



Name of Policy:

Safer Recruitment Policy

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Contents

Introduction	3
Aims of the Policy.....	3
Responsibilities	3
Safer Recruitment.....	3
The Planning Process	4
Advertising	4
All posts.....	4
Leadership posts	5
The Application Process.....	5
The Selection Process	5
The selection panel	5
Shortlisting	6
Online searches on shortlisted candidates	6
References	7
Other checks prior to interview	8
The interview and selection process.....	8
Appointment and Promotion of Existing Staff.....	9
Use of Fixed Term and Temporary Contracts	9
Use of Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors	9
Governors.....	9
Employment of Migrant Workers	10
Job Offers to Successful Candidates	10
Job offers.....	10
Pre-Employment Checks	10
After the pre-appointment checks	10
Single central record (SCR).....	11
Monitoring	11
Data Protection.....	12
Monitoring and review	12



Introduction

Wallace Fields Junior School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This policy document provides the framework for safer recruitment of all categories of staff at Wallace Fields Junior School, alongside continued monitoring based on statutory requirements and guidance.

The Governing Body values the contribution of all staff and recognises that the recruitment of appropriately skilled staff is key to the provision of a safe and successful teaching and learning environment in which pupils can thrive.

The Governing Body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Accordingly, this policy complies with the current DfE guidance document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that newly recruited staff possess the most appropriate blend of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities to meet the demands of the post and the needs of the school.
- To ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all staff.
- To ensure that all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are recruited without regard to gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave.
- To ensure that the recruitment and selection process is accessible to all by giving appropriate regard to the needs of individuals with a disability, with provision of reasonable adjustments where necessary.
- To ensure that all recruitment practices are compliant with DfE safeguarding guidance, with clear links to child protection policies and procedures, thereby ensuring as far as possible that all staff are suitable to work with children and young people.
- To ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body, with appropriate advice from the Headteacher, is responsible for determining the staffing complement of the school and for all appointments to the school staff.

The Headteacher will have delegated responsibility for the appointment of teachers and other staff outside of the leadership group.

Once the selection panel has been agreed, the lead person, in conjunction with the panel, will be responsible for drawing up the relevant documentation and planning the selection process.

The selection panel for any position will have responsibility for ensuring that a fair, equitable and non-discriminatory process is maintained throughout the recruitment and selection activities.

Safer Recruitment

Matters relating to child protection, safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children will be central to the recruitment process, starting with the planning of recruitment needs through to the selection exercise and appointment itself. Particular measures to ensure safe recruitment practice, compliant with DfE advice, are identified throughout this policy. The selection panel have

responsibility for ensuring the implementation of these measures. The safeguarding measures noted in this policy are neither exhaustive nor intended to obviate the need to refer to the most recent DfE guidance as necessary.

The Planning Process

The Governing Body, in conjunction with the Headteacher, will review the staffing requirements of the school annually and assess the short and long-term recruitment needs so that, as far as possible, a planned approach to resourcing the school is taken.

Before the start of the recruitment process, there will be a review of the requirements of the specific role. Where a job description or person specification does not exist (e.g. for new posts) then these will be drawn up for agreement by the selection panel.

Job descriptions and person specifications for existing posts will also be reviewed to determine whether the roles and responsibilities of the post need to be revised and to update the necessary qualifications, knowledge, experience, skills or abilities required by the post holder.

The person specification will also be assessed to ensure that it does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave.

Safeguarding Measures

- A statement of the school's commitment to the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of pupils will be included in both the job description and the person specification.
- The job description will clearly set out the extent of relationships and contact with pupils and the degree of responsibility for children and young people that the post holder will have.
- All person specifications will give consideration to the need for the post holder to be suitable to work with children and young people. Qualifications, experience, competencies and qualities needed for the role will be identified, along with an explanation of how they will be assessed during the selection process.
- All shortlisted applicants will be notified that any relevant issues arising from references will be taken up at interview.

Advertising

All posts

All teaching and non-teaching posts will be advertised internally within the school and in any relevant vacancy circular. Posts may additionally be advertised on an appropriate internet jobs site and/or in national/local press.

In certain circumstances a post or promotion opportunity will be ring-fenced for current staff in the first instance. Any such ring-fencing will be done in a consistent and transparent manner.

Occasionally the decision may be taken not to advertise a post. This may occur, for example, when a similar post has recently been advertised and an appointment can be made from the subsequent interviewees, or because a temporary appointment needs to be made as soon as possible to ensure continuity within a post.

Leadership posts

Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher posts will be advertised as the Governing Body considers most appropriate. As a general rule, such posts will, as a minimum, be advertised on a relevant internet jobs site, and may additionally be advertised in a nationally printed publication.

Where the Governing Body has determined that there is good reason not to advertise a leadership post the decision-making process will be clearly documented.

Safeguarding Measures

- All advertisements will include a statement about the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Reference will also be made to the requirement for the successful applicant to undertake an enhanced-level check via the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).

The Application Process

For all posts, information packs will be sent, or made available electronically, to all interested parties. The information pack will generally consist of:

- a letter from the person leading the recruitment process
- a job description and person specification
- an application form, including an equality monitoring form, with details for completion
- a copy of the school's equal opportunities policy statement
- a copy of the school's child protection policy statement
- a statement of terms and conditions relating to the post (hours, salary, etc.)
- information about the recruitment process (interview dates, etc.)
- any other relevant information regarding the post and the school.

Where applicable, the school will use the application form to make clear that shortlisted candidates may be subject to online searches.

Applications received after the closing date will not normally be considered, unless the applicant has given prior notice of a late application and this has been agreed by the selection panel, or there has been a low response to the advertisement.

Applications made through means other than application forms will not be considered, unless a reasonable adjustment has been made to accommodate the needs of an applicant with a disability.

Safeguarding Measures

- All applications must be made using the application form for the position to ensure receipt of relevant personal data, education and employment history, declaration of relationships, details of referees and a statement of personal qualities and experience.

The Selection Process

The selection panel

A selection panel of at least two people will be set up prior to the shortlisting process. The members of this panel will be comprised of the Headteacher (for teacher/SLT appointments) or (member of

SLT for support staff appointments) plus any of the following, as appropriate to the post: [*note that maintained schools cannot delegate the power to appoint below the level of Headteacher*]

- Deputy Headteacher
- Line manager for the post
- The local authority's representative (for Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher appointments)
- Professional advisers where particular expertise or guidance is required.

Wherever possible, all panel members will have been trained in and/or have relevant experience of recruitment and selection and interviewing.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel this fact should be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and to ensure equal treatment of candidates.

Safeguarding Measures

- At least one member of the panel will have completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

Staff and governors involved in the recruitment process will have an awareness of information regarding the following:

- The recruitment and selection process
- Pre-appointment and vetting checks, regulated activity and recording of information
- Other checks that may be necessary for, staff, volunteers and others
- How to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of children and legal reporting duties on employers

Shortlisting

Prior to shortlisting, the equality monitoring forms will be removed from the applications. If an applicant has requested reasonable adjustments to a part of the shortlisting process to accommodate a disability then this will be notified to the chair of the selection panel.

The shortlisting process for interview will determine those applicants who best meet the criteria for the post as outlined in the person specification. Decision making will be based solely on the information available on the application forms.

The school will consider undertaking online searches, as necessary, and explore any further potential concerns:

Online searches on shortlisted candidates

In line with KCSIE, the school will consider carrying out online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence. Online searches solely aim to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, that the school may want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Online searches will be conducted on shortlisted candidates only, and only where the school considers this appropriate. The school will consider any potential risks of online searches, e.g. unlawful discrimination or invasion of privacy, and will ensure staff conducting online searches

are clear on the purpose of the search. Shortlisted candidates will be made aware that online searches may be conducted as part of due diligence checks.

Online searches will only examine data that is publicly available. Staff will not 'follow' or submit a friend request to shortlisted candidates on social media platforms to access further details or information.

Online searches will be carried out by an individual who is independent of the recruitment process (SBM if not part of the interview process) to minimise the risk of bias or discrimination and to ensure that only relevant information is considered. The person responsible for carrying out online searches will have due regard to Part three of KCSIE.

The online search process may include searching for the candidate by name via search engines and social media platforms.

When carrying out searches of shortlisted candidates' online presence, the school will look out for indicators of concern, such as:

- Inappropriate behaviour, jokes or language.
- Discriminatory comments.
- Inappropriate images.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Anything that suggests the candidate may not be suitable to work with children.
- Anything that could harm the reputation of the school.

Any concerns will be addressed during the interview process. The school will ensure that candidates are given an opportunity to discuss any concerns raised by the online search.

Safeguarding Measures

- Incomplete applications will be rejected and may, at the discretion of the selection panel, be returned to the candidate for completion.
- Notes will be made of any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment so that these can be considered as part of the shortlisting process. Reasons for gaps in employment, repeated career changes, moves from permanent to temporary or supply teaching will also be noted for exploration and verification.

References

References will be requested for all shortlisted candidates (including internal applicants) prior to interview. The school will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 by not asking questions about a candidate's health or disability as part of these references prior to a job offer being made (including information relating to levels of sickness absence). It will be for the selection panel to determine whether the referees given by applicants are suitable and appropriate. Any applicants currently working in a school setting will be expected to give the Headteacher of that school/college as one referee. References from family members will not be acceptable.

All references subsequently received will be held by the chair of the interview panel who will explore any areas of concern at interview. Once a preferred candidate has been chosen following the interview process, the rest of the interview panel will be given access to the references of that person only, in order to confirm their decision.

Safeguarding Measures

- References will be sought and obtained directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the applicant will not be accepted.
- References will seek relevant and objective information, including information to verify the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Issues of concern will be raised further with the referee and taken up with the candidate during the interview.
- Where, in exceptional situations, references are not received prior to the interview, any concerns will be resolved satisfactorily prior to any unconditional offer of employment.

Other checks prior to interview

Where a candidate is claiming specific qualifications or previous experience that is relevant to the job but is not verified by reference checks, these will be verified before interview so that any discrepancy can be explored at interview.

Applicants will be asked to provide details of any cautions, convictions, reprimands and final warnings that are not protected (i.e. that are not filtered out), as well as any other relevant information, prior to interview.

Where shortlisted applicants have disclosed a criminal record or have proceedings pending against them, and/or have had any sanctions imposed by the Teaching Regulation Agency or the National College for Teaching and Leadership / GTC then this will be followed up at interview as necessary. In certain cases it may be necessary to have a discussion with the applicant prior to the interview.

The interview and selection process

Prior to the interview and selection process candidates will be given any relevant information, e.g. details of any selection methods that will be used. Candidates who have a disability or any other particular needs will be given the opportunity to highlight this prior to any selection activities taking place in order that reasonable adjustments may be made to the recruitment process if required.

Whilst an interview is always likely to be used as the primary feature of the selection process, the selection panel will consider whether any additional selection methods are required to supplement the interview. These may include presentations, teaching observation, interaction with pupils, in-tray exercises, verbal or numerical tests, according to the requirements of the role.

Whichever methods are chosen, the panel will use these to assess the merits of each candidate against the person specification and explore their suitability to work with children and young people. The selection panel will ensure that all candidates are asked the same core questions at interview based on the list of essential criteria for the post, although supplementary questions may differ according to the candidates' answers and backgrounds.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that no questions or selection methods could be viewed as discriminatory.

Safeguarding Measures

- Invitations for interview will require candidates to bring with them documentation to verify their ID, i.e. passport, driving licence, birth certificate, etc.
- Candidates will be instructed to bring with them to interview any relevant documentation that will confirm education and professional qualifications. Copies of all documents will be kept on file for successful candidates.

- In addition to assessing the candidate's suitability for the post, the panel will assess the candidate's attitude toward children and young people and his/her ability to support the school's safeguarding agenda and promote the welfare of children. Gaps in employment history and concerns or discrepancies in the application form and references will also be explored.

Appointment and Promotion of Existing Staff

The school values the contribution of all staff within the school community and seeks to retain key skills. The school will support as far as possible the continued professional development of all staff as they seek promotion to new opportunities both within the school and elsewhere. All members of staff are therefore encouraged to consider their suitability for any vacancy within the school. Where a member of staff applies for a vacant position they will be given equal consideration alongside external candidates, based on the essential criteria for the post.

Use of Fixed Term and Temporary Contracts

Where it is determined that posts are only of a short-term nature, this will be clearly specified in the job description and on any advertising literature. Posts will only be advertised on a temporary or fixed-term basis for genuine reasons. Most temporary or fixed-term contracts will come to a natural end. Where, however, a fixed duration contract expires and the need for the post remains for a further definite period, then the post holder will usually be given an extension to their fixed period contract.

Where the need for a temporary or fixed-term post becomes a permanent one, there will be no automatic entitlement for the temporary postholder to be offered the permanent contract. It will be for the Headteacher to consider the most appropriate recruitment process in the circumstances. This could include, for example, consideration of the original reason for the post initially being temporary, any subsequent changes to the needs of the school and the original recruitment process that was undertaken.

Use of Supply Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

The school workforce is made up of a rich variety of professional and highly skilled and committed people, not all of whom are paid employees. The school values the diversity that this brings to its community as it strives to provide a safe environment and improve the standards of teaching and learning for all pupils. To ensure the continued high standards of contributions, we will:

- Use, as our preferred sources of supply staff, agencies that operate to high quality standards, particularly in terms of recruitment checks and legislative compliance
- Use known teachers (e.g. ex-staff) as supply staff
- With appropriate adjustment, adopt similar recruitment measures for contractors as for employees, and for volunteers as for paid staff.
- An Enhanced DBS Check

Governors

Governors will have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS. Governance is not a regulated activity and so governors will not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

Governors will be subject to a section 128 direction check.

Employment of Migrant Workers

The school will not employ, as a member of staff, any individual who cannot demonstrate that he/she has the right to work in the UK, regardless of the individual's colour or apparent race, nationality or ethnic origins. Any employee who has a restricted right to work in the UK will be required to provide ongoing evidence of that right during employment.

The school is not currently licensed to sponsor migrant workers who require sponsorship in order to work in the UK under Home Office rules.

Job Offers to Successful Candidates

Job offers

Successful candidates will normally be offered the post verbally, followed by an offer letter as soon as possible afterwards. A written offer of appointment will include any terms upon which the offer is made conditionally, e.g. satisfactory completion of an occupational health questionnaire, provision of appropriate documentation to verify entitlement to work in the UK and other relevant details.

Pre-Employment Checks

Any offer of employment at the school will be conditional upon:

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references, if not already received
- Verification of the appointee's identity, if not verified following interview
- A satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check (including a check of the Children's Barred List) **refer to DBS Policy**
- Verification of the appointee's medical fitness to undertake the role
- Verification of the appointee's right to work in the UK (including a photocopy of the original evidence provided)
- Make further checks as appropriate on any appointee who has lived or worked outside the UK
- Verification of the appointee's qualifications, if not verified following interview
- For those in management, trustee or governor roles, conduct a section 128 check

Where it is a requirement of the post the offer will also be conditional upon:

- Verification of professional status, e.g. QTS/QTLS status, successful completion of statutory induction etc.
- A completed declaration form to confirm the appointee is not restricted in the work they may perform under childcare disqualification regulations
- Satisfactory completion of a probationary period.

If any of the following circumstances come to light during the vetting process the facts will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or the police, as appropriate:

- Candidates are found to be on the Children's Barred List, or the DBS check shows that the candidate has been disqualified from working with children
- An applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or
- There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

After the pre-appointment checks

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

- Agree a start date with the candidate.
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- Destroy the completed self-declaration forms.
- Submit contractual paperwork, including the completed DBS check, copies of identification, references, proof of qualifications, pre-employment medical enquiry form, P45, application/equal opportunities and emergency contacts.
- Add the required details of the checks carried out to the school's SCR.

Single central record (SCR)

The school will maintain and regularly update the SCR.

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

- All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school.
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the school or college, including volunteers.
- The bullet points below set out the minimum information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (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:

[Please note: for documents being viewed by the school, the date recorded on the SCR should be the date the document was seen, rather than the date it was issued.]

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- 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 section 128 check
- 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

For supply staff, the school will include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

If checks are carried out on volunteers, this will be recorded in the SCR.

The details of individuals will be removed from the SCR once their employment with the school ends.

Monitoring

The Governing Body is mindful of its commitment to best practice in recruitment and its obligations under both the Equality Act 2010 and DfE safer recruitment guidance and will ensure regular monitoring of all recruitment activity. This will be undertaken with a view to improving future recruitment practices and thereby achieving the aims of this policy. The results of this monitoring and any recommended actions will be reported to the Governing Body on an annual basis.

Data Protection

Records relating to recruitment and selection activities will remain confidential and accessible only to those who require information either as part of the recruitment decision-making process or for the administration of the process (including monitoring activities for the purposes of this policy or equality policies). Records relating to successful candidates will be placed in personnel files. Records for unsuccessful candidates will be retained in a secure place for a period of six months, after which time they will be securely destroyed. Inappropriate access or disclosure of recruitment data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the school's data protection policy. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed by the governing board and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

