



Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy

Document Version: 5
Ratified by: Board of Governors
Reviewed by: Headteacher
Date last reviewed: Spring 2024
Date to be reviewed: Spring 2027

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Policy Checklist

Is the policy from a good/outstanding source?	✓
Does the policy reflect the good practice demonstrated in school?	✓
Has the policy been cross referenced with up-to-date guidance?	✓

Amendments:

June 2016:	Title amendment from Recruitment and Selection Policy to Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy.
October 2016:	Complete rewrite.
December 2019:	Policy statement added. Shortlisting section rewritten. Addition of Restriction on health/disability questions. Certificate of Good Conduct added. Right of Appeal added. Volunteers and agency/supply staff added.
November 2022:	KSCiE updated to 2022. Governors added. Trainees added. Description of what regulated activity means. Online checks added.
September 2023:	Addition – candidates will be informed online searches may take place.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Education. Mill Ford School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. As an employee, the school expects all staff, student placements and volunteers (including Governors) to share this commitment.
- 1.2 This Recruitment and Selection Policy has been produced in line with the DFE Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (September 2022). Working together to Safeguard Children (2013), and the local Safeguarding Children Board's policies, procedures and guidance. The school takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to create safe environments whilst safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils the school is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment and Selection procedure.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 This policy has been adopted to help deter people from applying who are unsuitable to work with children and young people. It provides a consistent, fair and thorough process; ensuring safeguarding is an integral factor. Mill Ford School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.
- 2.2 The implementation of this policy ensures Mill Ford school acts within a fair and consistent recruitment procedure and can appoint the best person for the job regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, and pregnancy or maternity.
- 2.3 A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to the school's performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.
- 2.4 The Headteacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, is responsible for ensuring that appropriate recruitment practices are followed.
- 2.5 Where a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher is being recruited, the Governing Body will consult with the Local Authority about the recruitment process. The Service Director of Education or his/her representative will be included in the selection process for Headteacher appointments.

3 Scope

- 3.1 The policy applies to all employees and volunteers, as well as governors/trustees responsible for and involved in the recruitment and selection of staff. The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the governing body. The governing body may delegate the responsibility to the Headteacher for appointing staff other than those to the leadership group.
- 3.2 All decisions will be made with regard to curriculum needs and financial circumstances.
- 3.3 Decisions regarding remuneration for posts will be made in accordance with the school's pay policy.

4 Purpose

- 4.1 It is essential that all organisations that employ staff or engage volunteers to work with children adopt a consistent and rigorous approach in their recruitment and selection process with the aim of ensuring that those recruited are suitable for such an important and responsible role. The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for the recruitment of all staff (including volunteers). The aim is to:
 - 1. Ensure recruited staff possess the most appropriate blend of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities to meet the demands of the post and the needs of the school.
 - 2. Ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all staff.
 - 3. Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.
 - 4. Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

5 Principles

- 5.1 The following principles are encompassed in this policy:
 - 1. All applicants will receive fair treatment by a professional high quality approach being undertaken at each stage of the recruitment process.
 - 2. The Job Description, person specification or role profile are essential tools and will be used throughout the process.
 - 3. Employees will be recruited based on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job.
 - 4. Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members but preferably with three. At least one member of the panel will have received

appropriate training on the safer recruitment and selection process as recommended by the DfE. The school will ensure that the head teacher and at least one governor have successfully completed accredited training in safe recruitment procedures.

5. Selection will normally be based on a minimum, completed application form, shortlisting and interview.
6. All posts will normally be advertised.
7. To reduce the risk of a bad selection decision that can be expensive and may cause line management problems in the future or may not meet the school's commitment to safeguard children and young people.
8. To leave a positive image of the school with unsuccessful applicants.
9. To give successful candidates a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them.
10. The Equality Act 2010 makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.
11. Monitoring and evaluation are essential for assessing the effectiveness of the process in accordance with relevant employment legislation, safer employment practices and equalities legislation.

6 Advertising and Inviting Applications

- 6.1 Advertisements for posts – whether in newspapers, journals or online – and application booklets issued to prospective candidates will include the following statement:

“Mill Ford School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects its entire staff to share this commitment. All post-holders will be required to have an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).”

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

- i. Job description and person specification.
- ii. The school's Safer Recruitment Policy (this document).
- iii. An application form.

- 6.3 Applicants will also be made aware of the relevant school policies, including the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- 6.4 Advertisements for teaching posts will normally be placed on the school website and on a suitable national website.

- 6.5 Advertisements for support staff posts will normally be placed on the school website and on an appropriate local or national website, or if required in a local

newspaper, recruitment paper, or through local relevant noticeboards (e.g. Post Office).

- 6.6 In cases where a member of staff is employed on a fixed term contract for a post which then becomes available as a permanent post, that member of staff may be offered the permanent post without further advertising subject to approval by the Governing Body.
- 6.7 For temporary posts, such as those to cover maternity leave, the advertisement will normally be placed internally, on the school website and local newspapers, and in some cases through national websites.
- 6.8 Where staff are invited to take on a management or leadership responsibility for a fixed term in an acting capacity, the acting post will be advertised internally.
- 6.9 Advertisements will specify the start date of the appointment and whether the post is permanent or fixed term and, in the case of fixed term contracts, the end date of the contract; the remuneration for the post will be expressed in terms of the applicable pay scales and the closing date for applications will also be stated.

7 Applications

- 7.1 Prospective applicants will respond to the advertisement by requesting or downloading further information and an application form, which includes an equal opportunity monitoring form. Application forms will 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. The application form will be returned to the school by the specified closing date accompanied, where necessary, by a supporting letter. Other forms of curriculum vitae are not acceptable in place of a completed application form.
- 7.2 Applications received after the published closing date will not be considered unless there is clear evidence that the late receipt of the application has been caused by a postal delay. Such evidence would generally be an application with franking showing that it was posted first class at least one day before the published closing date. Applicants are advised to submit their applications by e-mail to avoid late arrival.

8 Shortlisting and References

- 8.1 Shortlisting will be undertaken by all panel members. The shortlisting and interview panel will consist of the same people throughout the selection process, wherever possible. One panel member will be nominated as the chairperson who must

ensure the impartiality of each of the panel members. The panel will agree a final short list of candidates to interview.

- 8.2 All applications will be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment history. All applicants must be assessed equally against the essential criteria without exception.
- 8.3 If there are gaps in employment history, best practice is followed to:
 1. Identify gaps.
 2. Check if the date for leaving full time education has been recorded.
 3. Check if an explanation of any gaps has been given.
 4. Record the gaps at this stage, if shortlisted.
 5. Check recorded reasons for leaving previous employments.
- 8.4 Late applications will not generally be considered, and certainly not once short-listing has commenced.
- 8.5 If only one candidate is shortlisted, the policy allows the shortlisting panel discretion on whether to interview and possibly appoint the candidate or postpone the interview until a larger pool of applicants have been sought, e.g. after re-advertisement.
- 8.6 A written record of decisions will be retained for both shortlisted and non-shortlisted applicants.
- 8.7 The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be sought directly from the referee, not via the candidate themselves. We will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate or an open reference i.e. "To Whom it may concern."
- 8.8 References will be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, and must be obtained before the interview so that any issues of concern raised can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview. In exceptional 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 strongly objects to their current employer being approached at that stage. In any case, where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, we will ensure that a satisfactory reference is received before the person's appointment is confirmed.
- 8.9 At least two satisfactory references will be obtained for each shortlisted candidate. One of the references will be from the current employer or most recent employer. If the post with the current employer doesn't cover work with children, an additional

reference will be taken up from a previous employer where the post did include work with children if applicable.

- 8.10 All requests for references will seek objective, verifiable information and not subjective opinion. A copy of the job description and person specification or role profile will be included with all requests, and every request will ask:
- i. About the referee's relationship with the candidate, e.g. did they have a working relationship; if so what, how long has the referee known the candidate and in what capacity.
 - ii. Whether the referee is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job in question, and for specific comments about the applicant's suitability for the post, and how s/he has demonstrated that s/he meets the person specification/role profile.
 - iii. Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children, and, if not, for specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.
 - iv. Ask the referee for their consent to the reference being disclosed to the candidate.
 - v. Remind the referee that they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission.
- 8.11 In addition to the above, requests addressed to a candidate's current employer, or a previous employer in work with children, will also seek:
- i. Confirmation of details of the applicant's present post and details of the reason for leaving.
 - ii. Specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct.
 - iii. Details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children and young people, including any in which the disciplinary investigation has expired, and the outcome of those; and
 - iv. Details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people, and the outcome of those concerns e.g. whether the allegations or concern was investigated, the conclusion reached, and how the matter was resolved.
- 8.12 On receipt of references, they will be checked to ensure that all the specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee will be telephoned and asked to provide written answers or amplification, as appropriate. Any discussions will be documented as these will form part of the written documentation of the recruitment & selection process.

- 8.13 The information given will also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and his/her previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form. Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant.
- 8.14 Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised are less likely to cause concern than more serious or recent concerns, or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily.
- 8.15 A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.
- 8.16 If an applicant is not currently employed with children or young people, we will seek a reference from the school/education establishment they were last employed in and reasons for leaving, wherever possible. This may be an additional reference to those already sought.
- 8.17 Full information on the best practice for references can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education – 2022, DfE publication.
- 8.18 We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online but candidates will be informed of this.

9 The Selection Process

- 9.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post. Teaching staff will be required, in all circumstances, to give a demonstration lesson in front of school staff. Leadership posts will require the candidate to undertake a series of tasks and possibly a series of panel interviews.
- 9.2 In all circumstances, candidates that are successful in the initial phase of selection will be required to attend an interview. Unsuccessful candidates will not be retained for interview.
- 9.3 **Interview Panel**
 - 9.3.1 A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel, but preferably three. Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it must be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may

then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

9.4 The Interview

9.4.1 Interviews will always be face to face.

9.4.2 In addition to assessing the applicant's suitability for the post, the interview panel will also explore:

- i. The candidate's attitude toward children and young people.
- ii. His/her ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- iii. Motivation to work with young people.
- iv. Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people.
- v. Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours, attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.
- vi. Gaps in the candidate's employment history.
- vii. Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and or referee; and
- viii. Ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything considering the requirement for a DBS Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity.

Regulated activity means when a person is responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or carry out paid or supervised unpaid work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children.

9.4.3 Candidates will be asked to bring original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body.

NB if the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his/her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

9.4.4 Records of interviews for unsuccessful candidates will be retained for a minimum of 6 months from the date of the advertisement. Records should include:

1. Assessment and selection criteria used.
2. Application of assessment and selection criteria.
3. Interview and other selection method notes.

4. Reasons for a decision made.

9.4.5 Reasons for the decisions taken by the interview panel will be recorded, to be completed and filed by the Chairperson.

9.4.6 All recruitment paperwork relating to the successful candidate will be retained and placed on his/her personal file.

9.4.7 The school has a responsibility to maintain a central record for the complete recruitment process including interview notes, DBS checks and copies of qualifications.

9.5 Restrictions on Health/Disability Questions

9.5.1 The Equality Act 2010 does not permit employers to ask any job applicant about their health or disability until the person has been offered the post. This includes checking previous attendance levels. There are some exceptions where it is possible to ask health related questions as follows:

1. To determine if the candidate is able to participate in an assessment to test their suitability for the role.
2. To determine reasonable adjustments for the interview or any tests.
3. To establish whether the applicant can carry out a function which is fundamental/intrinsic to the performance of the role.
4. To monitor the diversity of the applicant (this could be incorporated in the application form).
5. To take positive action in supporting employment for disabled people (e.g. under the "two ticks" scheme).

9.5.2 Checks on attendance levels can only be carried out after the successful candidate has been offered the position.

10 Employment Checks

10.1 An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be **conditional** upon:

- a) The receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if those have not already been received).
- b) Verification of eligibility to be employed in the UK.
- c) Verification of the candidate's identity (if that could not be verified straight after the interview).
- d) Verification of qualifications (if not verified after the interview).
- e) Verification of professional status where required e.g. QTS status.
- f) A check of the DBS children's barred list, a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Certificate and Teaching Regulation Agency check.

- g) (for teaching posts) verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999); and
- h) (for support staff posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

10.2 All pre-employment checks will be:

- a) Confirmed in writing.
- b) Documented and retained on the personal file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information imposed by DBS regulations).
- c) Recorded on the school's central record database; and
- d) Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

10.3 Where:

- a) An applicant is found to be on the DBS Children's Barred List, or the certificate shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or
- b) An applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or
- c) There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people.

The school will liaise and seek advice from the Local Authority's Safeguarding Board if a disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed during the selection process. The facts will be reported to the police and/or the DfE Children's Safeguarding Operations unit. Guidance regarding DBS procedures and concerns relating to disclosures can be obtained from HR.

- 10.4 HR will consult with the school in order to follow relevant DBS guidance if a disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed during the selection process. If the disclosure conviction information supplied is different from the information supplied by the candidate on their original job application, this will be further explored with the candidate. If a judgement is reached that the candidate deliberately falsified information supplied on the job application this can be considered when considering whether a job offer can be withdrawn. It is normal policy that any deliberate falsification of an application, in any respect, will debar a candidate from appointment.
- 10.5 If subsequent checks reveal any concerns or that the candidate is found to be on the DBS Children's Barred List, or that the candidate has been disqualified from working with children by a Court, or the applicant has provided false information in support of their application, the school will contact HR for further advice.

10.6 Certificate of Good Conduct (where appropriate)

10.6.1 The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is only able to supply information relating to the period the candidate has been resident in this country. Therefore, if the successful candidate has lived outside the UK for a period of 3 months or more (excluding BFPO addresses), a Certificate of Good Conduct will be required. It may be necessary for the applicant to obtain a translation of the Certificate of Good Conduct.

10.6.2 The original Certificate of Good Conduct must be presented, and photocopies will not be accepted.

11 Eligibility to Work in the UK

11.1 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. 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.

11.2 Employers are also required to re-check documents at least every 12 months if the employee has time-limited leave to enter or remain in the UK.

12 Overseas Trained Teachers (OTT)

12.1 OTTs are allowed to teach in state-maintained schools and non-maintained special schools in England as unqualified teachers for four calendar years. Further guidance is available from the DfE in their publication 'Overseas Trained Teachers' – 'Departmental advice for overseas trained teachers, local authorities, maintained schools and governing bodies' December 2014.

12.2 Enquiries regarding overseas trained teachers and QTS should be directed to the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

13 Teachers' Pensions – Re-employment

13.1 We will ask all new employees whether they are in receipt of a pension form the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

13.2 If they are, we will advise them that they must inform Teachers' Pension immediately that they have re-entered teaching.

14 Induction

- 14.1 All staff who are new to the school will receive full induction training that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices. Staff will be required to read the Staff Code of Safe Practice and the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 14.2 Staff will also be required to read, and confirm that they have read, Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and Appendix A.
- 14.3 Staff will also be required to complete an online Safeguarding in Education training, which will include training on the PREVENT duty.
- 14.4 Regular meetings will be held during the first three months of employment between the new employees and the appropriate line manager as part of the probation period.
- 14.5 **Induction for Early Career Teachers**
 - 14.5.1 Detailed advice and guidance on the Induction for Early Career Teachers is contained in the Department for Education document 'Induction for early career teachers (England) - Statutory guidance for appropriate bodies, Headteachers, school staff and governing bodies (September 2021)'.
 - 14.5.2 The induction period will combine an individualised programme of monitoring and support which will provide opportunities to develop further knowledge, skills and achievements in relation to the standards for the award of QTS with an assessment of performance.

15 Right of Appeal

- 15.1 Normally there is no appeal stage in the recruitment process, candidates have the right to feedback, but the panel's decision is final. The only redress an individual has is to make a claim for discrimination based on a protected characteristic under the Equality Act.

16 Volunteers/Work Experience/Trainees/Casual Supply Staff

- 16.1 Recruitment of volunteers, work experience placements and trainees will require an application form to be completed as per this policy so that all appropriate recruitment checks are made as would be completed for permanent, fixed term, temporary and casual supply staff.

- 16.2 Applications will be considered by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, before the candidates are invited in for an informal interview to ascertain suitability for post. All the pre-employment check will also be carried out as per this policy.

17 Agency

- 17.1 It is important thorough checks are made on anyone who will be working at school to prevent unsuitable people from gaining access to children and to maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.
- 17.2 We will satisfy ourselves that the has carried out the necessary checks in respect of safeguarding and eligibility to work in the UK.
- 17.3 We will record whether we have received confirmation of relevant checks from the supply agency (and copies of the DBS Certificates where appropriate) on the school's single central record.
- 17.4 Where a teacher is directly employed following a period of agency working it is essential that we carry out all checks normally conducted on a new employee.

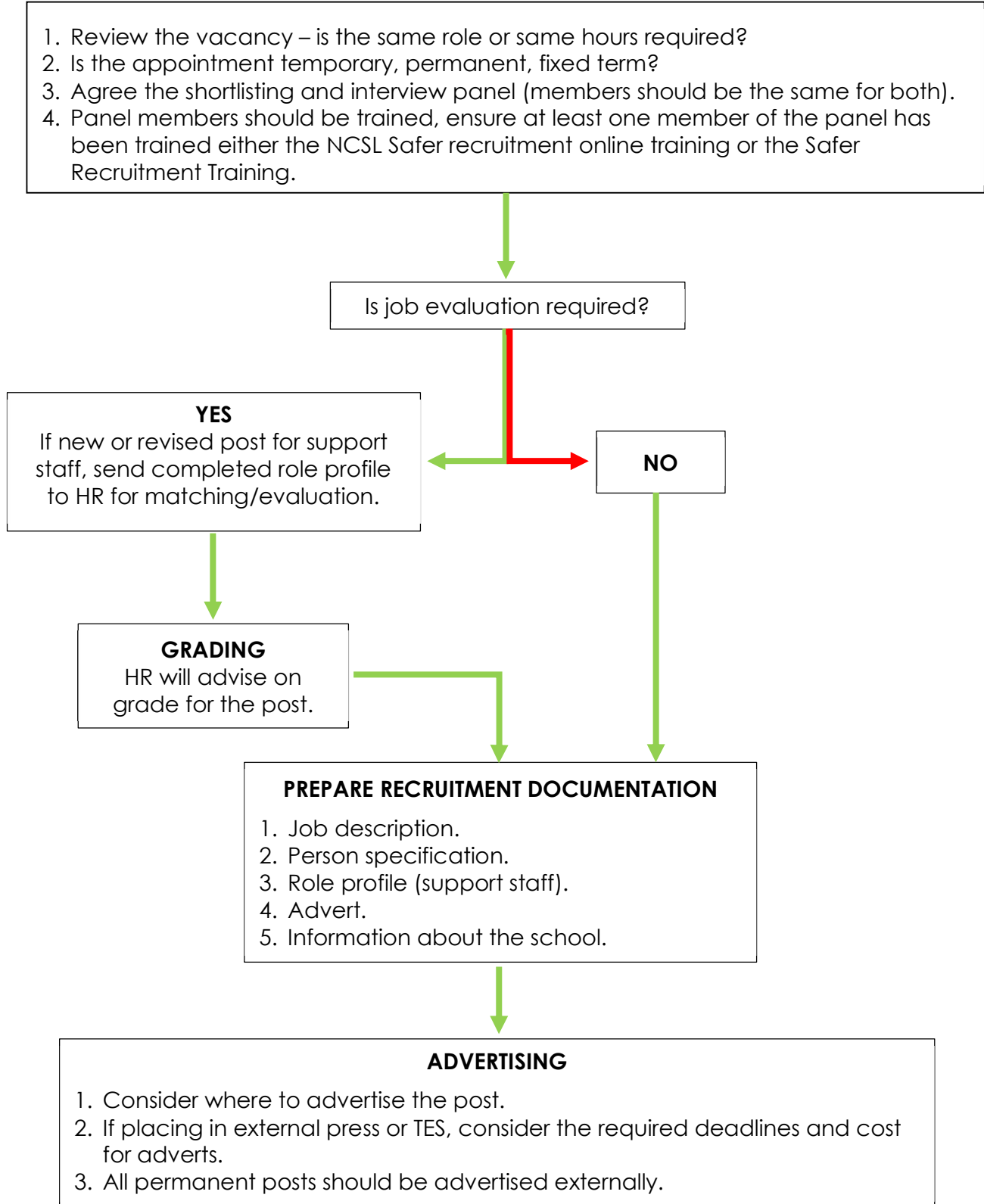
18 Governors

- 18.1 All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information unless working in regulated activity.
- 18.2 All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

19 Unsuccessful Candidates

- 19.1 Unsuccessful candidates will be contacted as soon as possible. It is good practice to offer feedback and provide this at a mutually agreed time.
- 19.2 Should the successful candidate subsequently refuse the appointment, the school may recruit from the unsuccessful applicants without re-advertising the post as long as this is within 6 months of the original recruitment process.

Appendix 1 – Recruitment and Selection Flowchart



SHORTLISTING PROCEDURES

1. Shortlist applicants against person specification or role profile – check guidance.
2. Invite shortlisted candidates to interview.
3. Take up references where permission has been given.
4. Ensure candidates are notified promptly of date/time/location of interview.
5. If interviewing a candidate with a disability check if adjustments may be needed.
6. Notify candidates promptly of date/time/location of interview.
7. Notify candidates of any additional selection tests, e.g. presentation, written text etc.



INTERVIEW PANEL PROCEDURES

1. All shortlisted candidates must be interviewed prior to appointment.
2. One member of the panel must have attended the DfE approved Safer Recruitment online training or the Safer Recruitment training provided by Plymouth City Council.
3. Panel members should be trained.
4. If interviewing a candidate with a disability make sure adjustments have been made, if required.
5. Make arrangements to greet and host candidates.



INTERVIEW

1. Use guidance notes to structure interview and prepare questioning strategy (ensure all candidates are questioned on same areas).
2. Probe carefully on answers and seek examples of past performance.
3. Ensure accurate notes are taken during the interview.
4. Check and verify evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and qualifications.
5. Check guidance on references and ensure you are satisfied.
6. Agree which candidate to appoint.
7. Collect interview notes from all panel members & keep interview notes, any observations from tests etc. for 6 months for unsuccessful candidates. The successful candidate's interview notes should be placed on their personnel file.



MAKING AN APPOINTMENT

1. Contact successful applicant and make confidential offer subject to any necessary pre-employment checks.
2. Inform unsuccessful candidates promptly. Offer constructive feedback.
3. Notify payroll with starters form.
4. Prepare the induction plan for your new member of staff.