



THE FEDERATION OF HACKBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL & SPENCER NURSERY SCHOOL

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout the Federation and to support the creation of a safer culture by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of the children and young people in our care.

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

- Promoting equality of opportunity for all;
- Attracting the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- Deterring prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people;
- Identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.

The Federation is committed to using the disciplinary procedures that deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with the Federation's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, procedure and practices.

As an employer we are under a duty to refer any allegation of abuse against a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of the allegation being made. A referral will be made if a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

As an employer, we are under a duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

2. Roles & Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them

- Ensure that appropriate staff and governors have completed Safer Recruitment training

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the schools operate safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
- Ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in schools
- Monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this policy
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at every stage of this process

3. Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), DfE (KCSIE 2025) and covers those stipulated in [The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework](#), DfE September 2025 (pages 24 to 27).

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

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

3.1 Advertising

When advertising roles we will make clear:

- Our school’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statement: “Hackbridge Primary School / Spencer Nursery School are committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced check.”
- That 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
- All applicants will receive the following when applying for a post:
 - A statement of the school’s commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils
 - Job description and person specification
 - Equal opportunities policy
 - Safeguarding and child protection policy
 - Selection procedure for the post
 - Guidance on completing the application form
 - Application form

3.2 Applications

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children
- Include a copy of, or link to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Prospective applicants must complete, in full, an application form. Incomplete applications will not be accepted for shortlisting.
- Candidates submitting an application form completed online will be asked to sign the form if called in for interview.
- A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

3.3 Shortlisting

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

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore potential concerns
- Shortlist candidates against the person specification for the post

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

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
 - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
 - Any relevant overseas information
 - If they are known to the children's local authority social care and
 - If they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process, this is in line with the statutory guidance document, KCSIE 2025, see Appendix A.

The purpose of the online search is to uncover any information that may suggest the candidate is:

- a potential safeguarding risk
- their appointment may damage the reputation of the school or;
- they are unqualified for the role they have applied for

No recruitment decision will be made solely based on an online search and all relevant information uncovered will be discussed with the applicant at interview.

All online searches will be conducted by individuals who not involved in any other aspect of the recruitment process.

No irrelevant information uncovered will be provided to the staff interviewing the candidate.

All candidates will be treated consistently. The same online search for all shortlisted candidates will be undertaken consisting of:

- A Google search of the candidate's name linked to their current employer, previous employer, educational institutions attended, previous job titles and news articles
- A search of LinkedIn, X (formally Twitter), Facebook and Instagram reviewing the last 10 posts made.

4. Identification of the Recruitment Panel

At least one member of the selection and recruitment panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment.

5. Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references (e.g. 'to whom it may concern')

- Not reply on applicants to obtain their references
- Not accept references from a family member
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children. If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- Contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- Establish the reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

Two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer, will be requested before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the procedure.

References will be sought directly from the referee, and where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges. Email addresses provided must not be personal addresses and will be checked by the school's HR team for authenticity prior to the reference being taken up.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people
- The candidate's suitability for the post

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

References marked as confidential will be exempt from Subject Access Requests (SAR) under UK GDPR and will not be disclosed to anyone other than the intended recipient.

6. Invitation to Interview

Candidates called to interview will receive:

- An email/letter confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
- Details of the interview day
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview

Interviews will always be face to face.

Candidates will be required to:

- Explain any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this

- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure
- Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people

7. Employment Checks

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

New Staff

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

- Verify their identity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regular activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their proof of professional teaching status (if applicable to role)
- Verify their professional qualifications (if applicable to role)
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their role.
- Verify their right to work in the UK and keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards and keep on their personnel file.
- Verify two references.
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to do teaching work.
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

The following line has been removed from paragraph 286 of KCSIE: 'applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK can also contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body'. This has been removed because the 'UK Centre for Professional Qualifications' no longer provide an advisory service on behalf of the UK Government in regard to regulated professions and recognition of professional qualifications.

Additional checks completed by the HR & Governance Officer (HPS)

- Section 128 checks (checks that candidates are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state for those candidates taking up management positions.
- Appropriate checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.
- Criminal records checks for overseas applicants, if applicable.

All checks will be:

- Documented and retained on personnel file
- Recorded on the school's Single Central Record
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received

Employment will commence subject to all checks and procedures being satisfactorily completed.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

8. Existing Staff

In certain circumstances, we will carry out the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

9. Induction

All staff and volunteers who are new to the school will receive information and training on the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and guidance on safe working practices as part of their induction training. All staff receive a comprehensive induction pack prior to commencement of employment.

All successful candidates will undergo a period of monitoring and will:

- Meet regularly with their line manager
- Attend any appropriate training, including Child Protection training

10. Supply Staff

The Federation will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed, including the disqualification check. Any information disclosed as part of the DBS check will be treated confidentially.

Staff at The Federation will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives at school to check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

11. Peripatetic Staff/Contractors

The Federation requires that all necessary checks and DBS requirements have been satisfactorily completed for peripatetic staff. 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

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Staff at The Federation will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives at school.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identify of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

12. Trainee/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.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

13. Volunteers

The school will request DBS checks with barred list information on all volunteers as it is deemed, they will work in regulated activity with children. Although DBS checks are not required for supervised volunteers, the school may obtain an enhanced DBS check if it required. We will never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.

Volunteers will also be asked to provide two referees who can be contacted.

We will ensure sure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Staff at The Federation will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives at school.

14. Governors

All Governors will be subject to the following checks

- An enhanced DBS check within 21 days of their appointment or a check of the update service.

- A Section 128 check (checks that persons are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state for those persons taking up management positions.
- Checks with the Local Authority for any other relevant information

15. 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.

First ratified by Governors: March 2015

This review: October 2025

Next review: October 2026



Online Searches

Shortlisted candidates will be emailed the following information.

As part of our due diligence and in line with the recommendation made in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), the school reserves the right to undertake online searches on shortlisted candidates. Further details about our searches can be found within our safer recruitment policy. As part of the recruitment process the school will only consider information that suggests a candidate may:

- Be unqualified for the role
- Pose a potential safeguarding risk
- Risk damaging the reputation of the Trust or one of our schools

Any concerns on issues or incidents that arise from an online check, will be discussed with the applicant.

In addition to a Google search, that includes the candidate's name; public social media profiles may also be considered. To support this process, we would be grateful if applicants could provide details relating to some aspects of their online presence (as applicable), as detailed below.

LinkedIn -

Twitter -

Facebook -

Instagram –

Please provide details of any other platforms and handles -

Through accepting the invitation to interview and providing the above information, you have confirmed permission for the school to undertake an online search as detailed above and within the safer recruitment policy.

Online Searches on Shortlisted Candidates - Proforma

Candidate name:	
Role shortlisted for:	
Searcher name: <i>(Note – the searcher should NOT be part of the recruitment panel)</i>	
Date and time of online search:	
Date when information provided to the recruitment panel: <i>(Note – if there are no concerns a ‘no concerns raised’ response should be provided to the panel)</i>	
SEARCH PARAMETERS	CONCERNS RAISED
<p>Google search: The following terms, looking at the first page of results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Candidate name’ • ‘Candidate name’ + ‘current school/employment’ • ‘Candidate name’ + ‘previous school/employment’ • ‘Candidate name’ + ‘educational institution’ • ‘Candidate name’ + ‘job title’ <p>Websites: The candidate’s name was typed into the search function of the following websites/public profiles viewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn • X (formally Twitter) (checked the top 10 results) • Facebook (checked the top 10 results) • Instagram (checked the top 10 results) • Any other platforms or handles provided by the candidate • Their current school’s website 	<p><i>Note - Only record information below that suggests the candidate:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is unqualified for the role</i> • <i>Poses a potential safeguarding risk</i> • <i>Risks damaging the reputation of the Trust or one of our schools</i> <p><i>Don’t include any irrelevant personal information.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No concerns raised</p>
<p><u>Notes to help the searcher:</u></p> <p>What to look for Concerns or risks might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A work history that doesn’t match the application form and references provided (for example on LinkedIn) • An education history that doesn’t match the stated qualifications • Attitudes that suggest the candidate is unsuitable for the role or risks damaging the Trust or a school’s reputation, for example posting pictures of/with students or expressing discriminatory opinions <p>However, be cautious, because the results of an online search may be misleading. Be aware that any information you find may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of date • Out of context or untrue • Relating to someone else, especially if the candidate has a common name or uses a pseudonym for social media <p>Asking candidates about any issues of concern that come up in your search can avoid any confusion and could explain inaccuracies.</p>	