



OAKLANDS
SCHOOL

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Next review due	October 2026
Last review	October 2025
Reviewed by	Suzanne Nutley
Approved by	Georgios Chatzakis, Executive Headteacher

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Introduction	3
Policy Aims.....	3
Scope and Purpose	3
Safer Recruitment	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Online Safety	5
Advertising	5
Job Description.....	6
Application Form.....	6
References	6
Short-listing.....	6
Interviews.....	7
Additional Interview Methods	8
Safer Recruitment Checks	8
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks	9
a) New Employees and Volunteers	9
b) Existing Employees and Volunteers	10
Low-Level Concerns and Whistleblowing	11
Agency Staff	12
Safeguarding Checks from Alternative Provisions	12
Breaches of the Policy	12
Record Keeping and Data Protection (GDPR)	12
Appendix 1 - Risk Assessment: Pending Pre Employment Checks	13

Introduction

Every Child Is Different - we work together to break down barriers and cultivate a respectful, inclusive community

Welcome to **Oaklands School, Hungerford**. Our school is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where every pupil can thrive. We believe in fostering an ethos of trust and respect, ensuring that all pupils feel valued and supported. Our confidentiality policy is designed to protect the privacy of our pupils and their families, while also promoting transparency and open communication within our school community.

Oaklands is a co-educational, independent day school established to provide contemporary and enjoyable learning experiences for young people aged 5 – 16 years with special and individual needs. Our school offers a warm and friendly environment for learning, with specialist support for pupils with unique learning profiles and neurodivergence, including specialist provision for pupils with autism, communication and interaction needs, sensory processing needs, global developmental delay and other related aspects.

- We are an inclusive school and believe that neurodivergence is not a deficit or a barrier to achievement.
- We have developed a curriculum approach which includes learning pathways and adaptive approaches to meet the needs of each individual pupil.
- We have taken the very best school practices and built them into our school.
- We consider that creating an inclusive school community is one of the key aspects for supporting our pupils to develop and grow.
- We believe that such differences need not be barriers to success, and we have taken the very best school practices and built them into our school.

Our curriculum offer is highly personalised to the needs of each pupil and delivered through our three Curriculum Pathways. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, PSHE and PE sits at the core of each pathway, and pupils will also experience the wider curriculum including, where appropriate, life skills, computing, music and drama, art and design. We adapt the curriculum and align with the children's EHC Plans to support their growing independence.

At Oaklands School, we understand the importance of confidentiality in maintaining a positive and secure learning environment. Our staff are dedicated to upholding the highest standards of data protection and privacy, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant legislation. We are committed to working closely with pupils, parents, and carers to address any concerns and ensure that the best interests of our pupils are always at the forefront of our actions.

Policy Aims

Recruiting the best people to our school is vital to our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our pupils.

Not appointing the right people to our roles can have negative impact on the performance of our school.

The Headteacher is responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit to any post, with the

exception of the Headteacher role where the School Board will be responsible.

In carrying out our recruitment processes we are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our pupils by operating safer recruitment practices in line with the statutory requirements and guidance.

We are also committed to ensuring that throughout our recruitment and selection processes no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

In the very exceptional cases where we are required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement this must be approved by the School Board who will provide reasons for this requirement.

Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, knowledge, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

If an applicant makes the School aware, at any stage of the recruitment process, that they have a disability then reasonable adjustments must be considered to ensure the applicant is not disadvantaged by the process.

Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting and appointing any employee to work within our School.

The Disclosure and Barring Service checks apply to both employees and volunteers in our School.

Safer Recruitment

All recruitment must be in line with this policy to ensure that we identify, deter and prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with our pupils.

The recruitment of all applicants and volunteers to our School must, without exception, follow the processes of safer recruitment. All offers of employment will be subject to us being satisfied that the applicant or volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people.

Any person involved in recruiting to our School must read the latest version of “Keeping Children Safe in Education” guidance produced by the DfE and our School’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

All employees and volunteers appointed to work directly with pupils must acknowledge that they have ‘read, understood and will follow’ the latest version of KCSiE – Part 1, Annex B. This is part of the Safeguarding Induction for employees and volunteers.

All employees and volunteers appointed to work at the school but not directly with pupils must acknowledge that they have ‘read, understood and will follow’ the latest version of KCSiE – Part 1, Annex A. This is part of the Safeguarding Induction for employees and volunteers.

All recruitment must be planned to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.

Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during recruitment must inform the Headteacher immediately.

All of Safer Recruitment checks and all Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks must be carried

out and have been determined as satisfactory before an applicant can start their employment in the School.

Online Safety

To ensure online safety in the recruitment process, the school must consider:

Safer recruitment practices – implement practices that ensures future employees are suitable for working with children and young people, focusing on creating a safe environment

Online candidates checks – conduct checks on candidates social media and online presence to identify any potential safeguarding risks

Data protection compliance – understanding our data protection obligations under GDPR to ensure compliance when handling employees information

Safer recruitment checklist – use a checklist (see Appendix 1) to guide the recruitment process, ensuring we adhere to legal and regulatory requirements

Policy framework – follow the school’s policy frameworks that outline responsibilities and guidelines for safer recruitment practices

The Department of Education are supporting the use of AI in recruitment in UK schools. This is available through free online materials. They help navigate safe and effective use of AI in education. The DfE’s initiative aims to equip the education workforce with the knowledge, tools and confidence the opportunities of AI whilst managing the risks responsibly.

The Department for Education’s filtering and monitoring standards set out that schools should:

- identify and assign roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems.
- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.
- schools can use the department’s ‘plan technology for your school service’ to self-assess against the filtering and monitoring standards and receive personalised recommendations on how to meet them.

Advertising

Any vacant position will be advertised via the appropriate channels for the individual job role to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is sourced. This can be externally through the school’s website, job boards and recruitment agencies and/or internally via employee emails.

All advertisements will have the following statement about safeguarding children and young people:

All applicants will require the appropriate qualifications and training for this role as well as the Right to Work in the UK.

Oaklands School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We undertake safeguarding checks on all workers in accordance with DfE statutory guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe

in Education’.

All candidates must undertake or have undertaken a valid enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Job Description

A job description will be required for all posts.

The job description describes the duties and responsibilities of the post. It must be up to date, accurate and specific to the role.

The job description must also include a person specification which outlines all of the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and knowledge required for the post.

All job descriptions and person specifications must make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as noted above.

Application Form

All applicants are required to fill out our standard application form. CVs will be accepted but will not replace the requirement to fill out an application form.

When completing the application form the applicant must specify and explain all gaps in employment and these will be discussed at interview.

References

All offers of employment will be conditional upon receipt of at least two satisfactory written references. References will:

- be requested for all shortlisted applicants.
- include the applicant’s current or most recent employer and where an applicant for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, will include the applicant’s most recent employer as a teacher.
- ask the current employer for details of any capability history in the previous two years, and the reasons for this.
- be directly from the referee.
- not be accepted if they are ‘to whom it may concern’ letters.
- request information on the applicant’s suitability to work with children and young people.
- be explored further with the referee and with the applicant if necessary.

Where it has not been possible to obtain references before the interview any concerns that are subsequently raised will need to be resolved before the appointment is confirmed.

Short-listing

Applicants will be short-listed against the requirements of the person specification. The same people should carry out the short-listing and the interviews. The outcome of the short-listing process will be recorded and retained by the School Business Manager

Any equal opportunities monitoring forms will be removed by the School Business Manager before the shortlisting process is started.

All shortlisted candidates will have letters of invite to interview which will include the following information:

According to KCSiE guidance, Oaklands School carries out online checks for all applicants invited for an interview. Please note that if the school identifies any information which might raise a concern, applicants will be asked for further details at the interview.

The online checks will be carried out only on the two major search engines (i.e. Google and Bing) and checks will be made over a period of 10 years from the present date. Our approach to online search focuses on it being fair and consistent for all shortlisted applicants. We will, therefore, not search social media presence as it is possible that not all applicants will have social media profiles.

The short-listing panel are responsible for scrutinising the application forms and identifying any gaps in employment or other areas that may affect an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. A satisfactory explanation for any concerns must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process.

Interviews

A face-to-face interview is the preferred mode of interviewing. If this is not possible due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. restrictions due to COVID 19; the applicant not being able to attend the interview face-to-face) the use of video conferencing, Skype, Facetime or other similar technologies will be considered for this purpose.

All those involved in interviewing must be properly trained. At least one person on the interview panel must have passed the appropriate safer recruitment training. It is recommended to refresh safer recruitment training every two years to stay updated with changed in legislation and best practices.

The purpose of the interview is to assess the merits of each applicant against the job description and person specification to establish their suitability for the post and their suitability to work with children and young people.

Interviews will be conducted with a minimum of two interviewers on the panel to enable a fair process, and lead to better judgement through multiple views and aspects. Each member of the panel will ask questions which enables written notes to be taken throughout the process.

Before the interview commences the interview, panel should:

- check if any reasonable adjustments are required.
- prepare appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work at the post applied for, this might include working with children and young people.
- decide a structure to the interview and establish which member of the panel will ask which question.
- identify any areas for further probing (e.g. if a criminal record has been declared or explain all gaps in employment etc);
- agree assessment criteria which reflects the person specification.

A set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their response will determine whether that is followed up through further questioning.

Any gaps in employment history or declaration of a criminal record or caution must be explored further during the interview process and annotated on the interview sheet.

Additional Interview Methods

In addition to a face-to-face interview with the interview panel a variety of other selection methods may be used, such as:

- observation of teaching practice;
- one or more additional panel interviews (for example, a panel made up of pupils from our school);
- a presentation on a given topic specified by the interview panel in advance;
- in tray exercises;
- psychometric testing.

Those responsible for deciding the arrangements for recruitment to a specific post will determine the selection method(s). They will be relevant and appropriate to the role and will be based on the requirements for the particular post as set out in the job description and person specification.

Applicants will be informed in advance if any selection methods are to be used in addition to a face-to-face interview and what these will be.

Safer Recruitment Checks

An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following:

- receipt of two satisfactory written references (one of which must be their current or most recent employer);
- follow up telephone verification with referees to substantiate the reference;
- verification of the applicant's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address;
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness; verification of qualifications where relevant;
- satisfactory enhanced DBS check;
- a clear children's barred list check (except supervised volunteers);
- verification of professional status where applicable.
- verification that any staff are not subject to a prohibition order by completing a prohibition check;
- for teachers, satisfactory check a teacher's record
- verification of right to work in the United Kingdom;
- any further checks where the applicant has lived or work outside of the UK including receipt of criminal record information from overseas;
- confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified or disqualified by association from providing childcare

All checks must be confirmed in writing and will be retained on the personnel file and recorded in the single central record (SCR) in line with the GDPR guidelines.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

a) New Employees and Volunteers

The school will carry out DBS checks as follows for new appointments, before the employee or volunteer starts work.

Who?	Definition	Type of check
Employees who will be engaging in regulated activity	<p>As an educational institution which is exclusively or mainly for the provision of full-time education to children, Oaklands School is an establishment specified in the relevant legislation. Activity carried out in this establishment will therefore be regulated activity relating to children if it meets the definition in the relevant legislation, including that it is carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Frequently (for example once a week or more); or b. On more than three days in any period of 30 days. <p>Note – personal care of a child because of age, illness or disability including physical help with eating, toileting, washing, bathing or dressing is always regulated activity regardless of how frequently it is carried out.</p>	An enhanced DBS check with children’s barred list check will always be obtained
Unsupervised Volunteers	As above	An enhanced DBS check with children’s barred list check will always be obtained

Supervised Volunteers	Where an individual is a volunteer (e.g. carrying out activity that is unpaid) they will not be engaging in regulated activity if: They are being supervised by someone that is in regulated activity; and The supervision is regular and day to day (e.g. it is ongoing); and The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children (this may take into account for example, the age, number and vulnerability of children the individual is working with and whether other individuals are helping to look after them)	We are unable by law to obtain a barred list check on a supervised volunteer. We will however obtain an enhanced DBS check (with no barred list check) for supervised volunteers.
-----------------------	--	---

DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. All applicants must produce the disclosure when requested to do so. The disclosure will be scrutinised to ensure it is authentic and to detect any fraud. The DBS disclosure number and date of the check must be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR).

We ask for all employees to join the update service on receipt of their DBS certificate. The School Business Manager will do an annual check through the Update Service on the Government website.

Applicants can have their DBS certificate kept up to date and take it with them from role to role where the same type and level of check is required. Applicants or volunteers should be asked if they have subscribed to this service. The cost of this service is £16 per year. The expectation is that individuals personally fund with the exception of volunteers. Where the applicant or volunteer has subscribed, they should provide the School with the original disclosure document to be verified and the School will check the online update for any changes.

Any applicant who refuses to produce their DBS disclosure will not be able to start work at the School and the conditional offer will be withdrawn as satisfactory checks are not in place.

Any volunteer who refuses to produce their disclosure will not be able to volunteer in the School.

Information relating to an individual's criminal record will only be shared with the relevant people to enable the School to make a decision about their suitability to work with children and young people. It will be held for no longer than is necessary and will be processed in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

b) Existing Employees and Volunteers

An enhanced DBS check and a children's barred list check will be carried out for all existing staff and unsupervised volunteers where their contact with children or young people has increased from that at their time of appointment.

An enhanced DBS and children's barred list check may be carried out on any employee or unsupervised volunteer where the School has concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children and young people.

An enhanced DBS (no barred list check) may be carried out on any supervised volunteer where the School has concerns about their suitability to work with children and young people.

DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. The School expects all applicants to produce the disclosure when requested to do so. Any existing employee who does not produce their DBS disclosure will be managed through the disciplinary procedure. All staff on receipt of their DBS certificate must have it verified by the School Business Manager.

All existing employees are required to inform the School of any change in their criminal record. This includes convictions, cautions, arrests and police investigations. The School may require all employees to sign a declaration on an annual basis that there has been no change in their criminal record.

Action may be taken as a result of any change or any failure to inform the School of any change.

All employees are encouraged to join the DBS update service where the School Business Manager can complete an annual check of the DBS status.

Low-Level Concerns and Whistleblowing

In staff induction, employees are made aware of low-level concerns and whistleblowing. Low-level concerns is a concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of this behaviour could include but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind closed door or,
- Humiliating a child

All low-level concerns should be initially recorded in writing to the Executive Headteacher or DSL. If the DSL, this should then be reported in a timely fashion according to the nature of each particular low-level concern.

Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If the school is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they should consult with their LADO.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Records should be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

Procedures for whistleblowing can be found in the [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

Agency Staff

In the case of agency staff, the School must ensure that the arrangement with the agency imposes an obligation on the agency to carry out all recruitment checks as specified in this policy. This must include DBS checks and children's barred list checks, that the school would otherwise complete for its staff. The school must obtain written confirmation from the agency that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. This must be recorded in the single central record (SCR).

Safeguarding Checks from Alternative Provisions

Where the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school remains responsible for the safeguarding of the pupil. The school should receive written confirmation from the provider that all appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed on all individuals working at the provision. This includes written confirmation that the provision will let the school know of any arrangements that may put the pupil at risk, i.e. staff changes so that the school can ensure itself that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out for new staff.

Breaches of the Policy

Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application will be managed through the School's complaints policy or grievance policy (for existing employees).

Record Keeping and Data Protection (GDPR)

All written records of interviews, application forms and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept by the School for six months, unless a longer period can be justified by the Headteacher. Records will be treated as confidential and kept for no longer than necessary in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

KCSiE, September 2025, paragraph 282, states: "when a school or college chooses to retain a copy, there should be a valid reason for doing so and it should not be kept for longer than six months".

Appendix 1 - Risk Assessment: Pending Pre Employment Checks

OAKLANDS SCHOOL

Risk Assessment: Pending Pre-Employment Checks

Employee Name:

Date:

CONTEXT

The school has taken a cautious approach by ensuring the new employee cannot enter the site or work with pupils until all safeguarding checks are complete. This protects children, ensures compliance with statutory guidance, and maintains public confidence, while temporary staffing arrangements mitigate operational pressures.

A prospective employee has been offered a role but is not yet cleared to work with pupils until satisfactory references, background checks, and an enhanced DBS certificate are confirmed.

Here's a governor-friendly compliance table you can use to track pre-employment checks. It includes a tick-box column for completion and a date column for recording when each check was verified.

Pre-Employment Checks Table

Check Required	Completed	Date Verified
Identity verification		
Right to work in the UK		
Enhanced DBS check (with barred list)		
References (minimum two, incl. last employer)		
Employment history & gap verification		
Qualifications check		
Prohibition from teaching check (if applicable)		
Prohibition from management check (if applicable)		
Overseas checks (if applicable)		
Medical fitness declaration		

1. Identified Risks

- **Safeguarding Risk:** Unverified individuals could pose a safeguarding concern if allowed unsupervised access to pupils.

- **Regulatory Non-Compliance:** Breach of statutory safer recruitment guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education, Ofsted/ ISI expectations).
- **Reputational Risk:** Damage to the school’s reputation if procedures are not followed and concerns arise.
- **Operational Risk:** Delay in filling the role may impact staffing capacity, particularly in a SEN setting with high support needs.

2. Risk Rating (Before Controls)

Risk Area	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating
Safeguarding	Medium	High	High
Regulatory Compliance	Medium	High	High
Reputation	Low	High	Medium
Operational Capacity	High	Medium	Medium

3. Control Measures in Place

- Employee not permitted on site until all checks are satisfactorily completed.
- Employee not permitted to engage in regulated activity until DBS clearance is confirmed.
- References and background checks must be verified by the headteacher or DSL.
- Visitor protocol applied if the individual attends site for induction or interview (escorted at all times, no pupil contact).
- Single Central Record (SCR) updated only once all checks are complete.
- Contingency staffing plan in place to cover operational needs until clearance is achieved.

4. Residual Risk (After Controls)

Risk Area	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Rating
Safeguarding	Low	High	Medium
Regulatory Compliance	Low	High	Low
Reputation	Low	Medium	Low
Operational Capacity	Medium	Medium	Medium

5. Monitoring & Review

Headteacher and DSL to review status of checks daily until clearance is confirmed.

Governors to receive assurance via safeguarding reports and SCR audit weekly, regarding member of staff awaiting clearance.

Risk assessment to be updated if clearance is delayed beyond expected timeframe.