



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Northbourne CE Primary School
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Safer Recruitment Policy

I. Introduction

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:

- attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to vacancies;
- deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable from applying for vacancies;
- identifying and rejecting those candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Relevant Body:

- To ensure that ODST 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 Guidance and Legal Requirements, and the relevant Local Authority's Safeguarding Children's Board procedures;
- To monitor member school's compliance with them.

The Headteacher will:

- To ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance;
- To ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in the school;
- To ensure that appropriate staff and governors in member schools have completed safer recruitment training and that this is updated where appropriate;
- To monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this document;
- To promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process.

General

- It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document;
- It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks;
- The responsibilities of Ofsted, within inspection and regulation work, also include identifying safeguarding concerns such as inadequate recruitment checking processes.

Introduction

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- attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to vacancies;
- deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable from applying for vacancies;
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Safer recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the recruitment process.

This policy complies with guidance outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022)* and reinforces the expected conduct outline in the Code of Conduct for Staff, as well as the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection and Whistleblowing Policies which all staff are expected to be familiar with. All successful candidates for paid or volunteer employment will be made aware of these documents.

Overview

1.1 Northbourne CE Primary School is committed to using procedures that deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with the school's safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and practices.

1.2 We are under a duty to refer any allegation of abuse against a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer 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 he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

1.3 Under certain circumstances, we have a duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff who, following disciplinary investigation, is dismissed or resigns because of misconduct towards a pupil and we may refer any concerns we have before the completion of this process.

Inviting Applications for a role

2.1 All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statement:

Northbourne CE Primary School, as a member of the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders in regulated activity are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced check. Online checks may also be carried out to comply with KCSIE.

2.2 It is expected that all vacant posts will usually be advertised externally so as to encourage as wide a field of potential candidates as possible. In certain circumstances there may be justification for an internal advertisement only but the rationale for this should be discussed with an ODST HR team prior to advertising.

2.3 All applicants will receive access to a pack containing or signposting to the following when applying for a post:

- An application form
- Job description and person specification
- Information about ODST, the school and other general information such as reference to the school's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of the pupils and to legislation concerning the protection of children

- Details of the selection procedure for the post
- The contact details of any person who will be able to provide additional information about the post
- A statement about access to the school for applicants who may wish to see it or who may wish to speak to the Headteacher before making an application.

2.4 Prospective applicants must complete, in full, and return a signed application form. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a completed application form. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed forms has not passed.

2.5 By completing and submitting an application form, applicants are deemed to have provided a signed declaration (even if this is sent by email) that the information given is factually correct and that they possess the qualifications, skills and experience that they have stated on the form.

2.6 Posts involving regular contact with children or young people are exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975. Applicants for such posts are required to declare any criminal convictions, including spent convictions, that they have or any cautions, reprimands or final warning that they have been subject to in relation to any offences.

Identification of the Recruitment Panel

3.1 At least one member of the Selection and Recruitment Panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment.

Shortlisting and References

4.1 Candidates should be shortlisted against the person specification for the post. A minimum of two people should carry out the shortlisting process, one of whom should have completed appropriate safer recruitment and selection training.

4.2 References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after shortlisting. The only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.

4.3 As part of the shortlisting process schools should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates for information publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

4.4 References will be sought directly from the referee, who, where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

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

4.6 Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
- Their relationship to the candidate
- Any substantiated allegations

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

4.7 Reference requests will include the following:

- Applicant's current post and salary for the period in question
- Disciplinary record

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

4.9 References should be kept as confidential and should only be seen by the selection panel and the person delegated to obtain the references.

Invitation to Interview

5.1 Candidates called to interview will receive:

- Communication confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
- Details of the interview day including details of the panel members
- Further copy of the person specification
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview
- Be asked to provide proof of identity

5.2 Candidates who are shortlisted for any selection process should be asked to provide on the day proof of their identity and qualifications relevant to the role.

The Selection Process

6.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the post but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.

6.2 A robust selection process should not rely solely on an interview and a range of selection activities should be designed in order to help assess who is the most suitable candidate for the job. Interviews must always be face-to-face.

6.3 Panels of at least 2 people should always be involved in interviews so as to allow observation of the candidate and notes to be taken and to minimise the risk of any allegation of bias.

6.4 Candidates will be required to:

- Explain any gaps in employment
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel
- 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.

6.5 To assess the suitability of a candidate to work in a school the interview may examine:

- The candidate's attitude and motivation to work with children
- Their ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Their attitudes in managing discipline and towards authority.

Employment Checks

7.1 An offer of appointment will be conditional and all successful candidates will be required to:

- Provide proof of identity
- Complete an enhanced DBS application (including barred list information for those in regulated activity) and receive satisfactory clearance
- Where applicable complete a declaration form confirming that they are not disqualified either directly or indirectly under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009;
- Provide proof of professional status and actual certificates of qualifications;
- Ensure that they are not subject to a prohibition order if to be employed as a teacher;
- Complete a confidential health questionnaire;
- Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK;
- Submit to an overseas police check for any individual who within the last five years has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom whether they are a UK citizen or not;
- A section 128 check will be carried out on any candidate taking up a managerial position within a school. This includes members of the SLT within the school and Governors.

7.2 All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the 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.

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

7.4 It is strongly recommended that all efforts are made to obtain all pre-employment checks prior to the commencement of employment, particularly in relation to references and DBS checks. Where this is not possible, appointments should be delayed until satisfactory checks are received, or arrangements made for supervision of the staff member until such time they are received.

7.5 Documented evidence of the checks made - for example, eligibility to work, notification of the DBS certificate number (although not the certificate itself) - should be kept on the individual's personnel file in school.

Induction

8.1 All staff and volunteers who are new to the school will receive information on the school's Safeguarding Policy and procedures and guidance on safe working practices which would include guidance on acceptable conduct/behaviour through the school's Code of Conduct. These expectations will form part of new staff members' induction training.

8.2 All successful candidates will undergo a period of induction and will:

- Meet regularly with their induction tutor
- Meet regularly with their line manager
- Attend any appropriate training including generalist child protection training

Supply Staff

9.1 Northbourne CE Primary School will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. Any information disclosed as part

of the DBS check will be treated confidentially. These agencies should be able to demonstrate that their staff have received appropriate safeguarding training.

9.2 Identity checks are carried out when the individual arrives at school.

Volunteers

10.1 In line with paragraphs 304-311 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, not only should local governing bodies prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children and take proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required, they should also ensure volunteers are properly supervised.

10.2 Although not a statutory requirement in itself to complete an Enhanced DBS on volunteers, it is a statutory requirement to carry out a risk assessment on volunteers to ascertain whether there are certain circumstances where an Enhanced DBS would be needed. To ensure best practice, schools should therefore carry out a risk assessment and obtain an Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List if the person is in Regulated Activity or an Enhanced DBS Check without Barred List if the person may be left unsupervised by someone who is themselves in Regulated Activity. Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Contractors

11.1 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (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.

11.2 We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors and will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

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

11.4 We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at Trust premises.

11.5 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.

11.6 Where we decide that an individual falls outside the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Trainee / student teachers

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

12.2 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.

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

Record Retention / Data Protection

13.1 Northbourne CE Primary School will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a six month period, after which time the notes will be destroyed.

Single Central Records

14.1 In line with DfE requirements, the school will keep and maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks. The central list will record all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff, supply agency staff whether employed directly or through an agency, volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, for example, specialist sports coach.

Appendix: Online Checks – Record Form

This form is to be used when potential issues are found, in order to keep a record of what has been found, and what has been explored with the candidate.

Candidate name	
Position applied for	
School	
Date of application	

Detail of Online Searches	
Individual who undertook the searches:	
Date of the searches:	
<p>Outline the links that were followed, and the concerns that have arisen from these: <i>Key elements to consider are, does the information found suggest the candidate 1) is unqualified for the role 2) poses a potential safeguarding risk 3) risks damaging the reputation of your school or trust</i></p> <p><i>Consider taking screenshots or keeping records of any particular issues you find.</i></p>	
<p>Outline discussion with candidate:</p>	
<p>Any further action to take? <i>Risk assessment? Further discussions with HR?</i></p>	
<p></p>	

Appendix: Online Searches – HR Guidance Sept 22

The new version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) states that schools “should consider” carrying out an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This is a new addition to the legislation that will apply from September 2022. The specific wording is as follows:

“221. In addition, as part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.”

It is important to note that an online search is not a replacement or an alternative for other recruitment checks.

Data protection

Data protection law applies to online searches the same as any other part of the application process. Searching for, and collecting, information about a candidate counts as a data processing activity. This means you need to comply with the 7 principles of data processing set out under the UK GDPR. Every piece of personal data that your school holds must be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and transparently
- Collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to achieve your purpose with it
- Accurate and kept up to date
- Processed and held securely
- Only retained for as long as is necessary to achieve your purpose with it
- Your school is responsible for complying with these principles, and must be able to show that it is complying

In order to comply with these principles, it is important to follow the guidance below, and retain any documentation relating to issues found as part of these searches with either the recruitment documentation for unsuccessful candidates (and destroy after 6 months), or if relevant to the successful candidate, on their HR file.

Conducting a search

1. Define the scope of the search

The scope of any search should be clearly defined, and consistent. The expectation is that these searches are completed for all school based roles, to ensure there are no incidents or issues that the school need to be aware of before recruiting candidates. The scope of this search is suggested as:

- A simple Google search of the candidates first and surname, this could include the location or previous employing school if the name is particularly common
- A review of the top 3 results is undertaken, which may include social media posts if these are included in the top-rated search results, as long as they are dated within the last 5 years.
- A separate review of all social media platforms or other search engines etc is not recommended.

It is not expected that these searches will be long and extensive, but more a quick review to assess whether there is anything in the public domain which needs to be further explored with the candidate.

2. Tell applicants they'll be subject to an online search if shortlisted

The template wording for the safeguarding statement (which should be included on all adverts) included at paragraph 2.1 in the Safer Recruitment Policy has been updated to reflect this.

3. Have a different member of staff carry out the searches

Finding out personal information about a candidate can lead to unconscious bias. This means that best practice is for the person doing the searches not to have any involvement in conducting interviews or making decisions about

recruitment. We recognise that in schools, where staffing is limited, this may not be possible, but we suggest that where possible those undertaking the online search are not decision makers in the recruitment process.

4. Make a record of the search

Once the search has been completed, the details of the search need to be recorded (see appendix 3). For candidates who are appointed, please add the date of the search and initials to the recruitment checklist which we have updated. If any issues are found, they should be recorded separately on [this form](#).

The interviewing panel should be provided with the outcome of these searches ahead of the interview. The person undertaking the searches should only share information that suggests that the shortlisted candidate:

- Is unqualified for the role
- Poses a potential safeguarding risk
- Risks damaging the reputation of your school or trust

Any concerns identified must not be shared with any other persons other than the interview panel and colleagues are reminded that any emails containing reference to this will form part of any subject access request where received.

Where the concerns raised through the search are minor, these can be discussed with the shortlisted candidates at the interview stage, in the same way we would raise any issues which may come from a reference. If the concerns relate to content published on a social media platform and you do not feel able to verify that the account belongs to the applicant, you may want to ask the individual, at interview stage, for any social media handles they may use. This will enable you to verify whether the post originated from the candidate's account.

If issues of concern are found through the searches, or where you are unsure, please contact the ODST HR team for further advice and support.