



Schools for Every Child

Safer Recruitment Policy

We are an education Trust that is committed to running dynamic, ever-improving schools. We work to make sure that every child feels they belong in their school where they feel safe and inspired by learning. For us, learning is an adventure. It is a privilege and a responsibility for all who work with us to ensure that the journey through school is exciting, challenging, caring and enriching, and that every child experiences joy, wonder, calm and success.

Approval Level	CEO
Author	COO (adapted model policy from The Key)
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Trust/Template/School level	Trust
Review cycle	Annual

“The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance”. (DfE)

Approval History

Committee Approval	Status	Next Review Date
	Review in progress Submitted for Ratification Live Policy	

Safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) 2025](#).

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 and records of safer recruitment training are held on staff HR records including a copy of their training certificate.

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.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our Trusts' commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding 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

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 on our employer profile which is used for all vacancy posts.

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

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before the 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 (e.g. 'to whom it may concern')
- Not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- Not accept references from a family member
- 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 headteacher/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. If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- Contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- Establish the reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed
- 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

See Appendix 1 for our Reference Guide which is published under the policies section of our website

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Confirm their identity by asking them to bring ID (we will not copy this ID at this stage)
- 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
- Record all information considered and decisions made

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will carry out a DBS appointment which must be attended and carried out with either Payroll or HR and will include the following:

- Verify their identity (using the identity documentation guidelines and take copies of these for the persons file)
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities (fitness to work declaration)
- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record (SD2a form) 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 may 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
 - If they are known to the police and children's local authority social care and
 - If they have been disqualified from providing childcare
 - Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true
- Obtain consent for us to complete an enhanced DBS certificate (DBS consent form) including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below).

- We will obtain the certificate before appointment using an online DBS service via Essex County Council, once complete we will not keep a copy of the certificate but will keep a record of the certificate number and date of issues on our Single Central record (SCR) and the employees personnel file for our records.
- The original certificate will be sent to the employees home address and they will be required to bring the certificate for us to sight and confirm the certificate number matches the online result that we received. We will destroy the SD2a form once the certificate has been issued.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- 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 and those with any financial delegation or responsibilities.*
- We will also consider carrying out an online search to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

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. When 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

Onboarding

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's 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.

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

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 and record the details of this check on our SCR
- Obtain two references for volunteers before they are recruited
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. When 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

Governors, Trustees & Members

- All members, trustees, local governors will be required to complete an application form to ensure that they provide personal information and acknowledge all declarations as required for paid employment as noted above in our recruitment and selection process.
- All members, trustees, local governors will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information.
- The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors 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](#)) (if they have been delegated any management responsibilities)
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Two references

- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

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.

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 on the schools SCR

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. When 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.

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.

Staff working in alternative provision settings

When 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.

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.

Appendix 1

References

At Schools for Every Child, we take the issue of safer recruitment seriously. Our approach is based on *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* to protect pupils, staff, and our community. Failure to follow this policy will be treated as a serious breach of safeguarding procedures and may result in disciplinary action.

General Principles

- All roles (staff &volunteers) require two satisfactory references before an interview.
- No one may begin work on site (including volunteering) until both references have been returned & verified.
- We do not accept two references from the same organisation.
- The Trust issues only one reference for former employees, covering their full employment with us.
- The CEO has final sign-off on every appointment across the Trust. No contract of employment is considered valid until the CEO has signed it.
- In sporadic cases, such as the appointment of volunteers or elected parent governors, a formal interview may not always take place. In these circumstances, two satisfactory references are still required before starting, and the rules of this guidance continue to apply in full.

Process for Schools

- Schools must inform HQ when wanting to advertise a vacancy or appoint a volunteer, providing sufficient notice for HQ to request and secure two references for shortlisted candidates before the interview.
- In the very rare event that a school wishes to interview before both references are returned, the Head of School / Headteacher / Executive Head must seek verbal and written approval from the CEO first. If this cannot be obtained, then no interview will take place. In this rare instance, Schools must not inform a candidate that they are being appointed or suggest they are likely to be successful until both references have been received, checked, and approved. This includes any form of offer, whether verbal, written, conditional, or informal comments, such as “you’ve got the job, pending references.” These candidates may only be informed of an appointment once the CEO has given final sign-off.

Who May Give References

- For school staff: only the Head of School, Headteacher, or Executive Head may provide a reference.
- For Heads of School, Headteachers, Executive Heads, and HQ staff: only the CEO may provide a reference or the TDSL in the CEO’s long-term absence. This ensures consistency, accuracy, and safeguarding.
- The Trust issues only one reference for former employees, covering their entire period of employment
- We reserve the right not to populate reference grids

Concerns Raised in References

- If a reference contains concerning or unusual information (e.g., relating to safeguarding, conduct, unusual resignation dates, past capability, unusual wording), the hiring manager must consult the CEO before confirming an appointment