



Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy

Background

Great Walstead School ("the School") is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority.

The School operates in a competitive market place and its staff are its greatest asset. Much of the School's success can be attributed to the skill and dedication of a committed team of people. We therefore aim to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment.

In line with legislation including the Children Act 2004, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Guidance DFE/-00215-2016, the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2014 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, the School's duty of care for pupils is paramount.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with employment legislation and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance (including KCSIE 2016 and Prevent Duty guidance).

Purpose

This Policy sets out the School's approach to recruitment and selection.

The School actively pursues and secures the highest possible calibre of experienced and qualified teachers and support staff, whilst ensuring that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will be carried out with thorough and consistent regard for equal opportunities.

The School may include a preference for someone who is able to support the Christian Ethos of the School for teaching positions, in accordance with Regulation 39 of The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 provision for independent schools of a religious character.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the School's Recruitment and Selection of Staff policy are:

- To recruit the person who is most suited to the particular job, on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.
- To ensure that staff and volunteers share the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

- To comply with relevant safeguarding, employment and equal opportunities legislation.
- To promote fairness and reflect the School's Christian ethos.
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Scope

This Policy refers and applies to staff directly recruited and employed by the School. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, staff are defined as '*Any person working at the School whether under a contract of employment, under a contract for services or otherwise than under a contract, but does not include supply staff or volunteers.*' This Policy is applicable irrespective of whether the contract is of a temporary, fixed term, or permanent duration.

In the case of agency or contract workers, the School shall obtain written confirmation from the agency or company which has provided the staff that it has carried out the appropriate checks.

Application Form

Candidates should apply by completing the relevant Application Form in full, which enables the School to compare candidates as information is submitted in the same format, and applicants sign appropriate declarations regarding the truthfulness and accuracy of the information given. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms. Candidates should receive a Job Description and Person Specification for the vacant position.

The School makes candidates aware that all posts in the School involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post.

Criminal Records Policy

The School will refer to the Department for Education (DfE) document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks. The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>.

The successful applicant will be required to complete an online Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) application for the position. Any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings must be disclosed to the School. However amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify a candidate for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.

Upfront disclosure of a criminal record may not debar a candidate from appointment. The School will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age it was committed and any other relevant factors. In this event, information should be submitted in confidence enclosing details in a separate sealed envelope to the HR Director or Head, which will be considered and then destroyed. If candidates would like to discuss this beforehand, they may contact the HR Director or Head, in confidence for advice. Each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in the attached Appendix.

All candidates should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal by the School if they have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

Invitation to Interview

The School will shortlist applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Short-listed applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

All formal interviews will normally involve a panel of three people chaired by the Head/Bursar or another designated senior member of staff. It is recommended best practice that at least one person on the appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training. The Chair of Governors should chair the panel for the Bursar's and Head's appointments and there is a Governor Panel member in attendance in all leadership and Head of Department appointments. The interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Chair as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel. Should the Chair have a conflict of interest, the Vice Chair shall decide whether the Chair should withdraw from the panel.

The interview will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children.

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by the candidate from the awarding body.

The School requests that all candidates invited to interview also bring with them **originals** of the following documents:

- Current driving licence including a photograph **or** a passport **or** a full birth certificate
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address
- Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name
- Where the candidate is not a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area or Switzerland, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Conditional Offer of Appointment/Pre-Appointment Checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received)
- Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK
- A satisfactory Enhanced DBS check and, if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS

- For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State
- Fully completed the application form
- Verification of professional qualifications, where appropriate
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (for teaching posts - applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas such checks and confirmations as the School may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. All teaching staff who have lived outside the UK will have an EEA check using the Teachers Services System.
- Those employed in management roles will have an additional check for a section 128 direction.
- Satisfactory Disqualification by Association Declaration – contained in the application form
- Satisfactory medical fitness.

Following a conditional offer, it is the School's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the School in strictest confidence. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role, i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, and layout of the School.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

References

The School will seek references for shortlisted candidates and will approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications. This may be before or after interview. If the candidate does not wish the School to take up references in advance of the interview, they should notify the School at the time of applying. References will ask for information from current or previous employers about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the candidate has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and, if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. They will also be asked if they are aware of any involvement of the candidate in extremism. Where neither the current nor previous employment has involved working with children, the School will still ask the current employer for an opinion on the candidate's suitability to work with children. Where the candidate has no previous employment history, the School may request character references which may include references from the candidate's school or university.

The School will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the Application Form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate. All references will be verified for the successful candidate.

Retention and Security of Records

The School will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy. Copies of DBS certificates will not be retained for longer than 6 months.

References

ISBA Reference Library for member schools/ISI Handbook for the Inspection of Schools - The Regulatory Requirements January 2017:

<http://www.isi.net/site/downloads/HandbookInspectionFramework201701.pdf>

Reviewed by: HR Director October 2017

Next Review date: October 2019

Appendix Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

All staff are required to complete a staff suitability self-declaration form as part of the application process and existing staff are required to notify the employer of any change in circumstances pertaining to their self-declaration.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. The School will report the matter to the Police and/or the DBS if:

- the School receives an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of, an applicant's application; or
- the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving.