

AT & FDN (IS) SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Responsible Board/Committee	People and Systems Committee
Policy Type	Central Policy (Group A)
Policy Owner	People and Systems
Statutory	Yes
Publish Online	Yes
Last Review Date	July 2025. This policy has been updated to reflect changes to KCSIE from September 2025.
Review Cycle	Annual This policy will not expire but will be reviewed as per its designated cycle. This policy remains effective whilst the review is taking place and will only become non-applicable once the updated version has been approved.
Next Review Date	May 2026
Version	3

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Recruiting the best people to our organisation is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our pupils.
- 1.2 Not appointing the right people to our roles can have a negative impact on the performance of our schools.
- 1.3 In school, the headteacher/Chief Master & Principal is responsible for deciding on the arrangements for recruiting to any post, except for the headteacher/Chief Master & Principal role, where the Foundation or Academy Trust and the School's Governing Body will be responsible.
- 1.4 The organisation is committed to equality and fair treatment within its recruitment and selection activities. It is our purpose to provide a fair, consistent, and transparent framework that adheres to employment legislation and statutory requirements, enabling managers to:
 - Ensure that the best possible candidates are recruited based on their merits, abilities, and suitability for the position.
 - Ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of our students are adopted throughout the process.
 - Follow a fair and consistent process in terms of the recruitment and selection of employees.
 - Adhere to all relevant legislation and statutory requirements.
 - Consider cost and economies of scale when selecting recruitment resources.
 - Be clear to candidates about the requirements for positions, adopt clear criteria, and be fair and transparent.
 - Manage risk to ensure sound appointment decisions.
 - Provide career development for all our employees.
- 1.5 In carrying out our recruitment processes:
 - We are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our pupils by operating safer recruitment practices in line with the statutory requirements and guidance.
 - We will comply with the requirements of data protection legislation (being the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018) and any implementing laws, regulations, and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time. Our data protection policy sets out how we will comply with data protection legislation.

- We will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and are committed to ensuring that throughout our recruitment and selection processes, no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.
- 1.6 In the very exceptional cases where we are required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement, this must be approved by the Foundation/School's Governing Body, which will provide reasons for this requirement.
 - 1.7 Recruitment will be solely based on the applicant's abilities and individual merit, as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, knowledge, experience, and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.
 - 1.8 If an applicant makes the organisation aware, at any stage of the recruitment process, that they have a disability, then reasonable adjustments must be considered to ensure the process does not disadvantage the applicant.

2 Scope and purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting, and appointing any employee to work within our schools and Foundation Office.
- 2.2 Sections 12 and 13 on Disclosure and Barring Service checks also apply to volunteers in our workplaces.

3 Safer recruitment

- 3.1 All recruitment must be in line with this policy to ensure that we identify, deter, and prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with our pupils.
- 3.2 The recruitment of all applicants and volunteers to our workplaces must, without exception, follow the processes of safer recruitment. All offers of employment will be subject to our being satisfied that the applicant or volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people.
- 3.3 Any person involved in recruiting to our organisation must read the "Keeping children safe in education" (2025) guidance (or updated statutory guidance) produced by the DfE and our organisation's child protection policy. These can be obtained via our websites.
- 3.4 All recruitment must be planned to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.
- 3.5 Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during recruitment must inform the People Partner or HR Representative immediately.
- 3.6 All of the checks described in Sections 11 and 12 must be carried out and have been determined as satisfactory before an applicant can start their employment in any workplace within the organisation.

4 Advertising

- 4.1 Any vacant position will normally be advertised via the appropriate channels to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is obtained.

- 4.2 All advertisements will have the following statement about safeguarding children and young people and the requirement to have an enhanced DBS check:

King Edward's School & King Edward VI High School for Girls are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Online searches will be carried out for all shortlisted candidates, as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education. All offers of employment are subject to an Enhanced DBS check, and where applicable, a prohibition from teaching check will be completed for all applicants.

- 4.3 All advertisements will also include the following statement if the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013, 2020, and 2023:

'This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013, 2020, and 2023). This means that certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected' and do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>.'

- 4.4 Under Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016, the public sector fluency duty requires state-funded schools to ensure candidates for their customer-facing roles have the necessary standard of spoken English (or English or Welsh in Wales). For example, a teaching assistant required to communicate with pupils to support their learning would be viewed as operating in a public-facing role. Adverts (and job descriptions) should make clear the necessary standard of spoken English or Welsh required for the role.

- 4.5 All applicants will be provided with a copy of our recruitment privacy notice, which sets out how we will gather, process, and hold personal data of individuals during and after the recruitment process.

5 Job description

- 5.1 A job description will be required for all posts, which describes the duties and responsibilities of the post. It must be up-to-date, accurate, and specific to the role. The job description must also include a person specification, which outlines all of the necessary skills, abilities, experience, attitude, behaviours, qualifications, and knowledge requirements for the post.

- 5.2 All job descriptions and person specifications must make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

6 Application form and shortlisting

- 6.1 All applicants are required to fill out our standard application form. CVs will be accepted but will not replace the application form.
- 6.2 Applicants will be shortlisted against the requirements of the person specification. The same people should carry out the shortlisting and the interviews, and there should be at least two people. The outcome of the shortlisting process will be recorded and retained.
- 6.3 The equal opportunities monitoring form must be removed from the application and not provided to the shortlisting panel.
- 6.4 The shortlisting panel is responsible for scrutinising the application forms and identifying any gaps in employment or other areas that may affect an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. A satisfactory explanation for any concerns, including any concerns as a result of online searches, must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process. It is best practice, in line with Safer Recruitment, that at least one person in the shortlisting process is Safer Recruitment trained.

7 Applicants Invited for Interview

- 7.1 Once the shortlisting panel has determined which applicant will be invited to interview, the following checks must take place:

- 7.2 References:

All offers of employment will be conditional upon receipt of at least two satisfactory written references. References will:

- Be requested for all shortlisted applicants, including internal applicants.
- Include the applicant's current or most recent employer, and where an applicant for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, include the applicant's most recent employer as a teacher.
- Ask the current employer for details of any capability history in the previous two years and the reasons for this.
- References relating to work in a school must be supplied by the Headteacher.
- Be directly from the referee, who will be a senior person with appropriate authority and confirmed as accurate by the headteacher/principal in respect of any disciplinary investigations.
- Not be accepted if they are 'to whom it may concern' letters.
- Request information on the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people from the last employer where the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children).

- Be verified with the person who provided the reference and, where the reference is provided electronically, verify that it is from a legitimate source.
 - Be clarified with the referee where the information is vague or insufficient.
 - Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post.
 - Be compared with the information set out in the application form, and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate.
 - Normally be requested before the interview.
 - Be explored further with the referee and with the applicant during the interview if necessary.
- 7.3 Where it has not been possible to obtain references before the interview, any concerns that are subsequently raised will need to be resolved before the appointment is confirmed.
- 7.4 In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, information relating to sickness absence will only be requested after a conditional offer of employment has been made.
- 7.5 The organisation may conduct searches, either themselves or through a third party, of the online presence and publicly available social media content of shortlisted candidates to identify any comments, images, or other content that could cause reputational damage to the trust/schools and/or give rise to a safeguarding concern.
- 7.6 Management of online searches (either by carrying out the search or instructing a third party to do so) and the collation of information will be carried out independently from those managing the shortlisting process. Only information relevant to potential reputational damage and/or safeguarding concerns obtained from the search will be passed to those managing the shortlisting process.
- 7.7 Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Applicants will only be asked to disclose and discuss criminal convictions and/or cautions which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013, 2020 and 2023) that may deem them unsuitable. Where this is provided electronically, the shortlisted candidate will be asked to physically sign a hard copy at the point of the interview.

8 Interviews

- 8.1 A face-to-face interview must take place for all applicants for all posts. The use of video conferencing, Skype, FaceTime, or other similar technologies is acceptable for this purpose.
- 8.2 All those involved in interviewing must be properly prepared to undertake the role, which may involve appropriate interview training. At least one person on the interview panel must have passed the appropriate safer recruitment training. The purpose of the interview is to

assess the merits of each applicant against the job description and person specification to establish their suitability for the post and to work with children and young people.

8.3 Before the interview commences, the interview panel should have:

- Prepared appropriate questions for the role.
- Prepared appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Identified any areas for further probing, e.g., if a criminal record has been declared, any information about past disciplinary action/allegations, or if there are gaps in employment, etc.
- Agreed assessment criteria, which reflect the person specification; and
- Decided on a structure for the interview and established which member of the panel will ask which questions.

8.4 A set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their response will determine whether that is followed up through further questioning.

8.5 Any gaps in employment history and any concerns identified as part of the online and social media checking process must be explored during the interview process.

8.6 Candidates shortlisted for an interview will be asked about their suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further questions include:

- Implication that adults and children are equal.
- Lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children.
- Inappropriate idealisation of children.
- Inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children; and
- Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

8.7 The interview panel must ensure that a fully completed self-declaration form is discussed and considered. Should a disclosure be present on the declaration form or the applicant verbally share a disclosure, the panel must complete the disclosure discussion form.

9 Other selection methods

9.1 In addition to a face-to-face interview with the interview panel, a variety of other selection methods may be used, such as:

- Observation of teaching practice in our schools or in the applicant's current school or academy.
 - One or more additional panel interviews (for example, a panel made up of pupils from our schools).
 - A presentation.
 - In-tray exercises.
 - Psychometric testing.
- 9.2 Those responsible for deciding the arrangements for recruitment to a specific post will determine the selection method(s). They will be relevant and appropriate to the role and will be based on the requirements for the particular post as set out in the job description and person specification.
- 9.3 Candidates will be informed in advance if any selection methods are to be used in addition to a face-to-face interview and what these are.

10 Level of language proficiency

- 10.1 Under the "fluency duty" (Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016), public authorities are required to ensure that workers in public-facing roles are fluent in English (or Welsh in Wales). Public-facing roles are those members of teaching and support staff who, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, are required to speak to members of the public (including students in schools).
- 10.2 The organisation will accept a range of evidence of spoken English ability as follows:
- Competently answering interview questions in English.
 - Possessing a relevant qualification for the role attained as part of education in the UK or fully taught in English by a recognised institution abroad.
 - Passing an English language competency test or possessing a relevant spoken English or Welsh qualification at CEFR Level B1 or above, taught in English by a recognised institution abroad.

11 Pre-employment checks

- 11.1 An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following:
- Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references (one of which must be from their current or most recent employer, and if it relates to work in a school one reference must be supplied by the Headteacher).
 - Verification of the applicant's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address. It is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be,

which includes being aware of the potential for individuals to change their names. All applicants will be asked to provide their birth certificate.

- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness.
- Verification of qualifications, where relevant.
- Verification of professional status, where applicable. For teachers, this will include checking that the individual has the required teaching qualification and has successfully completed any statutory induction, if required, through the DfE's 'Check a teacher's record';
- <https://check-a-teachers-record.education.gov.uk/>
- [Looking for Teacher Services - Employer Access - Schools? – Customer help centre](#)
- Satisfactory enhanced DBS check (see Section 12).
- Satisfactory online searches (see Section 7).
- For management positions (applicable to governors/trustees, headteachers and members of the senior leadership team), verification that they are not subject to a 128 direction by using the DfE's 'Check a teacher's record';
- For teachers and other employees who hold QTS and are working in non-teaching roles, verification that they are not subject to a prohibition order by using the DfE's 'Check a teacher's record';
- For teachers, satisfactory checks to determine any restrictions/sanctions that have been imposed in other EEA member states, through the provision of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where they qualified.¹
- A clear children's barred list check (except supervised volunteers) if working in a regulated activity.
- Verification of the right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Any further checks where the applicant has lived or worked outside of the UK, including receipt of criminal record information from overseas <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants> All checks must be confirmed in writing, retained in the employee's file and recorded in the single central record (SCR).

12 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - new employees and volunteers

12.1 The organisation will carry out a risk assessment to determine if a DBS check is required for each volunteer in accordance with Annexe E of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025. If

a volunteer is assessed as requiring a DBS check, the following DBS checks will be undertaken for new appointments before the employee or volunteer starts work:

Who?	Definition	Type of check
Employees who will be engaging in regulated activity.	As an educational institution which is exclusively or mainly for the provision of full-time education to children, the organisation's schools and Foundation Office are establishments specified in the relevant legislation. Activity carried out in this establishment will therefore be a regulated activity relating to children if it meets the definition in the relevant legislation, including that it is carried out: Frequently by the same person (for example, once a week or more); or On more than three days in any period of 30 days. Note – personal care of a child because of age, illness or disability, including physical help with eating, toileting, washing, bathing or dressing, is always a regulated activity regardless of how frequently it is carried out.	An enhanced DBS check with a children's barred list check will be obtained.
Unsupervised volunteers	As above	An enhanced DBS check with a children's barred list check will be obtained. Those applying for chair of trustee posts must also have their identity verified for a stipulated professional as part of their DBS check, as per the link below: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identity-verification-for-new-chairs-of-trustees.
Supervised volunteers	Where an individual is a volunteer (e.g. carrying out an unpaid activity), they will not be engaging in regulated activity if:	We are unable by law to obtain a barred list check on a supervised volunteer. We will, however, obtain an enhanced DBS check

Who?	Definition	Type of check
	They are being supervised by someone who is in regulated activity, and The supervision is regular and day-to-day (e.g., it is ongoing); and The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children (this may take into account, for example, the age (including the variation in ages), number and vulnerability of children the individual is working with, the nature of the work and opportunity for contact with children, whether other individuals are helping to look after them and how many workers a supervisor is supervising).	(with no barred list check) for supervised volunteers.

- 12.1 In exceptional circumstances, a new employee or unsupervised volunteer may be able to start before the enhanced DBS certificate has been received, but not before the children's barred list check has been completed, [DfE Sign-in](#). The organisation must ensure that appropriate supervision is in place until the DBS certificate has been received.]
- 12.2 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. All applicants must produce the disclosure when requested to do so. The DBS certificate will be cross-referenced with the applicant's signed self-declaration and the interview notes to ensure the information disclosed has been assessed correctly. The disclosure will be scrutinised to ensure it is authentic and to detect any fraud. The DBS disclosure number and date of the check must be recorded in the single central record (SCR). We are not required to take a copy of an applicant's DBS certificate; however, we may choose to do so for decision-making purposes. Any copy will be held for no longer than necessary, up to a period of six months, and will be processed in line with data protection legislation.
- 12.3 Any applicant who refuses to produce their DBS disclosure will not be able to start work, and the conditional offer will be withdrawn as satisfactory checks are not in place. Any volunteer who refuses to produce their disclosure will not be able to volunteer in any of our workplaces.
- 12.4 Applicants (free for volunteers) can have their DBS certificate kept up-to-date and take it with them from role to role, where the same type and level of check is required by subscribing to the DBS update service. Where the applicant or volunteer has subscribed, they should provide the organisation with the original disclosure document to be verified, and the organisation will check the online update for any changes.
- 12.5 Applicants will only be asked to declare convictions and cautions that are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013, 2020 and 2023).

- 12.6 Information relating to an individual's criminal record will only be shared with the relevant people to enable the organisation to make a decision about their suitability to work with children and young people.

13 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - existing employees and volunteers

- 13.1 An enhanced DBS check and a children's barred list check will be carried out for all existing staff and unsupervised volunteers (subject to risk assessment) where their unsupervised contact with children or young people has increased from that at the time of their appointment.
- 13.2 An enhanced DBS and children's barred list check may be carried out on any employee or unsupervised volunteer (subject to risk assessment) where the organisation has concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children and young people. An enhanced DBS (no barred list check) may be carried out on any supervised volunteer (subject to risk assessment) where the organisation has concerns about their suitability to work with children and young people.
- 13.3 The schools are working towards implementing a cyclical three year DBS review for all staff.
- 13.4 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. The organisation expects all applicants and employees to produce the disclosure when requested to do so. Any employee who does not produce their DBS disclosure will be managed through the disciplinary procedure.
- 13.5 All existing employees are required to inform us immediately if they are the subject of a police investigation or receive any conviction or caution which is not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013, 2020, and 2023) or any occurrence that may disqualify them from providing childcare under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009. Failure to immediately report such information will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

14 Agency staff

- 14.1 In the case of agency staff, the organisation must ensure that the arrangement with the agency imposes an obligation on the agency to carry out all recruitment checks as set out in section 11, including DBS and children's barred list checks, that they would otherwise complete for its staff. The organisation must obtain written confirmation from the agency that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. This must be recorded in the single central record (SCR).
- 14.2 The agency must provide a copy of the DBS certificate to the academy/school before the agency worker arrives.
- 14.3 Upon the engagement of an agency worker, the agency must be supplied with a copy of the organisation's Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Procedure unless they have previously been provided with the most recent version of this procedure.

15 Breaches of the policy

- 15.1 Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 15.2 Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application, will be managed through the organisation's complaints policy or grievance policy (for existing employees).

16 Record keeping and data protection

All written records of interviews, application forms, and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept by the organisation in line with our Data processing policy, and in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation.