



St Hilda's School
HARPENDEN
Caring, Curious & Confident

Safer Recruitment Policy

Important Note

Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda's School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

REVIEW DATE: October 2022

REVIEWED BY: Dan Sayers (Headmaster), Dani Taylor (Business Manager)

SIGNED: *Dan Sayers,*

DATED: 13 October 2022

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. St Hilda's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

In line with recent legislation including the Children Act 2004, KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education) 2021, The Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2018), and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the school takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, the school is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The objectives of the Safer Recruitment policy are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at St Hilda's School.



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the school's compliance with them.
- At least one member of staff has completed safer recruitment training and attends regular updates.

It is the responsibility of the Headmaster and other Senior Staff involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school.
- To promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations, the Board of Directors has delegated responsibility to the Headmaster (Teaching staff, Compliance Officer and Headmaster's PA), and Business Manager (Support staff) to lead in all appointments. Members of the Governing Body may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the Headmaster.

RECRUITMENT AND VETTING CHECKS

All Staff and members of the Governing Body are entered on a Single Central Register (SCR).

Advert

The recruitment advert will include: the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children and state that safeguarding checks will be undertaken, and the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification

Application Forms

We do not accept copies of curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

Our comprehensive application forms include;

- personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number;
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) **including reasons for any gaps in employment;**
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- details of referees/references (see below for further information); and
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification



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- a section on data protection, criminal records and a safeguarding declaration. The criminal records statement states *"It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position at the School"*

Shortlisting

We will ensure that at least two staff members carry out the shortlisting exercise, usually the same staff to carry out the interview. Inconsistencies, concerns and gaps in employment are explored.

We will carry out an online search as part of the due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the School can explore with the applicant at interview.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete and sign a disqualification self-declaration, this information is not used to decide who is shortlisted. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy at the point of interview.

Employment history and references

Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought prior to interview to allow any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. They are obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Direct contact, either by telephone or face-to-face, will be made with each referee to verify the reference. We will ensure that we are satisfied that the applicant is suitable to work with children.

We will seek to:

- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations);
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed;
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer;
- always verify any information with the person who provided the reference;
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source;
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided;
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post; and,



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- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

Selection and Interview

Other than in exceptional circumstances (lockdowns), face-to-face interviews will form part of the recruitment process.

At least two senior members of staff will interview the candidates. Structured questions are agreed beforehand and include a range of safeguarding questions. The applicants are asked about their motivation for working with children, skills and experience of working with children relevant to the role, gaps in employment and any frequent changes in employment or location. Candidates are asked to provide documentation to verify their identity, usually a birth certificate, passport and/or driver licence.

Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

All offers of appointment are conditional until satisfactory completion of these mandatory pre-employment checks including the identity checks done at interview.

DBS Disclosure

An enhanced DBS disclosure is required for all new appointments engaging in regulated activity in the school, except where the person has worked in a relevant post within three months prior to appointment.

A separate children's barred list check will be obtained if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available.

Individuals will be asked to declare any convictions, cautions or reprimands, warnings or bind-overs that may have been incurred. Since 2013 the Disclosure Barring Service have introduced transportable DBSs through the update service, the original physical certificate must still be obtained.

Prohibition from Teaching/Management

These checks will be made prior to appointment using the Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA) Employer Access Service. Management of the school includes (but is not limited to) headteachers, deputy/assistant headteachers, governors.

Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children will be asked to sign a Medical Consent Form declaring that they have the appropriate physical and mental capacity for the specific role.

Qualification Requirements

Candidates must be able to demonstrate they have obtained any academic or vocational qualifications legally required for the post and claimed in their application. The Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA)



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Employer Access Service will be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

Overseas checks

All new appointments, where persons have lived outside the UK, are subject to additional checks as deemed necessary.

Regulated activity

In summary, a staff member will be engaging in regulated activity with children if, because of their work, they:

- will be responsible, on a regular basis, for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children;
- will be working on a regular basis in the school, for or in connection with the purposes of St Hildas, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children; or
- engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

We therefore consider all our staff members to be involved in regulated activity and will carry out the full vetting checks necessary.

This policy will be reviewed annually, by the Senior Leadership Team, in line with the school's review schedule for policies.