

Recruitment and Appointment Policy

Document Management

Applicable To:	All staff in all Schools and Central Support Services including individuals employed by the Trust, contractors and agency staff. All volunteers including Members, Trustees and Governors.
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Inclusion

Ivy Learning Trust carefully considers all policies with respect to the impact on equality and the possible implications for pupils and staff with protected characteristics. The Equality Information and Objectives document on the Ivy website gives more information on this.

As part of the process of drafting this policy, consideration has been given to any potential impact on those with protected characteristics within Ivy.

Principles underlying this policy

1. The Trust Board is committed to:

- safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people;
- promoting equality of opportunity and community cohesion where the diversity of different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs and expects all staff, volunteers and other workers to share this commitment.

It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

2. The Trust Board recognises that a diverse workforce includes people from different backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection is always conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. Selection will be on the basis of merit and ability, assessed against the qualifications, skills and competencies required to do the job. We will uphold obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, gender re-assignment, disability or health, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic origin), religion or belief.
3. We will implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the role.
4. We will ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. We will monitor the compliance with these measures and require evidence that relevant checks have been undertaken for all workers deployed.

6. We will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, in line with the current DfE requirements. Applicants will be required to sign a DBS consent form giving consent for the DBS certificate to be copied and shared (within strict guidelines) for the purposes of considering suitability for employment and consent for an online status check to be carried out in the event that the applicant subscribes to the DBS update service.
7. The Trust Board is committed to ensuring that people who have convictions/cautions/reprimands on their record are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position, except in the case of school settings covered by the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 where certain convictions, cautions or warnings will mean an individual is disqualified from working in that setting and will prohibit employment at the school (unless a waiver can be obtained from Ofsted). All posts/ voluntary roles that give substantial unsupervised access to children and young people are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs (save for those offences that are subject to filtering by the Police).

Aim of this policy

This policy is designed to assist with recruitment and selection at Ivy Learning Trust. It outlines our recruitment procedure and is in-line with the DfE statutory guidance on safeguarding and the Ivy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Through this policy, Ivy aims to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures to ensure a robust safeguarding culture at our school. The Directors are committed to the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

Recruitment

Scope

The relevant principles described in this procedure will be applied in relation to everyone who works in the Trust including: staff employed on a permanent basis; temporary and casual staff; unpaid volunteers; those engaged via external organisations such as supply agencies; and contractors and self-employed persons.

Roles and responsibilities

1. At least one member of all selection panels will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
2. It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to:
 - ensure there are effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and effective recruitment of all staff and volunteers and for the engagement of other adults in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements;
 - monitor compliance with those policies and procedures;
 - elect Trustees to sit on selection panels for the appointment of members of Executive Team/ Heads/ Heads of School/ Deputy Heads/ other appointments as required;
 - approve the appointment of members of Executive Team/ Heads/ Heads of School
3. It is the responsibility of the Head/Head of School and other managers involved in recruitment to:
 - apply robust and effective recruitment and selection processes in accordance with this procedure;
 - ensure that safer recruitment practices are in operation and that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, volunteers and others engaged to work.
4. Delegated Authority at school level:
 - The Trust Board has delegated authority to the Headteacher/Head of School to make all staff appointments within their school.
 - A member of the Executive Team will be involved in the appointment of Assistant Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers.
 - A member of the school's LGB may be involved in the appointment of the Headteacher/Head of School.
 - The Headteacher/Head of School may delegate the selection process of staff outside of the leadership group to other managers, but remains responsible for the decision to appoint.

Recruitment procedure

Pre-advertisement

1. Identifying a vacancy

Before any action is initiated and as long as the budget allows, careful consideration will be given to the necessity of filling the post, the tasks to be undertaken and the skills, attributes and behaviours required to do the job. Where necessary, amendments to the role and staffing structure will be discussed at the termly review with the executive team and approved by the Board of Trustees.

2. Job Descriptions/ Person Specifications

A job description and person specification will be prepared for all posts. The job description will provide a framework of expectations and will define the purpose, scope and the principal duties and responsibilities of the role. The person specification will enable applicants to assess themselves for the job and provides a benchmark for judging suitability. All Job Descriptions and Person Specifications will clearly set out the extent of the relationships/contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children for each post. If a post is public facing and the successful applicant will be required to speak fluent English, this will be set out in the job description and person specification. The job description and person specification will be used throughout the recruitment process to develop the shortlisting and selection criteria. The salary for the job will be evaluated at this point and the actual salary range will be advertised.

3. Setting timescales

The length of the recruitment process will vary depending on the type of vacancy, the frequency of the desired publication, whether it is necessary to advertise both internally and externally and the length of the required notice periods.

4. Candidate pack

The candidate pack will be uploaded to My New Term and will consist, as a minimum, of:

- Recruitment and Appointment Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Privacy Notice for Job Applicants

5. Visits

Informal discussions and visits prior to application are welcomed by prior arrangement.

Advertising

Internal v wider organisational and external advertising

Internal

Where appropriate, certain posts may be 'advertised' in the first instance via an internal school/department expression of interest. This approach may be used where:

- The role is temporary, fixed term, or acting up
- There is a need to fill the post quickly
- The opportunity may support internal progression or development
- The post is part of a staff restructure

The internal expression of interest process will be open to eligible staff for a minimum of 1 week and will follow a transparent, criteria based selection approach. This process does not replace a formal recruitment process and an interview is usually required to demonstrate their ability to undertake the role.

Wider advertising (internal and external)

All roles that are advertised wider across the Trust and externally will be advertised via Ivy's application tracking system, My New Term. Roles will usually be advertised for a minimum of two weeks for external recruitment and one week for internal recruitment.

Roles will be advertised more widely where:

- The post is permanent or long term
- There is a need to attract a broader field of candidates
- There are significant leadership, safeguarding or curriculum responsibilities
- There is no suitable internal interest or appointment from the expression of interest process (it is not a requirement to do EOI first)

Wider recruitment ensures equal access to opportunities and supports the Trust's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Process

1. The school will consider the most appropriate methods of advertising any vacant posts and the format for the advert. This may include advertising the post on

professional social media sites in addition to other methods e.g. the school website and local/national publications.

2. Head/Head of School/Assistant/Deputy Head posts will be advertised in the manner considered appropriate by the Executive Team. In order to ensure the widest possible field of candidates, advertising will usually be national or external for these roles, unless there is a good reason not to do so.
3. All agency workers working at the school and employees working on fixed term contracts will be informed of any vacancies within the school by the Headteacher/Line Manager.

Application

1. Application

All applications for wider internal and external roles at Ivy will be made available electronically via our application tracking system, My New Term. Curriculum vitae will not be accepted. Where an applicant is shortlisted, any discrepancies or gaps in employment will be discussed at interview. Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or in summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected.

2. Recruitment Monitoring Information Form

As part of the application process, individuals will be asked to complete a Recruitment Monitoring Information form. Completion of the form will ensure that policies and procedures are effective in avoiding discrimination and promoting equality and diversity in recruitment. Completion of the form is voluntary. The recruitment monitoring information does not form part of the selection process and will be detached from the application form prior to shortlisting. The information provided will be used for periodic monitoring and statistical data purposes only. Required reporting of this data will be on an anonymous basis.

Shortlisting

1. Timing

Shortlisting will take place as soon as possible after the closing date. Shortlisting will be undertaken by the selection panel normally consisting of at least two individuals.

2. Invitation to interview

Once the shortlist has been decided, the shortlisted candidates will be notified as soon as possible. Invitation to interview will be confirmed in writing. Adequate time will be allowed between invitation and interview to allow for pre-employment checks to take place and to allow candidates adequate time to prepare for their interview. Full details of the selection process (i.e. details of the interview and any additional selection exercises) will be notified to the applicant in the invitation to interview correspondence. Every effort will be made to accommodate any special requirements necessary to enable candidates to participate in the process.

3. Requesting references

External candidates

One of the most important aspects of the recruitment process is the sourcing and scrutiny of employment references. References are not just a procedural requirement, they are a critical safeguarding tool that helps us assess a candidate's suitability to work in a school environment. They provide a fuller understanding of a potential candidate's professional conduct, capabilities and suitability. They help verify past experience, can assist with highlighting strengths and concerns that are not evident through the interview alone, supporting the school in making more informed, balanced and responsible hiring decisions.

References are sourced by the Head/Line Manager via our application tracking system My New Term at the shortlisting stage. Permission must be provided by the candidate to obtain references at the shortlisting stage.

External candidates (including supply/agency temps)

All references must be sourced in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

- A **minimum** of two references should be sourced from separate employers i.e. not two references from the same previous employer
- References must be sourced externally to Ivy Learning Trust. The exception is if candidates have previously been **employed** by Ivy Learning Trust. Supply staff employed by an agency must provide references as outlined below (not internal Ivy staff, who they're currently working with);
- Ensure one reference is from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal);
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer;

- Character references should be avoided - should only be sourced in exceptional circumstances i.e. where the applicant has no work history*;
- Not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern;
- Not rely on applicants to obtain their reference;
- Obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed;
- Always verify any information, if needed, with the person who provided the reference;
- Ensure references originate from a legitimate source;
- Contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided;
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate;
- Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post; and
- Ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

* There may be times where there are anomalies in obtaining references, i.e. someone who has no employment history or a place of work has closed down. If this is the case, please feel free to contact the HR Department for advice.

Internal candidates

Filed references will be checked and a decision made by the panel whether it is appropriate to obtain further references. Further references could be from a line manager/Head of Department or the Headteacher as appropriate.

Selection process

1. The selection process will, as a minimum, consist of a face to face interview even where there is only one candidate and including for internal appointments and promotions and volunteers. Where appropriate, the selection process may include additional activities such as in-tray exercises, group activities, presentations, pupil panels or observed assemblies/teaching.
2. The process will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements (i.e. job description and person specification), and explore their suitability to work with children. Where a candidate has made a declaration of criminal convictions, these will be discussed as part of the selection process. Where the school setting and post are covered by the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations, if an individual declares information on a Disqualification Declaration Form, the school will need to establish whether the information declared meets one of the disqualification criteria, in which case the panel may decide:

- a) to discontinue the recruitment process in respect of that candidate; or
- b) to discuss the declaration with the individual at the interview and decide whether the application can proceed.

3. Screening applicants using social media

The school will notify potential applicants when screening candidates prior to interview by checking social media sites. The purpose of such screening will be to ascertain whether a candidate demonstrates appropriate conduct, behaviour and suitability for employment in a school environment. Any such screening will not be used in isolation and will be discussed with candidates at interview where necessary.

Employment offer

1. The choice of candidate will be determined by the majority view of the interview panel. The panel may identify a first and any reserve choice candidate(s).
2. The successful applicant will be advised that they are the preferred candidate and a conditional offer made, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. A firm offer or start date cannot be made until all pre-employment checks have been completed.
3. Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily received, a firm offer of employment will be made and start date confirmed and the contract of employment will be issued.
4. If the preferred candidate does not accept the post, the panel will consider the option of contacting any reserve candidate(s). This will only be done where these candidates meet the criteria for the role.
5. Unsuccessful shortlisted candidates will be advised accordingly. All candidates can request feedback on their interview/selection.

Induction and probation

1. All new employees, internally promoted staff and volunteers will be provided with an induction program, which will seek to ensure that they are clear about their job role, the expectations of them in terms of standards of performance and conduct and applicable policies and procedures. Any training and development needs will be identified and supported appropriately. Where applicable, Early Career Teachers will be subject to the Statutory Induction Period.

2. A probationary period applies to all support staff. As a Trust, a new employee is an employee who is new to the employment of the Trust.

Record retention/ Data Protection

Staff records will be retained in line with the Trust's Data Protection policy.

Volunteers

The Trust values the contribution that volunteers make to its community and recognises the positive impact they can have on pupils' learning, experiences and wellbeing. Volunteers are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults and the same high standards of safer recruitment principles and processes are applied to volunteers as are applied to paid staff.

1. Application forms

Volunteers will be asked to complete a basic application form. This provides the information necessary to undertake safeguard checks and to give a picture of the skills and experience the volunteers bring to maximise their contribution and the volunteers own fulfilment in the assigned activities.

2. Interviewing volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to have a discussion with the Head/Head of School or other manager prior to commencing their role. This will not be a formal interview but will provide the school with:

- an opportunity to explain the workings of the school and how volunteers fit into that;
- time to ask volunteers for the factual information needed to make a successful placement including any safeguard checks;
- the opportunity to explore their suitability to work with children, including their motivation to work with children and their ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries;
- an opportunity to determine whether any special health, safety and welfare criteria need to be met.

This process will also provide the volunteer with:

- the opportunity to find out more about the nature of the work;

- information to decide how best they can make a contribution, using their skills and experience;
- how much time they want to commit.

3. Role profiles

Volunteers will be given clear and simple descriptions of the roles and boundaries of the voluntary activity. It is acknowledged that by its very nature, volunteering does not place the same obligations on an individual in terms of attendance etc. as a paid employee. However, it is very much hoped that volunteers will fulfil their commitment as agreed between themselves and the school - this includes consistent attendance and undertaking the agreed tasks. Volunteers may be asked to sign a voluntary agreement as clarification of the commitment they are making to the school and visa versa.

Agency staff and other workers

It is expected that the same standards of safer recruitment will be applied by external bodies providing workers or volunteers to the school. External bodies will be required to provide written confirmation that relevant safer recruitment and other relevant pre-employment checks have been undertaken and this will be recorded.