

A Place to Flourish
“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10)



Safer Recruitment Policy

Date of review/adoption	Spring 2024
Date of next review	Autumn 2025
Notes	

Signed ... *C. Robertson* Chair of Governors

Date

**Electronically signed and approved at Full Governing Board Meeting held on*
BLUNDESTON CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

Blundeston CEVC Primary School is committed to **safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work. We view **safeguarding** as everyone's responsibility and we take this responsibility seriously.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people.

The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law and Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021).

We will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board of the school 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 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 school operates 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 the school
- monitor any contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at every stage of this process.

3. Delegation of appointments and constitution of selection panel

The Governing Board delegates the power to offer employment for all posts to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will always involve at least one governor in the appointment of all staff. Selection panels will comprise of a minimum of three people, where possible.

In accordance with the statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

4. Advertising

All vacant posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may also be advertised internally. Any internal recruitment process will follow the procedures set out in this policy.

All advertisements for posts, paid or unpaid, will include the following statements:

“Blundeston CEVC Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment.”

“The successful candidate will have to meet the requirements of the person specification and will be subject to pre-employment checks including a health check, an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.”

5. Information for applicants

All applicants will be provided with:

- a job description, outlining the duties of the post, and a person specification
- a Local Authority application form (CVs will not be accepted)
- a description of the school, relevant to the vacant post
- reference to the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**, **Safer Recruitment Policy**, DBS and other pre-employment requirements
- an outline of terms of employment, including term and salary
- the closing date for the receipt of applications and interview date(s)

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

Candidates submitting an application form completed online, or sending it via email, will be asked to sign the form if invited to interview. Applicants will be reminded in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. Where applicable, the school will use the interview to make clear that shortlisted candidates may be subject to online searches.

A CV will never be accepted in place of a completed application form.

6. Shortlisting and reference requests

The selection panel will shortlist applicants against the person specification for the post. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants. The selection panel will agree the applicants to be invited to interview. Consider undertaking online searches, as necessary, and explore any further potential concerns.

Two references, one of which must be from the candidate's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the interview so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the selection process (unless a candidate has indicated on their application form that they do not wish for references to be asked for: this will be followed up at interview).

Candidates are entitled to see and receive copies of their employment references and should request these from their referees.

References will be sought directly from the referee and, where necessary, they will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges, including copies of emails. Hard copies of reference request forms will be sent to referees with a stamped addressed envelope for return to the school, in order that references are physically signed by the referee.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies and to explore the reasons why this is the case. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges, including copies of emails.

If a candidate for a post working with children is not currently employed in a post working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment in which the candidate has worked with children to confirm details of the candidate's employment and his/her reasons for leaving.

Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm, in writing:

- the referee's relationship to the candidate
- details of the candidate's current post and salary
- the candidate's performance history and conduct
- whether the candidate has been subject to capability procedures and the outcome of this
- whether the candidate has been subject to disciplinary action relating to the safety and welfare of children, including where the sanction has expired, and the outcome of this
- details of any substantiated allegations or concerns about the candidate relating to the safety and welfare of children
- whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people (if so, the school will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children)
- the candidate's suitability for the post with explicit reference to the job description and person specification.

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 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.

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

References are the "property" of the selection panel and strict confidentiality will be observed. Employer or personal testimonials, i.e. those provided by the candidate and/or marked "to whom it may concern", will not be accepted. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied. The selection panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the candidate, for any post. References will be verified and any discrepancies or areas of potential concern will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

If the field of applicants is felt to be weak, the post may be re-advertised.

7. Interviews

Before the interviews, the selection panel will agree on the interview format, tasks/activities and interview questions.

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

Ideally, interviews will take place face-to-face. However, the use of technology, such as Teams or Zoom, can be used if necessary.

Candidates invited to interview will receive:

- an initial email confirming the interview and any other selection tasks/activities to be carried out by candidates
- details of the interview day, including details of the panel members
- details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- the opportunity to discuss the process and ask any questions prior to the interview.

The questions asked will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirement of the job description and the person specification and each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post.

The same areas of questioning will be covered for each applicant and no questions which would discriminate directly or indirectly on protected characteristics under the Equality Act will be asked.

The selection process for every post will include exploration of the candidate's understanding of **safeguarding and child protection** issues.

Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the selection panel
- to declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure
- to demonstrate their capacity to **safeguard** and protect the welfare of children and young people
- to demonstrate their capacity to **safeguard** themselves, including answering a question about their social media accounts.

The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions, other than those protected, that the candidate has declared and are relevant to the prospective employment.

The recruitment documentation will be retained. In line with GDPR legislation, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them. After 6 months, all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

8. Pre-appointment checks

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

When appointing new staff, we will:

- verify a candidate's identity from current photo ID (originals) and proof of address (originals) except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available; the advice of HR will be sought if this is the case
- obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the candidate will be engaging in regulated activity
- obtain a separate barred list check if, after carrying out a risk assessment, an individual will be judged as suitable to start work in regulated activity before the DBS enhanced disclosure is available
- check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a Prohibition Order issued by the Secretary of State
- check information about any teacher qualifications held and whether induction has been passed

- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- verify the candidate's right to work in the UK (if there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then we will follow advice given by HR)
- make any further checks that we consider appropriate if the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK, including information on sanctions or restrictions imposed by EEA professional regulating authorities
- verify professional qualifications (original certificates), as appropriate
- require the candidate to complete the school's Childcare Disqualification Declaration form

All checks will be:

- 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

9. Offer of employment by the selection panel

The offer of employment by the selection panel and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties, subject to satisfactory completion of the pre-employment checks and satisfactory references. The successful candidate will be informed, normally by telephone, that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks.

10. Personnel files and Single Central Record

Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of his/her employment with the school including:

- job advertisement
- application form – signed by the applicant
- interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in the employment history
- references – minimum of two
- proof of identity
- proof of right to work in the UK
- proof of relevant academic qualifications
- evidence of medical clearance from the Occupational Health service
- evidence of DBS clearance, Barred List (where applicable) and Teacher Prohibition checks
- signed copy of the offer of employment letter/contract.

The school will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with DfE guidance.

11. Start of employment and induction

The pre-employment checks listed above must be completed before the employee starts work. Exceptions will only be made in circumstances where a risk assessment has been undertaken. Exceptions will never be made in the case of the Barred List and Teacher Prohibition checks.

All new employees will be provided with an induction programme as set out in the Induction Policy, which will cover all relevant matters of school policy including **safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children, child protection procedures, whistleblowing etc.

12. Adults working with children who are not employed directly by the school

Supply Staff: We will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. We will carry out identity checks when the supply staff member arrives at school.

Peripatetic Staff: We use staff employed by Suffolk County Council Local Authority who ensure and confirm that necessary checks and DBS requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

Volunteers: We carry out DBS and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post (as above) and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees. References are taken up, as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips/PTA events) are supervised, in accordance with legislation.

Students on placement: When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, NVQ etc.), references and completion of an application form will not be required. However, we will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with Barred List check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at school.

Students on work experience: Students on work experience will always be supervised.

Contractors: We ensure that contractors, or any employee of the contractor, working at the school have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required. Contractors and contractors' employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children.

If a contractor working at school is self-employed and will be in regulated activity, we will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

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

Lanyards used in school will reflect the level of checks that have been carried out (red = no DBS checks so adult will be accompanied at all times, green = DBS clearance has been obtained so adult is permitted to be unaccompanied, blue = paid members of staff).

13. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance.

14. Legal framework

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

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

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

- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2021) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
- DfE (2022) 'ID checking guidelines for standard/enhanced DBS check applications from 1 July 2021'
- DfE (2021) 'Right to work checks: employing EU, EEA and Swiss citizens'
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2023) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- Disclosure & Barring Service (2018) 'Regulated activity with children in England'
- Home Office (2022) 'Employer's guide to right to work checks'
- Safer Recruitment Consortium (2022) 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Teacher Appraisal Policy
- Teacher Capability Policy
- Single Central Record (SCR) Policy
- DBS Policy
- Work Experience Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy