



St Paul's Church of England Primary School Safer Recruitment Policy

Adopted by: Finance and Resources Committee

On: Wednesday 12th June 2024

Review: Summer 2027

Introduction:

The Head Teacher and the Governing Body of St Paul's C. E Primary School are committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of the children in our care. With this in mind we follow a stringent process of selection, in line with the statutory requirements set out in *Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, Sept 23*, for all posts within the school as outlined in this policy.

Appreciating the need for a thorough safe recruitment process means that we will allow enough time for all stages of the process and some contingency time as necessary.

The process:

1. Job Description and Person Specifications

1.1 At the start of the recruitment process it is important to:

- Define what the post holder's responsibility towards children will be
- The qualifications required for the post
- The skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours needed to perform the job
- The need for an Enhanced DBS certificate for all posts within the school will be reflected in both the job description and the person specification

1.2 Advertised posts will detail:

- The main duties and responsibilities of the post
- The post holder's specific responsibility towards the promotion and practice of safeguarding the welfare of children they come into contact with through their job
- The school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken.
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

1.3 The Person Specification will detail:

- The qualifications required for the post
- Professional registrations (if required)
- Enhanced DBS certificate required
- Define the skills and competencies required

- Explore issues relating to the safeguarding of children such as:-
 - Motivation to work with children
 - Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children
 - Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviour
 - Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline

The Person specification will state how these issues will be tested e.g.- application form, interview, assessment day (as necessary), references.

All points on the person specification should be evidenced either in a candidate's application form or through the interview and selection process.

2. The Advertisement

The advertisement for a vacancy will demonstrate the school's commitment to safer recruitment and vetting procedures as follows:

- School name
- Post title
- Hours of employment (indicating full or part time)
- Grade or scale
- Salary
- Permanent or Fixed Term (including the duration of the contract for Fixed Term)
- The advert text - which should include some reference to the post holder's responsibilities towards safeguarding children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The successful applicant will be required to apply for an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate
- Closing date
- St Paul's C. E Primary School, as an aware employer, is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and adults as its number one priority
- Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.
- Encourage visits to the school prior to application

3. Application Packs

The importance of safeguarding and protecting children in schools should be promoted as much as possible throughout the recruitment process in order to deter unsuitable candidates.

The following will be included in the application pack:

- An application form - (we do not accept CV's as these only show what the candidate wants to show and will not provide consistent data between candidates)
- The job description
- The person specification
- Details of the school's website
- A copy of or hyperlink to the school's Child Protection Policy

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Any other information pertaining to the interview process

4. Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
 - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
 - Any relevant overseas information

Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

5. The Interview Process

The interview process should allow time for any discrepancy in a candidate's application or reference to be scrutinised and clarified.

With this in mind all candidates must have:

- Their qualifications verified
- Employment gaps explained
- Criminal record disclosed
- References issued
- Their attitude towards children discussed at interview

This means that when a candidate is successful, any issues surrounding their application and references have been fully explored before they are offered the post. Every interview should be carried out on a face to face basis.

5.1 References

- References should be requested prior to an interview and ideally received back prior to the same. When references are received prior to interview it will enable the interview panel to follow up any discrepancies or issues at interview and to make a decision with reference to all the known fact available at the time
 - **One of the referees must be the candidate's current or previous employer and completed by a senior person.** Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
 - We do not accept open references of any sort.
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed
- All references must be dated and have obvious organisation authorisation
- Requests for references should ask about the candidate's relationship with children in their current or previous role and if they have been involved in any disciplinary action concerning children

5.2 Employment Gaps

The interviewing panel **must**:

- Discuss any gaps in employment with the candidate.(Valid reasons for gaps may be – no need to work; travelling; bringing up a family; caring responsibilities or a period of sickness.)
- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

As there could be more serious reasons for gaps in employment it is vital that the interviewing panel ensures that the candidate gives as much detail as possible, in order for the panel to make an informed decision, and are in receipt of all, relevant detail.

5.3 Qualification Verification

Essential qualifications for the post should be outlined in the job description and person specification.

At interview all qualifications will be verified – only original documents/paperwork are acceptable

A photocopy of all of the original qualification certificates will be taken and if the candidate is successful these will be placed in their personal file. If they are unsuccessful these will be destroyed.

5.4 Commitment to Safeguarding Children

The Interviewing panel should seek to identify the candidate's experience or views on the following:

- Motivation to work with children
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours
- Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline

To achieve this, the panel should ask candidates to outline their experiences of situations with children, and probe the issues which the candidate may not have mentioned or have been reluctant to discuss. This will enable the panel to be aware of any issues or lack of knowledge that the candidate may have.

6. Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

6.1 New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

6.2 Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

6.3 Rehabilitation of Offender Disclosure

Posts within schools are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

All successful candidates employed by the Governors of St. Paul's School are required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate.

Where a new employee starts work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, a separate barred list check is made in advance of them starting work.

6.4 Appointees with recent experience of working in schools

There is no requirement to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for appointees who, in the previous three months, have worked in:

- A school in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children or in any post in a school since 12 May 2006; or
- A further education setting in England in a post which involved the provision of education, and which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young people

However, all other pre-employment checks must still be completed for appointees from another school. This includes **a separate barred list check** for those in regulated activity, which can be obtained via the DBS.

6.5 Induction

All staff receive comprehensive induction including safeguarding, whistleblowing and staff conduct information as they take up their position. They are provided with a staff handbook and copies of key school policies. There is an annual induction review every September for all staff.

7. Adults not directly employed by the school

7.1 Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Agency supply staff are used within the school. The school currently uses three agencies: Smart Teachers, Zen Educate and Teaching Personnel. They provide a comprehensive list of all the relevant safeguarding checks for supply teachers **before** they start working in the school. On arrival, the admin team check the official Smart Teacher ID badge and identity documents, confirming that they are the named person booked. The Smart agent visits the school annually.

7.2 Contractors

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

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors. We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months. Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances. We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

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For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

7.3 Trainee/student teachers

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

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006.

7.4 Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006.

7.5 Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

7.6 Work Experience and Placements

Secondary students, undertaking work placements for two weeks, will not be subject to the same checks as the staff.

Teacher Training students - The University is responsible for carrying out the checks and should provide confirmation to the school prior to the student starting their placement.

NVQ/ NNEB students - the FE institution is responsible for checking that their students have CRB checks in place prior to commencing the course.

7.7 Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

8. Single Central Record

St Paul's School keeps a single central record of all staff, governors, volunteers and contractors. This provides confirmation that relevant checks have been made in accordance with those outlined above. This document is securely held in the school and is reviewed on a termly basis by the Children, Families and Communities Committee of the Governing Body.