

Recruitment and Selection Policy

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Dates consulted on with recognised unions:	From: 5 th June 2025 To: 4 th July 2025
Date approved by Trustees:	14 th July 2025
Date of next review:	September 2027
Status:	Final

WeST Vision, Mission and Values

[Westcountry Schools Trust - Our Vision, Mission and Values](#)

Providing Accessible Formats

This policy has been written in a dyslexia accessible format, which can also support the needs of other neurodiverse groups. If you are unable to use this document and require it in a different format, please contact Human Resources who can provide alternative accessible formats by request.

WeST Policy Suite

All Trust HR Policies are accessible via the WeST Staff Portal. Please contact your local administrative office or Human Resources for log-in details.

HR Helpline: 01752 891754 ext. 1765

HR Email: HR@westst.org.uk

Policy quick read

Purpose: The policy sets out a clear, fair, and inclusive framework for recruiting employees and volunteers across WeST schools and settings. It ensures alignment with safeguarding obligations, employment law, and the Trust's core values: *Compassion, Aspiration, Integrity, and Collaboration*.

Key Principles & Values

- **Safeguarding:** Central to recruitment; all processes adhere to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* guidelines.
- **Equality:** No discrimination based on protected characteristics (e.g. age, disability, race, religion, etc.).
- **Merit-based Selection:** Recruitment is open, transparent, and focused on appointing the best candidates.
- **Accessibility:** Reasonable adjustments are made for candidates with disabilities.

Recruitment Process Overview

1. Pre-Planning:

- Assess vacancy and secure approval through My New Term.
- Review job descriptions and person specifications and ensure they are uploaded to My New Term

2. Advertising:

- Roles are advertised fairly and appropriately (internal/external) on My New Term.
- Adverts must include a link to the Trust safeguarding policy.

3. Shortlisting:

- Based on the person specification and recorded on a shortlisting grid.
- Application forms required through My New Term (CVs not accepted).
- Online searches conducted using Google, once invitation to interview has been accepted.

4. Interviews & Assessment:

- At least one panel member must be Safer Recruitment trained.
- Interviews must include safeguarding and Trust values-based questions.
- Assessment methods tailored to the role (e.g. lesson observation for teaching).

5. References & Checks:



- Minimum of two references covering three years.
- Enhanced DBS, identity, right to work, and qualification checks required.

6. Appointments & Offers:

- Conditional on pre-employment checks.
- Offers not made at interview stage.
- Records maintained for 6 months minimum.

Post-Appointment

- **Induction:** Includes safeguarding policies, Code of Conduct, role- specific onboarding.
- **Probation:** Support staff undergo a 6-month probation with 3 and 5 month formal reviews.

Contact & Resources: HR support:  hr@westst.org.uk |  01752 891754 ext. 1765 and the Recruitment Toolkit available via WeST HR Resources.

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1. Delegation of Authority

The Trust is committed to ensuring a consistent, fair, and equitable approach in all employee matters, and will not discriminate either directly or indirectly on the grounds of an employee's gender, age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity status, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In order to achieve this aim, there needs to be a clear delegation of authority throughout the structure of the Trust and for this purpose the term "Responsible Officer" shall apply as per the levels below:

Delegation Key	
Line Manager	Person with formal line management responsibility as defined within the job description.
Level One	<p>If the employee is based within a school, the person with authority to act will be a Trust Headteacher, or an appropriate senior employee from the Trust Executive Leadership Team .</p> <p>If the employee is based within the Core Services Team, the person with authority to act will be a member of the Executive Leadership Team.</p> <p>If the employee is a Headteacher and dismissal is a potential outcome the person with authority to act will be the CEO, otherwise, the person with authority to act will be a Director of Education or the Deputy CEO.</p> <p>If the employee is a member of Executive Leadership Team, the person with authority to act will be the CEO, unless they have acted as the Line Manager, in which case the person with authority to act will be the Chair of the Trust.</p> <p>If the Employee is the Chief Executive Officer, the person with authority to act will be the Chair of the Trust.</p>

Level Two	<p>Where Level One was the Headteacher the person with authority to act will be the Director of Education or Deputy CEO.</p> <p>Where Level One was a member of the Executive Leadership Team the person with authority to act will be the CEO.</p> <p>Where Level One was the CEO or the Chair of the Trust, the matter will be referred to a Trustee Appeal Panel.</p>
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The Trust reserves the right in exceptional circumstances to vary the composition of the delegated authority / panel in order to ensure that meetings proceed without undue delay. In these circumstances the Trust will ensure that the responsible officer maintains appropriate standards of separation and confidentiality.

2. Introduction and Purpose

This policy provides the approach to recruitment and selection of employees and volunteers in all schools and settings as part of Westcountry Schools' Trust. To support all schools and settings in delivering this policy, a Recruitment Toolkit is available providing templates and guidance documents. These are available in the HR Resources folder in the Schools HR network channel in Microsoft Teams. Please contact your school HR Administrator or HR@westst.org.uk for further information.

This policy is also designed to ensure that people who are unsuitable to work with children, young people and their families are deterred and prevented from working within the school environment. This policy directly endorses and supports the mandatory guidance in the latest nationally published *Keeping Children Safe in Education* Document. Recruitment and selection in the Trust will focus on safeguarding children by reducing the risk of harm through the employment of suitable, appropriately screened, vetted and checked individuals.

- Westcountry Schools Trust is the employer of all employees and has overall responsibility for employee matters including recruitment.
- Westcountry Schools Trust actively promotes equality, diversity and inclusion, aims to eliminate discrimination, promotes positive attitudes to disabled people and takes account of disabilities in any employee dealings, including recruitment.

3. Policy Statement

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Trust aims to ensure that recruitment effectively and efficiently supports the provision of high-quality education. The school's / settings objective in carrying out recruitment is to fill vacancies with people of the highest quality, drawn from the widest possible 'pool', cost effectively and without undue delay, whilst adhering to principles of fairness and equality.

No employee, potential employee or applicant will be unlawfully disadvantaged on the grounds of age, race or ethnicity, disability, gender and marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief or pregnancy and maternity.

In adopting this policy, the Trust is committed to:

- Developing and promoting our schools.
- Appointing on merit.
- Being fair and transparent.
- Valuing all individuals involved in the recruitment process.
- Valuing existing employees and helping them realise their potential.
- Working towards developing a workforce that embodies the Trust core values of compassion, aspiration, integrity and collaboration.
- Giving appropriate and proper consideration to all applicants.
- Working towards developing a diverse workforce.
- Considering flexible working arrangements In line with legislation.
- Ensuring that assessment techniques and tests are fair and transparent.
- Making reasonable adjustments and access arrangements where requested.

4. Values-Based Recruitment

Our Trust values are at the heart of recruitment and selection. To support its vision that by working together our collective children will be afforded improved life chances through academic success and positive relationships, the Trust is committed to recruiting, retaining and developing talent, at every level of the organisation, that embody the Trust core values.

Those with delegated responsibility to recruit and select will design recruitment campaigns, selection activities and induction programmes that attract, identify, highlight and support the behaviours in candidates that underpin the Trust's core values: collaboration; aspiration; integrity and compassion. The Trust will ensure those delegated with the responsibility to recruit will be equipped to carry out these responsibilities.

5. Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Trust Recruitment

Westcountry Schools Trust is committed to providing equality of opportunities for all applicants by a fair and transparent recruitment process.

For the purposes of this policy the following are included:

- employees including apprentices;
- workers hired directly by WeST and who supply their services on an irregular or casual basis with minimum guaranteed hours;
- applicants for jobs.

Protected characteristics include:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex and sexual orientation.

An applicant can allege discrimination against an employer even though there is no direct employment relationship. This is particularly important in the recruitment process as a potential applicant, applicant or selected candidate may claim discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic. All actions and documents involved in the recruitment and selection process must be free of any criteria that could be interpreted as being discriminatory within the terms of the Equality Act 2010, this includes indirect discrimination.

Liability for unlawful discrimination rests with the employer and/or any workers who are found to have discriminated. For example, anyone participating in the recruitment process,

including panel members, could be liable if an allegation of discrimination is proven.

Applicants have up to three months following the recruitment process, to make a complaint.

This will likely change to six months from October 2026 as a result of the Employment Rights Bill. The fact that a person may not have intended to discriminate against someone is irrelevant and would not constitute a defence.

6. Selection Panel

The Trust has overall responsibility for all employee appointments in our schools and settings. The Trust may delegate these responsibilities to the Principal / Headteacher, Director, or a group of Directors in accordance with its Scheme of Delegation:

Constitution:

- The Trust Board holds delegated responsibility for determining the appointment of the CEO. The Chair of Trust Board and Director of People will be full panel members*.
- The Trust Board and CEO hold joint delegated responsibility for determining appointments to the Trust Executive Leadership Team below the level of CEO. The panel will comprise of the CEO, Trust Board Members and the Director of People*.
- The CEO holds delegated responsibility for determining appointments at Principal / Headteacher level. The panel will comprise of the CEO or delegate, Chair of the Trust or delegate, Director of Education and Director of People*.
- The Executive Team hold delegated responsibility for determining appointments within their own teams and should establish a panel in accordance with the requirements below including school leadership where relevant to the post.
- The Principal / Headteacher holds delegated responsibility for determining leadership appointments below the level of Principal / Headteacher. The named HR contact will also be an advisory panel member.
- The Principal / Headteacher holds delegated responsibility for determining employee appointments outside their own school leadership group and should establish an appropriate panel in accordance with the requirements below.

*For senior level appointments the panel may wish to consider the merits of engaging an external panel member with specialist knowledge, expertise or experience that would bring an additional dimension and increased level of robustness to the interview process.

Requirements for all Panels:

- The appointing officer has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the selection process is compliant with the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Safer Recruitment principles. Therefore, before advertising, the appointing officer should approve the job description / person specification, selection criteria, panel membership, process to be followed / timetable and the advertising strategy, including how best to attract a strong and diverse field of applicants.
- Membership of the panel should be diverse and inclusive to help ensure an equal and fair recruitment process. In particular:
 - Panels should consist of a minimum of 3 members;
 - will, where possible, consist of a balance of genders;
 - at least one member of the panel (and preferably more) will be current “Safer Recruitment” trained.
- All panel members should ideally participate in both shortlisting and interviews, however, as a minimum at least two panel members must be involved in both of these aspects.
- All panel members will familiarise themselves with the Trust Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure and Avoiding Decision Making Biases Guidance (available via the HR Resources Recruitment Toolkit) prior to taking part in shortlisting or interviewing.
- Panel members must declare any conflict of interest including prior knowledge of any applicant and, where it appears an actual or perceived conflict may exist, the Chair must ensure a record is kept of how any such conflicts were dealt with.
- At the end of the process the appointing officer should ensure all members of the panel complete and sign an interview questions template, clearly recording scores, comments and outcomes. Evidence of questions asked and answers provided should be retained for the appointed candidate for the duration of their employment and for other candidates for six months. Interview question templates should be collected from the panel by the appointing officer and returned to the HR administrator for processing and retention, along with the successful candidate form.
- Panel members should be mindful that their completed interview question templates may be shared with successful or unsuccessful candidates as part of a subject access request. Comments must be fair and transparent and reflect Trust values.

7. Analysis of Post Requirement and Seeking Relevant Approvals

Careful consideration should be given to the financial implications of advertising a post. The financial governance that applies to all our schools is set out in the Trust's approved financial procedures policy, available via WeST's website [Westcountry Schools Trust - Our Policies](#).

Regarding employee appointments, these financial procedures require that recruitment to any post must be authorised in advance by appropriate members of the Trust's Executive Team (CFO and Director of People, plus CEO where judged to be necessary by the CFO).

Posts are advertised and approved through 'My New Term'. [Employer Login | MyNewTerm](#). Through My New Term, vacancies must be authorised by Headteacher, named HR contact and finance lead before final approval and publication by the Trust Executive Team.

8. Review / Production of Job Description and Person Specification

The job description for the vacant post will be reviewed by the appointing officer to ensure it reflects the requirements of the post. If there is no job description, one must be developed by the appointing officer.

The job description will state:

- The main duties and responsibilities of the post
- The postholder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons, including the extent of the contact the person will have with children and their degree of responsibility for them.

The template available within the Recruitment Toolkit should be used for all job descriptions and person specifications.

If the post is new or has had significant changes in responsibility or duties, it must be job evaluated, in association with the named HR contact.

The person specification sets out the selection criteria - specifying the essential and desirable attributes needed by the successful candidate. A person specification template is provided within the Recruitment Toolkit.

These attributes will include:

- Qualifications, experience and any other requirements needed to perform the role
- Competencies, qualities and values that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate, including suitability to work with children and the Trust Core Values of

Compassion, Aspiration, Integrity and Collaboration; articulated through our Values-Based Behaviours

These requirements will be justifiable and clearly defined to show that no section of the community is being unlawfully discriminated against.

9. Advertising the Post

Where to Advertise

Vacancies must be advertised locally via 'My New Term', which creates an automatic feed to DfE teaching vacancies and Google careers. If further marketing platforms are required the Headteacher or appointing officer must consult with their named HR contact and finance lead, due to cost implications. Adverts posted locally by schools/business units are visible and accessible from the WeST My New Term page, as well as other schools across the Trust. In some circumstances the vacancy may only be advertised internally. These decisions must be documented in the notes section of My New Term by the named HR contact, in order to demonstrate the rationale. **Any decision to use recruitment agencies as a means of sourcing candidates must be discussed with HR in order that alignment with this policy and safer recruitment practices can be planned and assured.**

Writing an Advertisement [see Recruitment Toolkit for job advert template, alongside 'My New Term' templates where available]

In accordance with the Trust's Flexible Working Policy, the suitability for flexible working for will be considered for all posts and the Trust's flexible working logo included in advertisements for posting.

Advertisements should be appropriate, cost effective and non-discriminatory and will:

- be based on the details in the job description and the agreed selection criteria in the person specification;
- avoid any gender, age or culturally specific language or implication, e.g., for teaching posts, wording specifically targeting Early Career Framework or MPS Teachers must not be used as this may imply that a younger person is required;
- be clear and precise to attract applicants to seek more detail;
- include the statement: "We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment";
- Include the Trust's flexible working logo where possible;

- give an agreed reason for the appointment being temporary if the post being advertised is for a fixed term or temporary period. For agreed reasons please refer to the Agreed Reasons for Fixed Term Contracts document in the Contracts Toolkit, via the HR Resources;
- Include the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (based on the Trust template).

10. Shortlisting

All applicants, **including those sourced through recruitment agencies**, must complete an application form on My New Term; CVs will not be accepted. **Late applications will not generally be considered, and not once shortlisting has commenced.**

All application forms will be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully completed, and that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies. Any anomalies or gaps in employment will be noted and taken up as part of the consideration of whether to shortlist the candidate. Where applicants are shortlisted, any gaps identified from the application form must be fully explored at interview.

Part 1 of applications from My New Term, should be provided in anonymised format to the panel. Each member of the selection panel must score each applicant privately, on their shortlisting grid, before the overall scores are agreed collectively and the panel agree a final shortlist of applicants to invite to the selection process. A shortlisting template is available in the Recruitment Toolkit.

Shortlisting will be made by reference to the agreed essential and desirable criteria detailed in the person specification.

Applicants will be asked to complete Part 3 on My New Term, an Equality and Diversity Monitoring form. This will be detached from the application form (Part 1) prior to shortlisting and the details securely stored with the shortlisting pack and be retained for a period of 6 months, before being securely disposed of. Applicants will not be eliminated from the shortlist on the grounds of:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ age | ▪ pregnancy and maternity |
| ▪ disability | ▪ race |
| ▪ gender reassignment | ▪ religion or belief |
| ▪ marriage and civil partnership | ▪ sex |

- sexual orientation or

- 'spent convictions' unrelated to the job

other than where a genuine occupational requirement applies.

There are situations when it is possible to specify the sex of the person that we wish to carry out a role, if there is an objective justification for doing so and where this requirement is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Advice will be sought from a school / business units named HR contact before advertising a role where it is believed a genuine occupational requirement applies.

Applicants will not be asked, as a matter of course, to complete generic health questionnaires as part of the shortlisting process.

11. References

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support the selection panel's decisions. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee, not via the candidate themselves. Open references e.g. addressed 'To whom it may concern' are not acceptable. Likewise, references provided directly by the candidate must not accepted or be relied upon.

Following acceptance of invitation to interview via My New Term, references are requested via the system. If the candidate has been working in an educational context, the referee must be the Headteacher, Principal or Director of the establishment.

Regardless of the type of post being applied for, at least two references covering the previous three years' employment history must be provided. One reference must be the applicants current or last employer and must cover the last three years. If that reference does not cover the last three years the previous employer must provide a reference. This also applies to internal candidates. Where candidates do not have 3 years of employment history, appropriate alternative references must be obtained e.g., from education providers. In some circumstances it might not be possible to obtain references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because a candidate does not provide permission for their referee to be approached at this stage.

Requests for references do not include the candidate's sickness record or disability status, in order comply with The Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

To verify the legitimacy of an employment reference under [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) and safer recruitment, it must be obtained directly from the referee's official business address/email. The referee's official business telephone contact information should be used to verify the identity of the referee and receipt of the reference. References will be checked to ensure all questions have been answered satisfactorily and the Chair of the panel or delegated person will contact the referee to request further clarification as appropriate, for example if answers are vague or if insufficient information is provided. The reference should be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form. Any discrepancies present on the application form should be taken up with the candidate. Any inconsistencies present on the reference must be addressed with the referee.

Any concerns arising from a reference must resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed, including for any internal candidate. Where permission is given, obtaining references before interview allows for any concerns to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.

Any information about past disciplinary actions or allegations will be considered carefully when assessing the candidate's suitability for the post.

If a referee fails to return the reference the hiring administrator must contact the organisation to obtain a completed reference or alternative contact details. If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, they must provide a referee from the school, college or local authority at which they were most recently employed.

A risk assessment must be completed by the Headteacher or Appointing Officer for missing references or dates not covered. Some organisations may only provide a factual reference confirming dates of employment; these should be accepted, but must still be verified as outlined above.

Appointing Officers will read the Managers Guidance on Requesting References that is available in the Recruitment Toolkit before requesting and considering references.

12. On Line Search

Once an invitation to interview has been accepted, an online search must be completed as part of the due diligence on all shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school/business unit might want to explore with the applicant at interview. This should be conducted by the hiring administrator who is not involved in the selection panel, by a Google search and review of the top 10 results. The outcome must be recorded using the online search form available in HR resources.

Privacy of applicants must be respected in this process and links to other sites and social media not pursued. Any concerns should be recorded on the online search form and referred to the Headteacher without delay. Completed online search forms for all candidates should be passed to the panel in preparation for the interview.

Completed forms for unsuccessful applicants are retained in the recruitment folder and destroyed after 6 months. For the successful candidate the completed form is stored in their personnel file and recorded on the SCR tracker.

13. Assessment and Selection

Appropriate and effective selection tools and processes will be used and a range of selection methods will be considered in order to test candidates' suitability for the role against the person specification; these should be discussed with HR prior to choices being made. For example, teachers will be observed teaching as well as attending an interview. Suitability for senior and leadership roles particularly should be assessed by a range of selection methods. The selection methods used will be relevant, non-discriminatory and cost effective.

Final selection will be based on a formal structured interview except where this would place a disabled candidate at a substantial disadvantage.

All candidates will be notified in advance, with reasonable notice, of any test / assessment methods to be used.

14. Interview

Each shortlisted candidate will be invited to interview through My New Term and appropriate documentation must be brought to interview for checking identity, qualifications and right to work in the UK (these are portion of the pre-employment checks that are listed in section 21). Candidates must bring original certificates of qualifications and photo identification. Right to work documentation comprises a UK passport or birth certificate with a National Insurance card. Alternatively, non-British passport holders, may provide a share code detailing working visa status. The right to work in the UK evidence must be shown before the interview can take place and photocopies of documentation must be taken and signed by the hiring administrator (or delegate) to certify that originals have been seen.

All shortlisted applicants for posts which are eligible for an Enhanced DBS disclosure will be asked to complete and provide to the interview panel a self-disclosure form on My New Term. Appointing officers will read the Managers Guidance on Self-Disclosure Document in the Recruitment toolkit and follow the procedures in the Disclosure and Barring Service Check Policy when dealing with self-disclosure forms.

Guidance on Interview Questions, including examples, is available in the Recruitment Toolkit.

All interviews must follow Safer Recruitment practices, with at least one panel member who has been Safer Recruitment trained in the last three years. The Trust also requires that as a minimum, all members of the selection panel familiarise themselves with the 'Avoiding Decision-Making Biases Guidance' document before selection begins.

Any outstanding discrepancies or anomalies in the information candidates have provided must be queried and satisfactorily resolved at interview.

Each candidate will be asked:

- the same core set of questions and their answers fully noted. Answers may be probed further as appropriate;
- at least one, or more questions about safeguarding and designed to assess the candidate's suitability to work with children;

- competency questions to assess personal behaviours towards safeguarding, with outcomes being fully recorded;
- One or more questions designed to assess their alignment with the Trust core values of Compassion, Aspiration, Integrity and Collaboration;
- questions which require them to provide evidence-based examples of what they have done, how they have done it and what impact this had;
- to expand upon any unexplained gaps in employment, so that these are fully explored during the interview;
- where appropriate, from the details on the self-disclosure form or online search form, to discuss the circumstances of their declarations either at interview or in a separate meeting;
- to provide verification of their Right to Work in the UK (original documentation will be seen and a copy taken);
- to provide verification of qualifications (original documents will be seen and a copy retained);

Templates and guidance around interviewing is available within the Recruitment Toolkit. WeST holds the expectation that the panel familiarise themselves with all templates and guidance provided in the Recruitment Toolkit before any recruitment process is started. Questions about health will not be routinely asked until after an offer of employment has been made. Interview question notes and assessment form must clearly show the candidate name, be dated, completed in ink and signed by the interviewer.

15. Remote Assessment

In ideal circumstances interview and assessment of shortlisted candidates will take place in person. However, remote assessment via video link and other collaborative tools is an option in exceptional circumstances. Consistency of approach should be maintained between shortlisted candidates to ensure this does not disadvantage any particular group. Guidance and templates for a remote recruitment exercise can be found in the Recruitment Toolkit. These are designed to complement the wider Recruitment Toolkit and the Interview section above, not replace it, where remote recruitment is taking place.

16. Decision Making, Feedback and Offers of Employment

Each member of the selection panel will score each candidate at the end of each interview privately before the overall scores are agreed collectively and the best candidate chosen. If additional selection methods are used, these will be fed into the decision-making process at the end, and the candidate who best meets the selection criteria chosen.

The selection panel will agree feedback for each candidate and record whether each candidate is suitable for appointment, even if not the first-choice candidate. A Recruitment Summary template is available in the Recruitment Toolkit. All candidates will be advised of the likely timescales for a decision and notified of the outcome of the interview as soon as possible. The selection panel will wait until the successful candidate has accepted the offer before informing unsuccessful candidates, unless they are clearly unsuitable for the post.

Interview notes must be retained and passed to the hiring administrator. Interview notes for unsuccessful applicants are retained in the recruitment folder and destroyed after 6 months. For the successful candidate the notes are stored in their personnel file.

All candidates will be offered feedback on their performance during the selection process and an explanation of the decision, if requested.

The initial job offer to the successful candidate will normally be made verbally and followed up in writing via My New Term within seven working days stipulating that appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks (see section 21). Original documents should be produced and a copy of these will be taken and kept on the successful candidate's personal file with the exception of the DBS check.

17. Pay Determination on Appointment

Where a position within the Trust becomes vacant the Responsible Officer will determine the pay range for the vacancy prior to advertising it and, on appointment, will determine the starting salary within that range to be offered to the successful candidate.

For teachers the Trust will normally apply the principle of pay portability in making pay determinations for all new employees. The values of previous TLR or other allowance payments are not portable.

For support staff the grade for the role will be determined in accordance with the nominated Job Evaluation scheme (NJC or GLPC) administered by HR. Pay will commence at the bottom point of the grade unless the current or previous salary, or the level of experience, warrants otherwise.

Evidence must be sought of the candidate's current pay point.

18. Record Retention

The certified copies of documents checked at the interview stage for unsuccessful applicants are destroyed after the position has been accepted. For the successful candidate the certified copies are stored in their personnel file and recorded on the SCR tracker.

The following documents must be fully completed, signed and passed to the HR administrator to be confidentially retained for a minimum of 6 months (see section 16):

- assessment and selection criteria used (person specification);
- application of assessment and selection criteria (e.g., application form);
- interview and other selection method notes (e.g., question proformas, test results);
- reasons for decisions made on interview notes and/or shortlisting grid;
- any additional information such as copies of qualifications, etc;
- correspondence in My New Term
- references.

All recruitment paperwork for the successful candidate will be retained on their personnel file. Individuals are able to access all the paperwork relating to their recruitment process in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.

19. Eligibility to Work in the UK

Under the immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 it is a criminal offence to employ someone without entitlement or permission to work in the UK. Section 15 of the Act requires all employers in the UK to make basic document checks on **every** person before they start work to help ensure that they do not employ illegal workers. Employers are also required to recheck documents at least every 12 months if the employee has time-limited leave to enter or remain in the UK. Employers incur a significant fine if they employ an illegal worker. A new offence of knowingly employing an illegal worker can incur an unlimited fine and / or up to five years' imprisonment.

To ensure that recruitment practices are not discriminatory, **all** short-listed applicants, regardless of their colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origin, will be asked to produce original documents as evidence of their right to work in the UK. Applicants should bring evidence of their right to work in the UK to their interview if shortlisted (see section 14).

Where a preferred candidate requires a Skilled Worker Visa (previously Tier 2 General) status to work for the Trust the appointing officer will contact their named HR contact for advice before an offer of employment is confirmed.

20. Overseas Trained Teachers (OTTs)

OTTs are allowed to work as unqualified teachers for a maximum of four years without the need to gain qualified teacher status (QTS).

Details can be found in the Guidance from the DfE on Overseas Trained Teachers [Teach in England if you trained outside the UK | Get Into Teaching GOV.UK](#)

21. Appointments

Pre-employment checks

- An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:
- verification of the right to work in the UK (original documents will be seen and a copy retained – section 14)
- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if those have not already been received – see section 12);
- verification of the candidate's identity (original documentation will be seen and a copy taken at interview stage);
- where appropriate, a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check (before working unsupervised with children) – copies of certificates are not retained, but originals must be seen and the date recorded (or the DBS update service used) – see sections 22 and 23.
- barred list checks;
- pre-employment health questionnaire;

- verification of qualifications (original documents will be seen and a copy retained at interview stage);
- verification of professional status where required e.g., TRA registration;
- QTS status teaching qualification certificate and QTS number;
- For teaching posts - verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7th May 1999) for newly qualified teachers (before 1st September 2021) or early career teachers (from 1st September 2021);
- For non-teaching posts - satisfactory completion of the probationary period;
- If appropriate, declaration by the employee that they are not disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 (see below);
- For qualified teachers applying for support staff posts - a check against the TRA registration list to establish whether the applicant has been deregistered from the teaching profession;
- A check that a person taking up a management position is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State;
- Completion of an online check by an appropriate member of staff not included in the selection panel.

22. DBS Checks

The Trust will process disclosure checks at Enhanced level for all eligible roles, with appropriate Barred List checks for those roles that meet the criteria for Regulated Activity. This will include all roles based on or regularly visiting school sites.

A section 128 check will also be undertaken for all those whose roles relate to the management of the school, including the Headteacher/Principal. This process provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC) regardless or not of whether they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

In addition, an enhanced check will also include any approved information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed

to the employer. The barred list check also enables the Trust to see whether the individual appears on the children's barred list and is therefore unsuitable to work with children.

For those roles not eligible for an Enhanced level DBS check, an assessment will be made of eligibility for a Standard level disclosure check and where eligible this will be processed. A Basic level DBS check will be processed for all roles that are not eligible for either an Enhanced or Standard disclosure check.

The original DBS certificate must be seen and the certificate number recorded on the SCR prior to the individual commencing employment.

Where a new starter has not received their DBS certificate prior to their start date, a risk assessment must be completed. This will record agreed appropriate supervision, all other pre-employment checks, including a separate children's barred list check, and any other measures that must remain in until the original DBS certificate has been seen and a record made to confirm this.

Where information is contained within the DBS, this will be discussed with the individual in order to carry out an assessment of any risk this poses. Information contained within the DBS certificate does not automatically mean that an individual is unsuitable for employment. A decision on suitability will be made following a risk assessment being completed with the individual in order to record the discussion and the outcome reached. As part of these considerations it is important to consider what information was disclosed by the individual at each stage of the recruitment process, as well as the role that the individual has applied for.

DBS checks do not have an expiry date and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE) does not require the routine renewal of DBS checks. The Trust does not operate a system of routine renewals, however, all staff will be asked annually to confirm if there have been changes to their DBS status (annual compliance checks). In the case on an internal appointment, where a Basic or Standard DBS check is in place, and there is a change to an eligible role, an Enhanced level DBS check must be undertaken as outlined above. Please see the Trust's Disclosure and Barring Checks Policy for further information.

23. DBS Update Service

Individuals can register for the DBS Update Service at the point they are issued with their DBS certificate. This enables future status checks to be carried out to confirm that no new information has been added to the certificate since its issue and provides portability across employers. There is an annual fee for this service which is the responsibility of the individual to pay.

Before checking the DBS update service, the HR administrator must obtain consent from the individual. They should then confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity and see the original certificate to ensure it is at the appropriate level of check.

Following this, the HR administrator is able to complete a free online check which would identify whether there has been any change to the information recorded since the initial certificate was issued. Individuals will be notified each time an organisation accesses their records.

Where applicants are already signed up to the DBS Update service, and providing the individual consents, the Trust can access the update service in order to check the individual is suitable for employment with children. The date this check was completed should be recorded on the SCR.

A new enhanced DBS certificate would only be required if the original DBS was not at the required level previously.

24. Teacher Prohibition Checks

Teacher prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools and other specified settings. A person who is prohibited must not be appointed to a role that involves teaching work in such establishments. Teacher prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). The Secretary of State is able to issue an interim prohibition order if it is considered to be in the public interest to do so.

The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 define each of the following activities as teaching work:

- Planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils.
- Delivering lessons to pupils.
- Assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils.
- Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

The regulations provide that these activities do not constitute teaching work if they are carried out under the direction or supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the Headteacher to provide such direction and supervision.

When appointing to a Teaching Assistant post or if an existing employee's role changes, this check will normally be required if they are undertaking unsupervised and undirected teaching work (e.g., HLTA) as an integral part of their role.

The Trust must undertake Teacher Prohibition Checks when an individual indicates they have qualified teacher status and/or have worked as a teacher previously but are applying for a support staff post such as a Teaching Assistant.

N.B. A prohibition order will normally prevent someone from being considered for a Teaching Assistant role where they are undertaking unsupervised and undirected teaching work (e.g., HLTA) as an integral part of their role. This would be discussed with the individual as part of the risk assessment process.

To complete this check, the authorised person in the school will log into Teacher Services on the Secure Access Portal and conduct a 'teacher status check'. This process will also verify the teacher's Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and the completion of the teacher induction.

Providing this check is satisfactory, the person responsible in the school will record the date this check was completed on the SCR. Where issues are raised, this will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity. The Headteacher will arrange to discuss the concerns with the individual and will make a record of this discussion and the outcome reached.

25. Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

Employees are covered by this legislation if they are employed and / or provide early years childcare (this covers the age range from birth until 1 September following a child's fifth birthday i.e., up to and including reception age) or later years childcare (this covers children above reception age but who have not attained the age of 8) in nursery, primary or secondary school settings, or if they are directly concerned with the management of such childcare. This includes:

- Early years provision - employees who provide any care for a child up to and including reception age. This includes education in nursery and reception classes and / or any supervised activity (such as breakfast clubs, lunchtime supervision and after school care provided by the school) both during and outside of school hours for children in the early years age range; and
- Later years provision (for children under 8) - employees who are employed to work in childcare provided by the school outside of school hours for children who are above reception age but who have not attained the age of 8. This does not include education or supervised activity for children above reception age during school hours (including extended school hours for co-curricular learning activities, such as the school's choir or sports teams) but it does include before school settings, such as breakfast clubs, and after school provision.

Further information can be found in the DfE Statutory Guidance on Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 issued in February 2015

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

26. Checks for Section 128 Directions

A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts an unsuitable individual from taking part in the management of a school.

An individual who is subject to a section 128 direction is unable to:

- Take up a management position in a school as an employee.
- Be a trustee of a school trust.
- Be a governor on any governing body in a school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities.

Individuals involved with management as part of their duties include Executive Heads, Headteachers, any teaching positions on the senior leadership team (SLT) and any teaching positions which carry department leadership. When recruiting for other posts such as teachers with additional responsibilities, these may fall under the requirements of section 128, but it depends on the facts of each case. In such cases, advice should be taken from HR to ensure appropriate pre-employment checks are completed in advance of employment commencing.

A section 128 direction will show on an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, provided that 'children's workforce independent schools' is specified in the parameters for the barred list check. However, the Teacher Services' system via the Secure Access Portal should also be checked as the DBS route cannot be used for individuals not involved in regulated activity (e.g. governor on a governing body in a school, or trustee of an academy trust).

Providing this check is satisfactory, the person responsible in the school will record the date this check was completed on the SCR. Where issues are raised, this will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity. The Headteacher will arrange to discuss the concerns with the individual and will make a record of this discussion and the outcome reached.

27. Overseas Checks

All foreign nationals including UK citizens who have lived or worked overseas in the previous 5 years (in a fixed permanent overseas address for a continuous period of 6 months or more) must provide a Certificate of Good Conduct (CGC) or overseas criminal record check, in addition to immigration documentation. The applicant will need to provide a CGC or overseas criminal record for every country in which residency or employment is relevant and it should be requested in English otherwise translation costs may be incurred.

If a restriction has been imposed by another EEA regulating authority, it does not prevent an individual from taking up a teaching post in England, but the Trust must consider the circumstances that led to the restriction/sanction being imposed when considering the individual's suitability for employment.

Since 1 January 2021, following the UK's exit from the EU, professional regulators in the EEA (EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) no longer share information about sanctions imposed on EEA teachers with the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). The TRA therefore no longer maintain a list of EEA teachers with sanctions.

The Trust is required to seek information from an individual's criminal history from their country of origin or in which they have been working and/or travelling. The individual must provide a certificate of good conduct (or similar) form the relevant authorities. It is often sensible and most time effective for the individual to apply for/obtain this from the country prior to returning to the UK as it sometimes needs to be requested in person.

N.B. Overseas checks must be completed prior to an individual commencing employment. The Home Office has published guidance on criminal checks for overseas applicants and guidance on employing overseas trained teachers. This can be accessed via the www.gov.uk website.

28.Contracts of employment

All employees must be provided with written details of the main terms and conditions of employment on or before their start date in post as per the statutory stipulation. This is known as the Statement of Particulars. The preferred approach is to provide this as soon as practicably possible after confirmation of employment and certainly to allow for signature and return at least two weeks prior to the contract start date.

The type of contract and the terms and conditions of employment will be clear and appropriate for the category of job and the needs of the service. If the contract is temporary the reason for this will be written in the contract.

Successful candidates must sign the contract and return the complete document, within two weeks. The HR administrator must store this in their personnel records.

29.Administration

All employment checks, including qualifications, DBS, identity and right to work in the UK will be placed on a single central record at the school which will be subject to Ofsted inspection. Evidence of compliance with safer recruitment practices should be retained on the personnel file. This includes a copy of the advertisement, shortlisting grid and annotated interview questions.

30. Single Central Record

We maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks, in accordance with statutory requirements. The Single Central Record will, as a minimum, contain details of the following:

For all employees who are employed to work at the academy, including teacher trainees on salaried routes:

- date of identity check
- date of enhanced DBS check/certificate
- date of Children's Barred List check
- date of check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom
- dates of receipt of satisfactory references
- date and outcome of prohibition from teaching check (if required)
- date and outcome of section 128 check (if required)
- date(s) of further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK, including
- recording checks for teacher sanctions and restrictions from other countries
- date of receipt of professional qualifications (if required)

For all individuals who are employed as supply staff through an agency:

- date of receipt of written confirmation that all relevant checks have been carried out and are satisfactory, including receipt of Enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List (where the role amounts to regulated activity)
- date when the individual's DBS certificate was seen in academy
- whether the DBS certificate contained any disclosures

For all individuals serving as members or Trustees for Westcountry Schools Trust

- date of identity check
- date of enhanced DBS check/certificate
- date and outcome of section 128 check (if required)

In addition, we maintain on our Single Central Record details of safer recruitment checks for all employees related to online searches, mental and physical health check and Childcare Disqualification, as required. We also records details of checks undertaken with respect to volunteers, Trustees and those involved in the local tier of governance, , contractors, and Westcountry Schools Trust central team employees.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring compliance of their Single Central Record. The Director of Safeguarding report to Trustees and the Safeguarding Trustee is responsible for monitoring the Headteacher's oversight of the Single Central Record, and for regularly reporting the outcome of such monitoring to the Trust Board. This activity will be supported by Trust HR and Director of Safeguarding. In the case of those sections of the Single Central Record managed centrally, i.e. Westcountry Schools Trust central team, , the responsibility for ensuring compliance is delegated to the Director of People and the Director of Safeguarding.

31. Transfers between WeST schools/academies

All members of staff are employees of the Trust, and may transfer to another academy within the Trust as a result of redeployment, secondment or due to personal choice.

In the case of redeployment or secondment, we will request a letter of assurance from the previous academy stating the date and outcome of all safer recruitment checks, and confirmation of any concerns relating to the employee's conduct and behaviour. The individual remains the employee of the Trust, so a new enhanced DBS is not required. In the event that the employee moves from a role not in regulated activity to a role that is in regulated activity, a Children's Barred List check will be sought.

In the case of an employee moving to a new role following successful appointment via a recruitment process, we will request a letter of assurance from the previous academy

stating the date and outcome of all safer recruitment checks, and confirmation of any concerns relating to the employee's conduct and behaviour. In addition, new references specific to the new role will be completed, alongside any other checks required by the new role that were not previously required, i.e. a Section 128 check for a teacher moving to a leadership position. As above, the individual remains the employee of the Trust, so a new enhanced DBS is not required. In the event that the employee moves from a role not in regulated activity to a role that is in regulated activity, a Children's Barred List check will be sought.

In the event of any concerns being shared at any point throughout the transfer process, we may choose to apply for additional checks to those stated above in order to verify information that has been shared, and to seek assurances about the employee's continued suitability to work with children

32. Induction

The Appointing Officer will make appropriate induction arrangements for all newly appointed employees, which must include Level 2 Safeguarding Training. An Induction Booklet template is available in the Recruitment Toolkit for school-based induction items. The West induction booklet will be uploaded to ESS once the new employee starts.

In accordance with the *Keeping Children Safe in Education* statutory guidance, new employees will, as part of induction, be given a copy of 'Part one' of that guidance. The school/business unit will also provide a copy of (or provide access to) the *Child Protection and Safeguarding, Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing and Low-Level Concerns* policies and, for Schools, the *Behaviour Policy* with the expectation being that these are read fully and understood. A record will be made and kept on personnel file of these documents having been provided and / or signposted as part of the induction. New employees will also receive training in the systems within the school which support safeguarding, including the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where applicable, Principals / Headteachers will support ECT teachers to complete the statutory induction programme for Early Career Framework Teachers.

33. Probationary Period (Support Staff)

The performance of new support staff will be rigorously monitored during a probationary period of six months with close attention being paid to learning needs and performance issues. The line manager will read and follow the Trust Probationary Policy in managing the probationary period of a new member of support staff.

New support staff will have a probationary review meeting with their line manager 3 months and 5 months after they commence employment with the Trust. A record of this will be provided to the new member of support staff with a copy held on their personnel file. Template forms are available in the Recruitment Toolkit.

Advice will be sought at an early stage from the school / business units named HR contact if there are performance concerns about a new member of support staff.

Completed probation will be confirmed by the line manager in writing and the completed probation ITrent page completed by the HR Administrator.

34. Agency Staff and Peripatetic Staff

The Trust will only use those agencies which operate Safer Recruitment procedures. The Trust must obtain written confirmation from any agency, third party organisation or contractor to assure itself that all relevant safeguarding and pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed. Any information disclosed as part of the DBS checks will be treated confidentially.

In relation to an enhanced DBS certificate, the written confirmation must confirm a certificate has been obtained by the employer (e.g. the agency). Where a position requires a barred list check (where an individual will be engaged in regulated activity), this must also be included in the confirmation from the agency, third party organisation or contractor.

All of the above checks must be confirmed in writing to the Trust prior to the individual arriving at the relevant site for work.

The school will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives on site in order to

ensure the person presenting to them is the same person that the checks have been confirmed for. This will involve checking the individual's identification by seeing a driving licence (photo card) or passport or other official photo ID card.

School must notify HR immediately if there are any safeguarding issues with supply staff.

35. Self Employed Status

Where an individual is required to work in the Trust and has self-employed status, it will be necessary for relevant checks to be completed prior to them providing their services to the Trust. This includes identity checks and ensuring they have the right to work in the UK.

If they are going to be engaged in regulated activity, working unsupervised or could fall within the categories of frequent or intensive, consideration should be given to obtaining a DBS certificate for the individual as self-employed individuals are not able to make an application directly to DBS. However, the Trust recognises that this process will provide an individual with a DBS certificate in the name of the Trust which potentially could be taken elsewhere.

36. Volunteers

Recruitment of volunteers will be in line with this policy and all appropriate recruitment checks should be made on volunteers as would be done for substantive, fixed-term and temporary employees.

A volunteer who is not engaging in regulated activity but has the opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis (e.g., a supervised volunteer) must have an enhanced DBS certificate, but there is no requirement for this to include barred list information. The Trust is not legally permitted to request barred list information on a volunteer who, because they are supervised, is not in regulated activity.

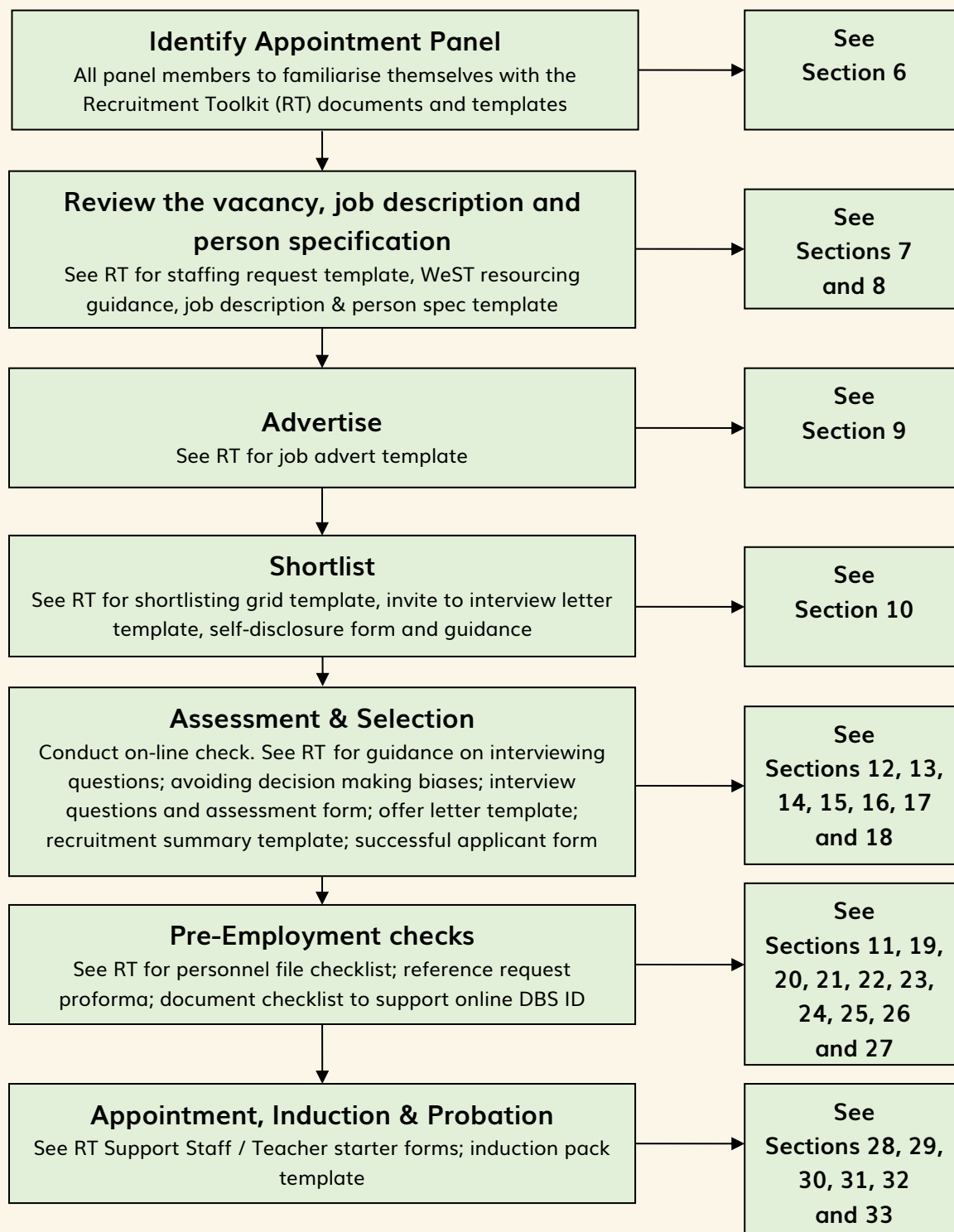
37. Casual Workers

Recruitment of casual workers will be in line with this policy and all appropriate checks will be made on casual workers as would be done for substantive, fixed-term and temporary employees.

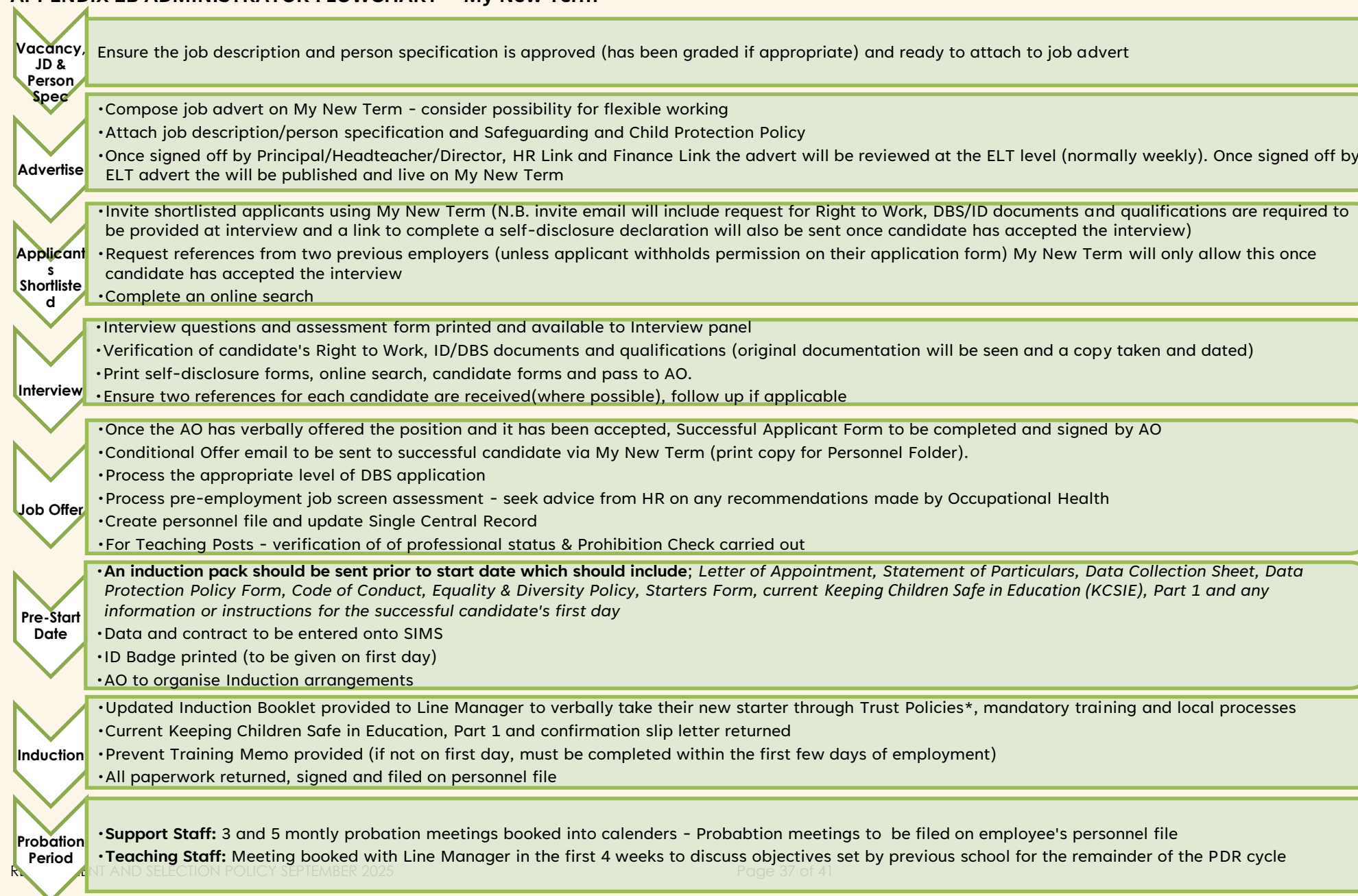
38. Further Advice

For further advice and guidance on any aspect of this policy please contact your named HR Advisor or hr@westst.org.uk

APPENDIX 1A – Recruitment and Selection Flowchart



APPENDIX 1B ADMINISTRATOR FLOWCHART – My New Term



APPENDIX 2 – Key Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Legislation specifying employment rights:

- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Fixed Term Employee Regulations 2002
- Part-time Workers Regulations 2000 (Amendment) 2002
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Immigration Act 2016, Part 7 – Fluency Duty

Equality legislation:

Equality legislation covers all aspects of the recruitment and employment process and protects applicants with “protected characteristics” against discrimination. “Protected characteristics” are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Legislation and guidance for the protection of children:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Working together to safeguard children March 2015
- Keeping children safe in education DfE (latest nationally published version)

Legislation, policy and guidance giving rights of access to information at of all stages of the recruitment process:

- UK General data Protections Regulations (UK GDPR) (2018)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Equality Standard for Local Government
- Best Recruitment Practice
- Conditions of Service
- DBS Code of Practice (amended 2016)
- Education Act (2002)
- Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations (2003)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025)
- Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) (as amended 2013 and 2020)
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable groups Act (2006)
 - UK General data Protections Regulations (UK GDPR) (2018)

Policy History

Policy Date	Summary of change	Contact / Responsibility for Policy	Version/ Implementation Date	Review Date
January 2016	Recruitment and Selection Policy updated in line with Keeping children safe in education guidance. This version replaces the Schools Recruitment Policy 2011	HR One	January 2016	As necessary and appropriate
February 2017	Recruitment and Selection Policy updated in line with Keeping children safe in education statutory guidance September 2016 version and to take account of public sector fluency duty	HR One	February 2017	As necessary and appropriate
May 2017	Updated in line with MAT details and link to Fluency Duty Policy for further guidance and change the MAT name	WeST	May 2017	As necessary and appropriate
September 2017	Publication date	WeST HR	September 2017	As necessary and appropriate
February 2018	Updated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance September 2018. Updated in line with Data Protection Act 2018 legislation. Appendix 1B inserted. Safer recruitment guidance on references inserted.	WeST HR	March 2019	As necessary and appropriate
August 2021	Updated so reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance is not date specific, to take criminal record check changes into account, incorporate Trust Values, incorporate remote recruitment developments, include change from NQT to ECFT, promote use of recruitment toolkit and	WeST HR	December 2021	As necessary and appropriate.

	expand on support staff probationary period requirements.			
June 2023	Removal of references to local governing boards, replacing with Hub Advisory Board / Removal of references to gender	WeST HR	September 2023	September 2025
May 2025	Clarification of responsibility for tasks involved at school level. Clarification of retention times for applicants. Updates in light of My New Term usage. Updates in light of ITrent usage. Clarification and further depth about the processes involved and how they are carried out. Legislation updates. Update of induction booklet for staff. Update of flowchart in appendix. Update of right to recruit and CAF process. Clarification of process for transfers between academies. Clarification of DBS, teacher prohibition checks. Addition of volunteers and agency staff guidance. Further depth regarding the single central record.	West HR	September 2025	September 2027