



# TRUE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

<b>Safer Recruitment Policy</b>	
<b>Policy Ref Number:</b> TLP_0077	<b>Reviewed by:</b> Director of People & Culture <b>Approved by:</b> People Committee
<b>Policy Date:</b> May 2026	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2028

## **1. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY**

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This procedure applies to all adults working in or on behalf of True Learning Partnership and covers the recruitment and engagement of individuals whose roles may involve contact with children.

## **2. STATEMENT OF INTENT**

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True Learning has implemented this policy to assist with recruitment and employee selection. It outlines the Trust's recruitment procedure and how the Trust ensures safer recruitment is considered at all levels of the recruitment process.

The safety and protection of the Trust's pupils is always at the forefront of the Trust's concerns, which is why this policy aims to embed a robust safeguarding culture into the recruitment practices of the Trust.

The safe recruitment of employees is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. In order to meet this responsibility, the Trust follows a rigorous recruitment process to select the best candidate for each role.

This policy is an essential element in creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all pupils, employees and others within the Trust community and aims to ensure both safe and fair recruitment and selection of all employees and volunteers by:

- Attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to our vacancies.
- Deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.
- Identifying and rejecting those candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.
- Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in our recruitment and selection practices, including enabling the rigorous and unbiased appointment of staff.
- Ensuring the best possible employees are recruited on the basis of their abilities and suitability for the role.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Privacy Notices, Applicant Information and Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## **3. TRUST ETHOS**

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Our Trust is committed to inspiring the best in everyone. Guided by our shared values: we are aspirational in our pursuit of excellence; collaborative in working together and valuing diverse perspectives; compassionate in our care for others; curious in promoting creativity and a love of learning; and inclusive in ensuring everyone feels valued, supported and able to contribute fully.

These values underpin all Trust policies and practices, shaping safe, supportive and innovative environments that empower individuals to achieve their full potential and make a positive difference within their communities and beyond.

#### **4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

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This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020

This policy has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Academy trust governance guide'
- DfE 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
- Disclosure and Barring Service 'ID checking guidelines for Standard/Enhanced DBS check applications from 22 April 2025'.
- Home Office 'Right to work checks: employing EU, EEA and Swiss citizens'.
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'.
- DfE 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- Disclosure & Barring Service 'Regulated activity with children in England and Wales'
- Home Office 'Employer's guide to right to work checks'.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Trust Appraisal Policy
- Capability of Staff Policy
- Single Central Record (SCR) Policy
- Records Retention Policy

- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy

## 5. LINKS TO THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

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This policy has been written to reflect the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan Principles) which apply to anyone who works as a public officeholder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public officeholders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources.

The seven principles are:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

All employees have a responsibility to act and to take decisions based on public interest and should act with honesty, integrity, objectivity and impartiality at all times.

## 6. DEFINITIONS

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**Regulated activity** includes:

A) Being responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children.

B) Working on a regular basis for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), or in connection with the purposes of the establishment, with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work undertaken by supervised volunteers.

Work under A) and B) is regulated activity if undertaken regularly, defined as carrying out the activity by the same person at least once per week or on 4 or more days in any period of 30 days.

C) Engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

Regulated activities do not include:

- Paid work in specified places which is occasional and temporary and does not involve teaching or training.
- Supervised activities which are paid in non-specified settings such as youth clubs, sports clubs etc.
- A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children.

A **standard DBS** provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer, regardless of whether they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The law allows for certain old and minor matters to be filtered out.

An **enhanced DBS** provides the same information as the standard DBS, plus any additional information, e.g. interviews and allegations, held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed. The position being applied for/or activities being undertaken must be covered by an exempted question in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and by provisions in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002

An **enhanced DBS with barred list check** is required for when people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children. This check allows for additional checks to be made as to whether the person appears on the children's barred list, along with a check of the Police National Computer records plus additional information held by the police as above. The position being applied for, or activities being undertaken, must be eligible for an enhanced DBS check as above and be for a purpose listed in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (No2) Regulations 2009 as qualifying for a barred list(s) check. In addition, this check can also include information as to whether an individual is subject to a section 128 direction.

The **children's barred list** is a list maintained by the DBS which covers individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. In addition, where an enhanced DBS including a barred list check is obtained, the certificate will also detail whether the candidate is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 167A of the Education Act 2002.

A **section 128 check** provides for the Secretary of State to direct that a person may be prohibited or restricted from participating in the management of an independent school (which includes academies and free schools). A person prohibited under section 128 is also disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school.

**Safer recruitment** is the safeguarding and protection of pupils during the recruitment and selection process. Its overall purpose is to help identify and deter or reject individuals who are deemed to be at risk of abusing children.

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The full breakdown of roles and responsibilities for those involved in our recruitment process is within Appendix 1.

## **8. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR OUR EMPLOYEES**

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To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of employees 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.

The recruitment panel will comprise an appointing officer, who is responsible for the management of the entire recruitment process, with a panel made up of appropriate colleagues based on the role. At least one member of the recruitment panel will have successfully completed up-to-date safer recruitment training.

Before the recruitment process commences, the appointing officer will confirm with the People and Culture team:

- the recruitment timeframe.
- who will be involved in the process and what their roles will be, e.g. who forms the recruitment panel and who will lead the interview.
- the documents that will be provided to candidates, including the job description, person specification and application process ensuring that these documents contain a clear statement about safeguarding, the checks that will be carried out and that references will be sought.

#### **a) Planning, advertising and shortlisting**

The job information and associated documents will be published online via My New Term (the Trust Applicant Tracking System). My New Term also integrates with several other platforms to broaden the reach of job vacancies and streamline the recruitment process. The full requirements of the role will be clearly explained, including any employment vetting requirements such as a DBS check.

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- our Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- that all vacancies will be advertised through My New Term (and associated platforms) ensuring that the advertisement reaches a wide range of groups. Advertisements will contain a statement of commitment to ensuring equal rights.
- that safeguarding, vetting and online 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.

It is a requirement for employers to direct candidates to guidance on what declarations they should and should not make. There have been changes in some youth charges/reprimands that no longer need to be disclosed. Therefore, the following information is now contained in our application process:

There are two national charities that can provide advice for job applicants on disclosing criminal records:

<https://www.nacro.org.uk/criminal-record-support-service/support-for-individuals/disclosing-criminal-records/%20disclosing-criminal-records-employers/>

<https://www.unlock.org.uk/>

Providing false information on criminal records would result in application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been successful. If appropriate, the matter may be referred to police, other professional regulatory bodies.

## **b) Application Forms**

The application form provided by My New Term will:

- be used for all recruitment across the Trust, containing a common set of core data that all prospective applicants must complete. We advise candidates that CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed applications forms.
- 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). It will advise candidates that shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-disclosure form before interview.
- include a reference to, and direct candidates to our child protection and safeguarding policies.

## **c) Shortlisting**

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- include a recruitment lead who has completed full safer recruitment training.
- ensure all applications are scrutinised to ensure they are fully completed, the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies.
- ensure that all candidates will be consistently and objectively assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification and notes taken.
- ensure that the shortlisting process is as systematic as possible, and that the recruitment panel reads through all applications. Each member of the panel will document their own shortlist which will then be collated and discussed. Candidates will be assessed against the same shortlisting criteria to ensure a fair process.

## **d) After Shortlisting**

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

- complete and return a self-declaration form 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. Only those candidates who have been shortlisted will be asked to disclose any relevant information using our online disclosure form through My New Term.

- sign a declaration which confirms that the information they have provided is true. The purpose of the self-declaration is so that candidates will have the opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at interview before the DBS certificate is received.

In line with KCSIE statutory guidance (September 2025, paragraph 221), the Trust will carry out an online search of shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence checks to identify candidates who may not be suitable to work with children and/or bring the Trust into disrepute. The searches only include what is publicly available online. Shortlisted applicants will be advised through the recruitment packs that an online search of publicly available information will be carried out as part of the Trust's due diligence checks.

The review is carried out by a member of the People and Culture Team who does not sit on the selection panel for recruitment and who only provides information found in the online review which may impact safeguarding or reputation. Any concerns that are found from the online search are reviewed and if appropriate discussed with the candidate at interview.

#### **e) Pre-Interview Checks**

Pre-interview checks will include the following:

- Requesting **two** references from each shortlisted candidate directly from the referees via My New Term platform – where possible, one reference will be obtained relating to the role in which the candidate worked with children. Further references may need to be obtained in order to cover the relevant number of years of employment and this is not possible may include obtaining character references if necessary.
- Verifying that the candidate has qualifications or experience relevant to the post.
- Checking references against application forms and noting down discrepancies or concerns and following up these concerns with referees and recruitment panel.
- Checking and, where necessary, following up candidates' self-declaration forms

#### **f) Requesting References**

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. References will always be requested directly from the referee and from a senior person with appropriate authority. We do not rely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom it May Concern". Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal.

References must be from separate employers and candidates will be asked to provide further details and consent via My New Term

Referees are asked to give any reason why the applicant should not be employed for work with children. Applicants should be aware that any previous employer may be contacted prior to interview. Where possible references are requested before interview and at the latest before confirming appointment directly with the referee using My New Term.

If the applicant has never worked with children, the Trust will ensure that a reference from their current employer is received. If the candidate is a school leaver or has not been in work for over two years, a character reference will be requested. It is important, wherever possible, that all references including character references are supplied in a professional capacity.

Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- employment dates, post held and reason for leaving.
- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people.
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, which relate to the safeguarding of children.
- the candidate's suitability for the post

### **g) Checking References**

References will be checked upon receipt to ensure that all questions have been answered satisfactorily, and that information is not contradictory or incomplete. The referee will be contacted to provide further clarification where appropriate, e.g. if some answers are vague or insufficient, or contradictory information has been provided.

The reference will be compared for consistency with the information on the candidate's application form. Discrepancies between the reference and the application form will be discussed with the candidate at interview. 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 any such exchanges.

References are shared with the recruitment panel via the My New Term secure platform.

The recruitment panel will ensure that any past disciplinary action or allegations disclosed as part of a reference are considered carefully when assessing the candidate's suitability for the role. If this involves safeguarding or potential safeguarding concerns, the DSL will be consulted to help assess the candidate's suitability. The recruitment panel will ensure that the information provided in the reference does not contain any information about concerns / allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious.

Before making a decision not to appoint a candidate based on an unsatisfactory reference, the recruitment panel will consider if HR advice is necessary. Once the decision is made, the appointing officer will record this on the recruitment file as the reason for non-appointment.

### **h) Providing References**

References will only be requested once consent has been obtained from the candidate. The member of staff providing a reference will follow this policy's procedures and the prospective employer's requests as much as is reasonably possible, e.g. if a pro-forma is provided, they will complete the form. If the reference is not requested in a specific format, the member of staff will decide the most appropriate method, e.g. a pro-

forma or a letter-formatted reference. Employer references must be provided by Headteachers or the CEO for the central team, no other member of staff can provide an employment reference.

The headteacher/CEO will decide in exceptional circumstances if a reference cannot be provided or if certain questions asked by the prospective employer cannot be answered, with HR advice sought when appropriate.

Members of staff can provide personal references but must make it clear within the reference that it is a personal one and is not written for or on behalf of the school or the Trust. The staff member must use their own paper or an email address unaffiliated with the Trust and ensure that the reference is not linked to the Trust in any way.

If, as part of a settlement agreement, the Trust has agreed to provide a reference for a former employee, the Director of People and Culture will ensure it is provided in line with the agreement and this policy. In circumstances where new evidence emerges that indicates information provided in the reference is incorrect, the Director of People and Culture will decide if the reference is changed or withdrawn, with legal advice sought where necessary, and will notify the employee of any decision first.

The Trust will ensure that any information provided confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and only provide the facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations, including a group of low-level concerns about the same individual, that meet the harm threshold. Any repeated concerns or allegations which do not meet the harm threshold which have been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated, or malicious will not be included in any reference.

References will contain only factual and verifiable information and will not include speculation, e.g. about a former employee's suitability for a job, or hearsay. The person providing the reference will ensure all comments have a factual basis and that an impression is not given which is misleadingly positive or negative. Performance issues or concerns which have not been discussed or raised with the employee beforehand will not be mentioned.

Personal data relating to references will be handled in line with the Data Protection Policy. All references will be properly addressed and marked private and confidential. Information relating to an individual's health and sensitive personal data, e.g. information relating to the individual's ethnicity, religion or trade union membership, will not be disclosed as part of a reference unless 'express consent' has been received from the individual for this purpose.

### **i) Interviews and selection**

The Trust will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post which will include a face-to-face interview and may include a student panel, a data or written task and lesson observation.

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements and explore their suitability to work with pupils. The recruitment panel will ask open questions to assess the candidate's

experience and suitability for the post, and to explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people including:

- Motivation to work with children and young people.
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal and professional boundaries with children and young people.
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviour/situations.
- Attitudes and approaches to maintaining discipline.

Candidates will be required to satisfactorily explain any gaps in employment, any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel and declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure.

All candidates invited to interview must bring photographic ID and proof of address to confirm identity.

Care should be taken where a person has changed their name. It is recommended that the birth certificate is used as part of the identification verification process. More information can be found on the government's website for DBS checks: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines/id-checking-guidelines-for-dbs-check-applications-from-3-september-2018>

More general government guidance on verifying someone's identity can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identity-proofing-and-verification-of-an-individual/how-to-prove-and-verify-someones-identity>

Interviews will be conducted by appropriately trained employees and full notes will be taken.

## **j) After the Interview**

After the interview has been completed, the recruitment panel will:

- assess all candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria.
- make a conditional offer of employment to the candidate, subject to the completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks.
- contact and provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates – feedback will be verbal and based on evidence of their performance against the person specification for the role.

Interview notes and assessment materials will be held securely for 9 months for unsuccessful candidates, in line with the Retention Policy, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged.

After choosing a successful candidate, the Trust will:

- ask the successful candidate to provide proof of identification and qualifications for the Trust's records (if this has not already been provided),
- complete the relevant pre-appointment checks (detailed below).

Any spent or filtered convictions that constitute protected matters, whether declared on the candidate's self-declaration form or at interview, will not be taken into account when determining suitability for employment. Where other information is disclosed or identified, the Trust will undertake the appropriate risk assessment to determine whether the candidate is suitable to work for the Trust.

### **k) Pre-Employment Checks**

In accordance with the recommendations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and Disqualification under childcare Act 2006 (DUCA), the Trust carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

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

- verify their identity if this could not be verified at interview.
- obtain two (as a minimum) satisfactory references, if these had not been received prior to interview.
- obtain (via the applicant) a satisfactory enhanced DBS certificate, including children's barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity. 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, but we will keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken.
- obtain a separate children's barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the enhanced DBS certificate is available.
- verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities through a pre-employment medical check.
- verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of employment and for 2 years afterwards.
- verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- ensure that anyone carrying out teacher work is not subject to a prohibition order.
- undertake an online screening check.
- carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK.
- check that candidates taking up a management position including teachers with Teaching and Learning Responsibility payments (TLR) are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.
- if the role involves working with Children under 8 or in a wrap-around care setting 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.

### **Right to Work Checks**

The Trust will obtain evidence that all candidates for a position have the legal right to live and work in the UK, either by conducting a manual document-based check, using an Identity Service Provider (IDSP), or

through the government's online portal. The offer of employment will normally be made conditional on the individual having, and continuing to maintain, the legal right to live and work in the UK for the role in which they will be employed. When conducting a manual, document-based check, the recruiting school will ensure that the documents received from candidates are acceptable in line with government guidance, and from the appropriate list: [List A](#) for candidates with a permanent right to work in the UK, or [List B](#) for candidates with a temporary right to work in the UK.

The Trust will not make assumptions about a person's right to work in the UK, or their immigration status, on the basis of their race, ethnicity, nationality, length of residence in the UK or background. All candidates, including British citizens, will have their right to work in the UK checked.

Where a candidate's right to work is time-limited, the Trust will conduct a follow-up check in advance of its expiry.

All right to work documents will be signed and dated by the person who undertook the check and retained on school personal file for period outlined in section K.

### **Identity Checking Process**

When checking the validity of identifying documents, the Trust will ensure that this is done in the presence of the holder, e.g. in person or via a live video link. In both cases, the Trust will be in physical possession of the original documents. The Trust will only accept valid, current and original documentation in its physical form.

The Trust will request documents with photographic identity, such as a passport, and compare this against the candidate's likeness. The Trust will not accept documents that are not in the candidate's current name as recorded on the application form.

The Trust will ensure that the candidate declares all previous name changes and provides documentary evidence to support the name change. If the candidate is unable to provide evidence to support the name change, the Trust will hold a discussion with the candidate about the reasons why. The Trust will always aim to check the name on the candidate's birth certificate in order to validate their identity.

Copies of all Identity documents will be signed and dated by the person who undertook the check and retained on the individual's personal file.

### **DBS Clearance Not Received Before Start Date**

In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for an individual to start employment without a completed DBS. If an individual starts work before their DBS has returned then the recruiting school must take advice from the Trust People and Culture Director and either defer the start date or carry out a DBS Risk Assessment to manage any potential risks to the school, or Trust, of someone who has not yet had formal clearance of their suitability to work in a school setting.

It is the responsibility of each Headteacher or CEO in the case of the Trust Central Team to ensure that such measures are in place and that the candidate is supervised whilst working at the base school location.

### Assessing Disclosure Information

The Trust will consider the following when assessing any disclosure information on a DBS certificate:

- The seriousness and relevance to the post which they have applied to.
- How long ago the offence occurred.
- The country where the offence occurred.
- Whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents.
- The circumstances around and at the time of the incident.
- Whether the individual accepted responsibility for what happened.

The Trust will also consider the incident in the context of the Teachers' Standards and Teacher misconduct guidance, if the applicant is applying for a teaching post.

### Limitations of Disclosure Information

The information provided on a disclosure certificate is limited to basic facts: for example, the date, offence and sentence. It does not set the offence in context. If the information on the disclosure certificate gives cause for concern, the applicant must be given the opportunity to discuss this information. Only then should a final decision on the individual's appointment or employment be made.

Employees should be aware that disclosure certificates are an important part of the overall recruitment process, which should also include references, qualification checks and interviews. Disclosure certificates requested by other employers must not be accepted because a disclosure will only contain relevant information on offences up to the date it was issued.

## **I) Post-Appointment Documentation**

Application and interview details of those candidates not appointed will be destroyed after 9 months from the interview date. All other relevant recruitment documentation relating to the chosen candidate must be kept securely within their HR file electronically and/or paper based, which are stored in locked filing cabinets in each recruiting location.

### New Starter Induction Checklist

A New Starter Checklist has been developed to ensure all new starters are managed in a consistent way to ensure that all school and Trust obligations are met. Once completed the new starter checklist is filed within the chosen candidate's employee file.

## Single Central Record (SCR)

A record of safeguarding checks for those who work within a True Learning Trust school on a paid or voluntary basis must be maintained. This information should be entered into the schools' Single Central Record. The Single Central Record should include volunteers and other regular visitors not entered into the HR system who may be undertaking regulated activity i.e. unsupervised access to children.

## **9. CANDIDATES WHO HAVE LIVED OUTSIDE THE UK**

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For candidates who have lived outside the UK, all mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary, including an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information for those engaging in regulated activity, even if they have never been to the UK before.

The Trust will make any further checks that it deems appropriate so that any relevant events occurring outside the UK can be considered, e.g. obtaining proof of past teaching conduct for any candidate for a teaching position from the professional regulating authority in the country in which they worked, where available, or conducting criminal records checks for overseas applicants.

It is recognised that in some countries it is not always possible to obtain a certificate of good conduct; where this is the case, the Trust will take reasonable alternative steps to seek assurance of an individual's suitability.

Further details can be found on [the Home Office: Criminal records checks for overseas applicants - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants). The government does not stipulate any timeframes; however, the Trust stipulates that we should endeavour to seek criminal records checks for anyone who has worked abroad in the last 10 years for a period of six months or more.

## **10. AFTER PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

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Once the pre-employment checks have been completed, the recruitment lead will:

- Agree a start date with the candidate.
- Submit a new starter form to the People and Culture Team who will produce the contractual paperwork and maintain the full HR record, along with the relevant school. The HR record will include the completed DBS check, copies of identification, references, proof of qualifications, pre-employment medical enquiry form, payroll information and application/equal opportunities information.

## **11. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD**

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The People and Culture Team and nominated school employees will maintain and regularly update the SCR.

All new employees will be added to the record, which will include:

- All employees who work at each Trust location, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff even if they work for one day.

- All others who work in regular unsupervised contact with children in the Trust, including volunteers.

The bullet points below set out the minimum information that must be recorded in respect of employees (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed or certificate obtained:

- An identity check
- A standalone children's barred list check where appropriate
- An enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested, or certificate provided.
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK, including checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions.
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK.
- For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check
- Any disqualification under the Children Act check where appropriate.

For documents being viewed by the Trust, the date recorded on the SCR should be the date the document was seen, rather than the date it was issued.

The Trust uses a central system for the SCR, it ensures that all those who need to see the central SCR can easily do so and that the SCR can easily be filtered by each Trust school.

## **12. NON-EMPLOYED ADULTS WORKING WITHIN OUR SETTINGS**

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### **Agency Workers**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. On arrival at the school, we will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

### **Contractors**

Contractors who employ staff to work with, or provide services for the Trust, must also adopt and implement Safer Recruitment procedures where reasonable and practicable. This will include reassurance about contractors undertaking regular safeguarding training and expectations regarding conduct including preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.

Anyone undertaking work for the Trust that is regulated activity must be subject to the same pre-screening requirements as for employees prior to commencing the work. The individual school/central team will decide what work is deemed regulated activity will be shared with the contractor as part of the contract procurement discussions before commencement of any work.

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at any of our schools has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- 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.

With the agreement of the Director of People and Culture, in exceptional circumstances risk assessments may be put in place for Contractors whose checks are not fully completed but they must then be supervised the whole time they are onsite. We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school they are working at.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches working in our Primary settings, 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.

### **Trainees/ Student Teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

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. This includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006 where applicable to their placement.

### **Volunteers**

If any Trust school is actively seeking volunteers, we will adopt the same recruitment measures that would apply to paid staff.

We will:

- Request references in line with our standard recruitment process for our employees.
- 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.
- 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.
- If the role involves working with Children under 8 or in a wrap-around care setting, 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 a volunteer's role will be a one-off, such as accompanying teachers and pupils on a day outing or helping at a concert or school fete, such measures would be unnecessary provided that the person is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of pupils. This also extends to secondary school pupils on work placements (or similar) and students aged 18 or over in a normal student capacity. However, any overnight supervision would require an Enhanced DBS and barred list check.

It is our policy that any unsupervised volunteer will be subject to an enhanced DBS check barred list check at the appropriate level.

### **Staff working in alternative provision settings**

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

### **Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

### **Pupils staying with host families**

Where any of the Trust schools make arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on all members of the household over the age of 16.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

## **13. SAFEGUARDING**

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For references provided to the Trust, the candidate's suitability will always be assessed with particular regard paid to their suitability to work with children. The DSL will be consulted where appropriate.

The DSL will recognise the Trust's duty to disclose safeguarding concerns overrides any other duties to an employee, and ensure the Trust complies with its safeguarding obligations. The DSL will ensure records are kept of all allegations against employees in line with the most up-to-date version of KCSIE.

For all safeguarding allegations, excluding those proven to be malicious, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any

action taken, and decisions reached, will be kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused employee. Accurate information based on these formal records will be given in response to future requests for a reference, where appropriate. Safeguarding information will not be given in circumstances where the allegation was found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious – this includes if it is a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious. The employee providing the reference will make no comments about their own personal views on the veracity of allegations.

## **14. EQUALITY AND EQUITY**

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True Learning is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our employees. We endeavour to build a workforce that will be truly representative of all sections of society and that each employee feels respected and able to give their best. To that end we are committed to provide equality and fairness for all in our recruitment and employment practices and not to discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

## **15. RETENTION**

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We take the security of all data seriously. We have internal policies and controls in place to ensure that personal data is not lost, accidentally destroyed, misused or disclosed, and is not accessed except by our employees in the proper performance of their duties.

If an application for employment is unsuccessful, the organisation will hold the data on file for 9 months after the end of the relevant recruitment process. At the end of that period, the data is deleted or destroyed.

If an application for employment is successful, personal data gathered during the recruitment process will be transferred to the personal HR file (electronic and paper based) and retained during the period of employment.

The periods for which the data will be held will be termination plus 7 (seven) years.

## **16. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

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Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all employees and relevant stakeholders. All employees are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

This policy will be reviewed biennially.

## **APPENDIX 1: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Approving effective policies to ensure recruitment in the Trust is in accordance with the legislation outlined above.
- Ensuring that employee recruitment is as safe as possible, as well as fair and compliant with the relevant legislation.
- Ensuring a member of the board is on the recruitment panel for a new headteacher.
- Ensuring that equal opportunities are established and implemented throughout the recruitment process.
- Ensuring that the DPO reviews this policy and that any recruitment data that is kept is in accordance with the Retention Policy.

The CEO is responsible for:

- Monitoring Trust policies to ensure recruitment in the Trust supports best practice and are in accordance with the legislation outlined above.
- Setting appropriate recruitment procedures, as per the scheme of delegation.
- Appropriately delegating responsibility for school-based recruitment to the headteacher.
- Acting as a member of a recruitment panel for senior posts across the Trust.
- Approving any salaries which fall outside the guidance followed under STPCD and the Green Book, e.g. for central posts.

The Director of People and Culture is responsible for:

- Monitoring the advertising of vacancies, assessing how they are being advertised and whether the adverts are maximising all of the opportunities to attract the appropriate candidates.
- Benchmarking the success of any advertising methods used, as well as the overall success of the recruitment process.
- Ensuring that all members of any Trust recruitment panels are familiar with their obligations with regards to safer recruitment, as set out in KCSIE.
- Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on prospective employees working within the Trust.
- Monitoring the Trust's SCR to ensure that the necessary vetting checks for employees are carried out.
- Accommodating the needs of new employees and making reasonable adjustments when necessary.

The People and Culture Team are responsible for:

- Liaising with the appointing officer who will be responsible for the entire management of each recruitment process.
- Advertising the vacancies in line with the process detailed above.
- Ensuring that references have been received where requested.
- Ensuring that all references for a shortlisted candidate are requested where possible prior to interview and shared with the Appointing Officer.

- Ensuring that references include confirmation as to whether the referee is satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold.
- Highlighting to the Appointing Officer any declarations which may need to be discussed at interview.
- Allocating DBS, mandatory training and pre-employment medical checks to the successful candidate and monitoring until all pre-employment tasks are complete and a start date can be confirmed.
- Issuing and receiving signed contractual paperwork.

The Recruitment Panel is responsible for:

- Creating the advert and ensuring it meets all the necessary requirements.
- Appointing an appointing officer who will be responsible for the entire management of the recruitment process.
- Where possible, ensuring that the shortlisting panel and interviewing panel are comprised of the same people.
- Shortlisting the potential candidates with the aim of reducing the application field and identifying those with the potential to effectively undertake the role.
- Ensuring that the interview addresses leadership ability, team working skills, integrity, understanding of the Trust's ethos and vision and values, and why the candidate believes they would be a good fit for the Trust.
- Ensuring that the interview addresses safeguarding practices.
- Ensuring that the interview addresses the candidate's motivation, reasons for being interested in joining the Trust, and attitude to working with children.
- Agreeing with the successful candidate when other members of the Trust community will be informed about their appointment, including employees and parents.
- Ensuring that they have the skills to carry out effective selection processes.

The Appointing Officer is responsible for:

- Promoting the safety and wellbeing of children at every stage of the recruitment process
- Managing the entire recruitment process for a vacancy.
- Acting as a point of contact between the school/recruiting location and the People and Culture Team.
- Reviewing and scrutinising candidates' applications and identifying any gaps.
- Ensuring that all references and any declarations are properly scrutinised, and that information is not contradictory, unclear, or incomplete, with clarification requested when appropriate.
- Preparing the recruitment panel to conduct the interviews.
- Liaising with the People and Culture Team to arrange interviews with shortlisted candidates.
- Ensuring the recruitment process is carried out in line with the relevant Trust policies.
- During the recruitment process, and especially during the initial stages, the recruitment panel and the appointing officer will be watchful of candidates displaying the following characteristics:
  - No understanding or appreciation of children's needs
  - Expressing that they want the role to meet their needs at the expense of children.
  - Using inappropriate language in relation to children

- Expressing extreme views or views that do not support safeguarding practices.
  - Displaying unclear boundaries with children
  - Providing vague answers when asked about their experience and being unable to explain gaps in their employment.
- Ensuring that the candidate chosen to fill a vacancy is suitable for the role.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Monitoring the school SCR to ensure that the necessary vetting checks for employees are carried out.
- Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within their school and that all mandatory training is completed and recorded.
- Ensuring that appropriate supervision of employees and volunteers is organised, and for promoting the safety and wellbeing of pupils generally and throughout the recruitment process.
- Leading interviews as appropriate.
- Ensuring that the successful candidate receives the appropriate training, e.g. safeguarding and induction.
- Overseeing the SCR for volunteers and Governors to ensure full compliance with this policy.
- Ensuring that all relevant employees are familiar with this policy.
- Ensuring the appropriate staff have completed the safer recruitment training and that the training is updated every three years.

The DPO is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all documentation is handled in line with the Data Protection Policy and relevant legislation.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Deciding when it is appropriate or necessary to disclose any safeguarding concerns or allegations as part of a reference, in line with KCSIE.
- Discussing with the headteacher/CEO the suitability of a candidate when a reference has disclosed safeguarding concerns or prior allegations.