

“Treat everyone you meet with dignity. Love your spiritual family. Revere (worship) God. This is the kind of life you’ve been invited into, the kind of life Christ lived. He never did one thing wrong, Not once said anything amiss. “

1 Peter Chapter 2: Verse 17-23



Safer Recruitment Policy

Author:	Executive Principal
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Introduction

Our Academy vision is “Living Well Together with Dignity, Faith and Hope”. We aspire to take dignified decisions and afford dignity to all members of our community, regardless of background or circumstance. Our position as a Voluntary Aided Church Academy means that the Christian faith has a central role in all of our actions and decisions. We strive for excellence in all that we do, enabling our student to transform their lives and to hope for happy and successful futures.

This policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students by ensuring that we have implemented procedures designed to prevent unsuitable people having contact with our students. This policy applies to the whole Academy and it is produced in line with the guidance given by the DfE as defined in “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (September 2023) in conjunction with “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2015) and it forms an element of the Academy’s Safeguarding Policy (updated September 2017).

Aims

The aims of our Safer Recruitment policy are to ensure dignity for staff and students in order:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability
- To ensure that all applicants are considered equally and fairly and to ensure that no applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015) and any guidance published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Ofsted
- To ensure that the Academy meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Staff involved in the recruitment and selection of employees are responsible for familiarising themselves with the provisions of this policy and for complying with the procedures set out within it. It is unlawful for the Academy to employ anyone who is not eligible to work in the UK and/or barred from working with children and it is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position in the Academy.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Governors

Governors are responsible for ensuring that the Academy has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment and that these are compliant with DfE and legal requirements. Compliance with these policies and procedures must be monitored.

2. Principal (and other Managers involved in recruitment)

Managers involved in recruitment are responsible for ensuring that the Academy operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the Academy. Managers are also responsible for monitoring contracts’ and agencies’ compliance with safer recruitment procedures. The welfare and dignity of children and young people should be promoted at every stage of the recruitment process.

The Governing Body has delegated responsibility to the Principal and other Managers to lead on all appointments. Governors may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with the Principal.

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

1. Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, all vacant posts will be advertised to as wide a field of applicant as possible via mynewterm and TES. All advertisements will make clear reference to the Academy’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; 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.

2. Application Forms

Applications may only be made by completing the Academy’s own application form; the mynewterm application form or TES application form; CVs are not accepted. Applicants are required to provide information about their academic and full employment history, their suitability for the role. In addition, applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history. Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted. They include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity).

Application forms will include a declaration from the applicant regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974). All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected or referral to the police/DBS.

3. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Job Descriptions are finalised prior to taking any other step in the recruitment process. They accurately and clearly set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role. The Person Specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise required to do the job.

4. Shortlisting

Shortlisting involves minimum of 2 people and will consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons for them and explore all potential concerns. Shortlisted candidates have 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. Information requested includes if they have a criminal history; included on barred list; prohibited from teaching; any criminal offences committed in any country with the law as applicable in England and Wales; known to police and children’s local authority social care and if they have been disqualified from providing childcare.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, the Academy will carry out an online search to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online including, but not limited to, general Google searches and information available on social media accounts. The Academy may explore the outcome of the search further with the applicant at interview. Any information found will be kept safe and secure, and will only be shared with those directly involved with the recruitment process for the post concerned.

5. References

References are obtained on shortlisted candidates prior to interview, unless the applicant has expressly indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In the event that this is not achievable, they will always be taken up before any offer of employment is confirmed. Reference requests will include specific enquiries about the applicant’s background in relation to safeguarding.

All offers of employment are subject to the receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant’s current, or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from this context if possible. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and any anomalies or discrepancies will be followed up. The Academy does not accept “open” references, testimonials or references from relatives and we do not rely on applicants to obtain their own reference. All references will be vetted and verified that they have come from the person, to whom the request was sent and we will ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source. Data provided on references is compared against the information provided on the application form and any inconsistencies are raised with the candidate. Any concerns are resolved before an appointment is confirmed.

Post-interview references are requested for successful candidates in order to obtain details of absence records and continuity of service.

6. Interviews

All applicants invited to interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications in the form of original documents. Interviews will be face to face, except in extreme circumstances and wherever possible will include at least three interviewers, one of

whom will have completed Safer Recruitment Training. Applicants will be specifically asked if they wish to notify the recruiting panel of any information and any gaps in employment will be discussed or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently and will explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate’s suitability to work with children. All information is recorded on interview record sheet. Safeguarding will be addressed through the structure of interview schedule by the interviewer who has completed Safer Recruitment Training. Additionally, the Selection Panel should sign each other’s interview notes before the paperwork is passed to the HR Manager.

7. Offers of Appointment

All offer letters state that the offer of appointment is conditional. In accordance with the recommendations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Academy carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the 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 as a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These include criminal records checks for overseas applicants and for teaching positions 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
- All information is recorded on the school’s single central record (SCR) and copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals personnel files.

Proof will need to be provided of all legal name changes.

All appointments are subject to a probationary period, during which time a reduced notice period applies, enabling termination of the employment for whatever reason in a shorter time frame than would normally apply under the standard terms of their contract. The Academy’s disciplinary and capability procedures do not apply during this probationary period. The Academy reserves the right to extend this probationary period should it deem this necessary.

While it is normal for DBS checks to be completed in advance of the employee taking up their position, it may be possible for employment to commence where all other recruitment checks have been completed satisfactorily, providing that the new employee is kept under supervision at all times. A Risk Assessment will be carried out to ensure all risks have been identified and actioned accordingly.

Promotion

All internal promotions will be subject to the same checks outlined above to ensure any internal appointments are in line with this Safer Recruitment Policy.

Agency staff

Agencies will be required to ensure evidence is provided to ensure all supply staff have been subject to the checks outlined above. 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 as follows:

- 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 check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

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.

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
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.

Governors

All trustees, governors and local members will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if they are working in regulated activity (without barred list information if not); a section 128 check; identification check; right to work in the UK check and other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

8. Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme that clearly identifies the Academy’s policies and procedures for safeguarding, including the Safeguarding Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Staff Conduct Policy.

9. Single Centralised Register (SCR)

A single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks (SCR) is maintained in accordance with national requirements. The SCR will contain the following details:

- All employees of the Academy
- All employees contracted as supply staff
- All staff of contractors who are in the Academy on a regular basis
- All peripatetic teachers and coaches
- All volunteers who work regularly within the Academy
- All Governors of the Academy

10. Record Retention

The records of successful applicants will be retained on their personnel file. These will include documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and qualifications. Photocopies of all documents belonging to unsuccessful candidates will be destroyed six months after the recruiting process, in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018).

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body has delegated to the Principal the responsibility for reviewing the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The Governing Body will approve all major changes to this policy. The policy will be promoted and published throughout the Academy.

Related Academy Policies and Documents:

- Disclosure & Barring Policy
- Equality Policy
- Keeping children safe in education: information for all school and college staff (not a policy but a document)
- Safeguarding Policy