



ELMGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Safer Recruitment – Guidance for Applicants

As a Harrow Council maintained school we follow the Council's policy below. However, in accordance with Child Protection and Keeping Children Safe in Education we have added a section at the end of the policy titled 'Additional School Processes'

September 2024
Next review September 2025

There have been no changes to the Harrow Council policy and the school has amended CRB to DBS. There have also not been any changes to the key policy called 'Additional School Processes' on this policy.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this summary is describes the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- attract the best applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

There are some statutory requirements for the appointment of some staff in Children's Services – notably qualified teachers and social workers. These requirements change from time-to-time and must be met.

IDENTIFICATION OF RECRUITERS

Children's Services will ensure that all interview panel members have received training in recruitment and selection and are aware of safer recruitment practice.

INVITING APPLICATIONS

Advertisements for posts – whether in newspapers, journals or on-line – will include the statement:



"This post is subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure."

Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

- job description and person specification;
- Children's Services safer recruitment policy (this document);
- the selection process for the post;
- an application form

All applicants must complete the council application form in full. If completed online, shortlisted applicants will be required to sign their form in person at interview.

SHORTLISTING AND REFERENCES

Shortlisting of applicants will be against the person specification for the post.

References will be taken up as part of the final selection stage, prior to any start date being agreed, so that any discrepancies can be addressed during the selection stage.

References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted. References will be sought in writing from the employing organisation. Referees will be contacted to verify references provided and where necessary, to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of these exchanges.

Note: references will be verified.

Should applicants only be able to provide personal / character referees consideration will be given to other relevant methods.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Referees will always be provided with the job description and person specification for the post, and asked specific questions about:

- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children;



- the candidate's suitability for the post.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of shortlisted candidates.

Interviews will always be face-to-face. Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face interview (which may be via visual electronic link).

Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters;
- to declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure;
- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

All successful applicants will be required:

- to provide photographic proof of identity
- to complete an online DBS disclosure application, with satisfactory identity proofs, and receive satisfactory clearance
- to provide actual certificates of qualifications
- to complete a confidential health questionnaire
- to provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK

INDUCTION

All staff who are new to the council will receive induction training that will include appropriate safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices for their area, arranged through their line manager within the first 2 months.

Regular meetings will be held during the first 3 months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s).



Note: All new recruits are subject to a probationary period during which performance and suitability to work with children are monitored.

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL PROCESSES

The school also ensure the following are carried out in accordance with KCSIE Sept 2024.

Safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

Safer Recruitment Policy

Recruitment and selection process

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children - **Advert**
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken - **Advert**
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children – **Teacher application form**
- 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 – **Teacher application form**

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) – **application forms**
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders – **application pack on website**

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 – **Gaps investigated during interview**
- Explore all potential concerns – **notes are added to application forms and questions asked at interview stage**

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:

- If they have a criminal history – **staff disqualification form**



- Whether they are included on the barred list – **staff disqualification form**
- Whether they are prohibited from teaching – **staff disqualification form**
- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales – **staff disqualification form**
- Any relevant overseas information – **oversea worker declaration form**

Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process. –

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will try to obtain references before interview. However, all offers of employment are identified on the offer letter as being subject to satisfactory references. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview – **HT signs off all references and explores any concerns**

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person.
- Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the 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
- 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

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this – **notes made on application form**
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children – **notes made on application form**
- Record all information considered and decisions made – **notes made on application form**

Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:



- Verify their identity – **right to work and DBS documentation original documentation obtained**
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available – **N/A but we do a barred list check as normal on all staff**
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities – **occupational health referral must be completed prior to starting.**
- 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 – **originals kept on file**
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate - **originals kept on file**
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher – **checks carried out on Dfe website and recorded on SCR**
- 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 check 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

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual fall 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