and to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the letter of invitation will encourage applicants to contact the school if they require any adjustments to enable them to attend the interview.
- 13.4 Candidates are required to bring evidence of the Right to Work in the UK and Photo ID. Candidates should also be required to bring evidence of relevant qualifications to interview, where the original documents must be checked, and a signed and dated copy retained. Candidates should be advised that if required documents are not produced on the day of interview, the interview may be cancelled. Documents relating to unsuccessful candidates will be retained with the interview papers and destroyed six months from the date on which the position was offered and accepted.

- 13.5 The interview panel will include at least one member who has undertaken safer recruitment training in accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.
- 13.6 The panel will take notes during the interview to enable a scoring matrix to be completed and, at the end of the interviews; the panel will consider each of the candidates against the criteria for the post before reaching their decision. The notes should be sufficiently detailed to allow comprehensive feedback to each candidate regarding their relative strengths and weaknesses throughout the selection process.
- 13.7 The notes for all interviewees will be retained for a minimum of 6 months from the date on which the position was offered to enable constructive feedback to be given to unsuccessful candidates.
- 13.8 The Selection Panel should where possible also make effective provision for candidates to learn about the Trust and the role in more detail, for example by touring the buildings in normal operation and meeting relevant staff and students.
- 13.9 Once the decision has been made, all candidates should be notified of the outcome as soon as is practicable. It is best practice to contact all candidates via telephone to confirm the outcome of the process. This should be undertaken by the Chair of the selection panel.

14.0 Pre-employment Checks

- 14.1 All offers of employment will be conditional on the successful completion of the pre-employment checks listed below and will include confirmation of salary, start date and any information that the successful applicant needs to provide before commencing employment e.g. DBS application form and pre-employment questionnaire.
- Enhanced DBS check.
 - DBS Barred list check where applicable (i.e. if working in regulated activity).
 - Verification of identity including Date of Birth or Verification of entitlement to work in the UK.
 - Verification of any relevant qualifications.
 - Receipt of 2 satisfactory references.
 - Satisfactory pre-employment health clearance.
 - Prohibition checks for those in teaching work and those with previous teaching experience (including unqualified teachers, HLTA's etc).
 - A section 128 Prohibition from Management check where applicable.
 - Overseas checks as appropriate.
 - Social media checks.
- 14.2 If these are not satisfactory an offer of employment may be withdrawn or where an individual has commenced work, employment may be terminated.

- 14.3 Any written offer of appointment must state that it is conditional, clearly indicating the information on which the offer is dependent
- 14.4 The Academy Head and/or Executive Principal is responsible for deciding the level of pay for the successful candidate in accordance with the Trust's Remuneration and Pay Policy and any guidelines set by the Trust. The decision should reflect the qualifications and experience of the successful candidate.

14a Right to Work

- 14a.1 In order to comply with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 – Prevention of Illegal Working – interview candidates will be asked to bring certain documentation to the interview which shows their eligibility to work in the UK. No offer of employment can be made unless one of the original documents listed on the Home Office Right to Work Checklist is produced.
- 14a.2 The candidate's original documents must be checked, and a signed and dated copy retained. Documents relating to unsuccessful candidates will be retained with the interview papers and destroyed six months from the date on which the position was offered and accepted.
- 14a.3 The Home Office Right to Work Checklist shows the acceptable identity documentation as currently defined by the Home Office and further information on establishing an individual's right to work can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/378926/employers_right_to_work_checklist_november_2014.pdf

14.b DBS and Barred List Checks

- 14b.1 All those directly employed by Schools and Academies in paid positions are required to obtain an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- 14b.2 It is an offence to employ, in a school or academy, an individual who is barred from working with children. A check against the Children's Barred List will be requested as part of the enhanced DBS Disclosure for all employees working in regulated activity i.e. having unsupervised, frequent, or intensive contact with children.
- 14b.3 It is the schools' practice that an individual obtain a satisfactory enhanced DBS check before commencing work. In exceptional circumstances where the applicant is required to commence work before the full disclosure certificate is received, where working in regulated activity, a barred list check must be carried out along with a 'Risk Assessment for DBS' before employment commences and supervision must be in place until a satisfactory DBS check is obtained.
- 14b.4 In cases where we are notified that a DBS check is positive for criminal convictions, cautions, warnings etc, the contents of the certificate will be discussed with our Core HR Team and relevant Trust HR Manager.

14b.5 For further details of what constitutes regulated activity and guidance on DBS checking for unpaid positions, including Governors and volunteers, please refer to the guidance document on TEAMS.

14b.6 More information about posts which require an Enhanced DBS and how to check the Barred List can be found at www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check

14.c Prohibition of Teachers

14c.1 The Trust are required to check that anyone appointed to teach has not been prohibited from doing so by the Secretary of State in accordance with the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012. All those in teaching work, or those with previous teaching experience, will require a prohibition check. All applicable staff will be checked on the Teacher Regulation Agency self-service portal to ensure that they have the required teaching qualifications, have successfully completed statutory induction where it is necessary i.e. for teachers who obtained QTS after May 1999, have not been prohibited from teaching.

14c.2 The Teacher Regulation Agency allows checks on teachers sanctioned (since 18 January 2016) in other EEA member states by an EEA member state regulator of the teaching profession.

14c.3 For all budget holders and Head of Department (whether teaching or support staff) will need a S128 check carried out.

14.d Section 128 Management Checks

14d.1 Section 128 directions are made by the Secretary of State under s. 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, barring individuals from taking part in the management of independent schools, Academies and Free Schools. The school will undertake a section 128 check for those taking up management positions at Independent Schools, Academies and Free Schools to ensure they are not prohibited under the provisions. This includes Academy Councillors, Directors and Trustees.

14.e Overseas Checks

14e.1 In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, overseas checks, as the Trust considers appropriate, will be undertaken where, by reason of the individual's living or having lived overseas. The general guidance is living outside of the UK for a period of 3 months in a 5-year period (unless there are any concerns). Obtaining an enhanced DBS certificate is not enough to establish his or her suitability to work.

14e.2 Since 6 April 2017 for all Tier 2 Visa applicants it is a requirement that they must provide a criminal record certificate from any country where they have lived for 12 months or more (whether continuously or in total) in the last 10 years.

14e.3 Checks on individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK should include recording checks for those European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions which can be checked on the Teacher Regulation Agency Self Service Portal.

14.f Proof of Qualifications

14f.1 Proof of qualifications will be checked to ensure that they match with the candidate's application form. The name of the qualification, awarding institution, date of qualification and candidate name will be checked. A signed and dated copy of the certificate will be retained as evidence of when the check was carried out, and by whom.

14f.2 In the case of teachers, Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) will be checked via the Teacher Regulation Agency's Self-Service Portal at <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk>

14f.3 In the event of any concerns regarding the validity of the qualification, a candidate may be required to obtain confirmation or clarification in writing from the exam board or awarding institution.

14.g Follow-up References

14g.1 Following a written conditional offer of employment to the successful candidate, a supplementary reference request may be sent to their original referees. This is an opportunity to request information about sickness absence and attendance records which cannot be requested prior to an offer of employment to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

14.h Pre-employment Medical History Questionnaire

14h.1 The school will require all successful applicants to complete a medical history questionnaire to verify their medical fitness. There is also a requirement for schools to ensure that staff appointed to teaching posts have the necessary physical and mental fitness to teach under the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

14h.2 Completed medical history questionnaires will then be considered in conjunction with the follow-up references which specifically explore sickness absence and attendance issues and, where appropriate, further advice about fitness to carry out a role will be sought from Occupational Health. To comply with the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments will be made to enable a candidate to take up their role.

15.0 Withdrawal of Offers

15.1 In the event that the pre-employment checks are unsatisfactory, or where the identity, qualifications or right to work in the UK of a successful candidate cannot be verified, the Trust will consider withdrawing the conditional offer of employment. Where the successful candidate has started in post and information becomes available which would have caused the offer to be withdrawn, employment may be terminated. In these circumstances, advice will be sought from the Core Trust HR team.

16.0 Single Central Record

16.1 In accordance with the terms of the School Staffing (England) Regulations (as amended) Core/Academies/Schools will retain details of recruitment and vetting checks undertaken in a Single Central Record (SCR). This data will be collated, used, and stored and deleted in line with GDPR.

16.2 As outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education the central Trust will hold a collation of all school SCRs centrally and will make available the information for Trustees who have been appointed.

17.0 Complaints

17.1 An individual who feels that their treatment during the recruitment and selection process is unfair may raise a formal complaint. This can be done by writing to the Chair of the selection panel, setting out the key points of their complaint. The complaint will be investigated in line with the Trust's Complaints Procedure.

17.2 Existing employees of the school should raise their concerns through the Grievance Procedure.

18.0 Induction

18.1 Induction is essential in ensuring that new employees are properly equipped for work, and they understand their role in the life of the school and feeling part of the school community.

18.2 Core/Academies/Schools will put in place an induction programme for all staff joining the school. This will vary considering previous experience and the nature of the role but will ensure that all staff and volunteers receive guidance on safe working practices and the safeguarding policies of the school.

18.3 All new support staff will complete a six-month probation period. Existing staff moving to a new post will not have to complete a further probation period.

19.0 Data Protection

19.1 Unless stated elsewhere in this policy the data gathered during this management process is processed in line with our data protection policy which can be found on our [website](#).

19.2 Any data gathered during this process will be held in line with our records retention policy which can be found on our [website](#).

19.3 If you have any questions about the way your data has been gathered or will be retained, please contact the Data Protection Officer at DPO@meridiantrust.co.uk.