





To inspire, enrich and nurture so each individual reaches their full potential

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Safer Recruitment Policy

September 2024

To be reviewed annually in the Autumn Term

Next Review: September 2025

History of Document:

Issue No.	Date Issued	Prepared By	Approved By	Comments
Issue 1	September 2022	Victoria Hobson	Trust Board	New policy adopted to meet requirements outlined in KCSIE 2022
Issue 2	September 2023	Victoria Hobson	Maxine Kinghorn <i>Chair of Trustees</i>	Added a sentence setting out that shortlisted candidates will be informed that the school may carry out online checks as part of the due diligence process (section 1.3)
Issue 3	September 2024	Jo Pape	Trust Board	Further clarity in section 1.6 and addition of section 1.7 'remote recruitment'

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1. Recruitment and selection process

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 school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- That safeguarding and online presence 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 and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

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 consider carrying 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.

1.4 Online Search

We will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. The Online Search Record (Appendix One) will be completed as a record. The search will not be part of the shortlisting process itself. The candidate will have a chance to address any issues of concern that come up during the search at interview.

Finding out personal information about a candidate can lead to unconscious bias. Due to this, the person completing the online search will not have any involvement in conducting the candidate's interview or making decisions about their recruitment.

1.5 Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. 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 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 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.

1.6 Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Assess all candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria;
- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this;
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children;
- Contact and provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates - feedback will be verbal and based on evidence of their performance against the person specification for the role;
- Record all information considered and decisions made. Interview notes and assessment material will be held securely for an appropriate amount of time after the interviews, in line with the Records Management Policy, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged.

1.7 Remote recruitment

While remote recruitment is not our primary recruitment method, there may be occasions where remote recruitment is used. In these cases the school will follow all the requirements set out in this policy when recruiting remotely, changing only the in-person nature of the interview, and implementing the necessary additional steps to support this. Online interviews will be conducted in line with the school's ICT Policy and Data Protection Policy at all times.

- Staff members conducting an online interview will ensure they understand how to operate the various relevant functionalities of the online interview platform, e.g. how to share their screen, prior to the interview commencing.
- Staff members conducting an online interview will ensure privacy settings are adjusted appropriately on the provider's site or application.
- The school will be aware of, and have due regard for, the potential risks associated with online communication, e.g. ease of anonymity, and will ensure it takes suitable precautions, e.g. encrypting data where possible.
- The school will ensure that any tasks set for candidates during the interview are compatible with the online nature of the interview, e.g. they do not require the exchange of physical paper resources.
- The school will communicate its expectations to candidates regarding the use of the online platform in good time prior to the interview. These expectations will include, but will not be limited to, the following:
 - The candidate will participate in the interview with both the video camera and microphone features enabled at all required times
 - The candidate will participate in the interview in a suitable setting – a quiet area with a neutral background

1.8 Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). 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 (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken;
- Obtain a separate 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 be a teacher;
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants;
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach.
- 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.

** Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.*

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college 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

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

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; or

- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe 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 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.

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.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

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.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

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;
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

8. Trustees and Members

All 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.

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

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

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008);
- 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. Pupils staying with host families

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

Appendix One – Online Search Record

Candidate's name:	
Role shortlisted for:	
Searcher's name:	
Date and time of online search:	

In the concerns raised section of the below table, only record information that suggests the candidate:

- Is unqualified for the role
- Poses a potential safeguarding risk
- Risks damaging the reputation of our school/trust

Don't include any irrelevant personal information.

Search Parameters		Concerns Raised
Google Search <i>view the first page of results using the following terms</i>	'Candidate Name'	
	'Candidate name' + 'current school/employment'	
	'Candidate name' + 'previous school/employment'	
	'Candidate name' + 'educational institution'	
	'Candidate name' + 'job title'	
Websites <i>insert the candidates name into the search function of the following websites/applications</i>	LinkedIn	
	Twitter (check the top 10 results)	
	Facebook (check the top 10 results)	
	Instagram (check the top 10 results)	
	Their current school's website	