



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2	Aims and Objectives	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3	Roles and Responsibilities	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4	Recruitment and Selection Procedure	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5	Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process	5

1. INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Breckland School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

In line with recent legislation including DFE guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school takes very seriously its duty of care for all students. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its students the school is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse students or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the school based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or family relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

The policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Breckland School.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DFE guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the school's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Principal, Business Manager and other Managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school.
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations, the governing body has delegated responsibility to the Principal (teaching staff) and Business Manager (support staff) to lead in all appointments.

School governors and trust members will be invited to be involved in all staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with those who form the selection panel (including a Governor and/or Trust representative if available).

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Application Forms

Breckland School uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (e.g. Teaching Agency).

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

References

References for short listed applicants will be sent for immediately after short listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone or face-to-face will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original document will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed following at the end of the recruitment programme.

5. OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks, copies of qualification and proof of identity. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to students. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any position at Breckland School.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formerly known as CRB Disclosure)

All staff at Breckland School requires an enhanced DBS Certificate* and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

Members of staff at Breckland School are aware of their obligation to inform the Business Manager of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

(*Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency - regulated activity for children is unsupervised activities on a frequent basis, for example, teaching, training, care or supervision, advice or guidance on well-being or driving a vehicle with children as passengers. Frequent is once a week or more on an ongoing basis or four or more time in a single month or overnight.)

Dealing with convictions

The school operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Business Manager. A decision will be made following this meeting, after consultation with the Principal, Chair of Governors and Chair of Trust.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status.

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the school will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

Overseas checks

All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. The School, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, will, if applicable, sponsor all new foreign members of staff (see Certificate of Sponsorship section).

In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a police check from the relevant Country.

Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS)

If an appointed applicant is a national of a non-EEA country, a CoS may be required. Before any offer of employment is made, the Interviewing Manager's should consult with the Business Manager to establish whether the school has any unallocated Sponsorship Certificates.

Criteria for issuing a CoS is:

- The job is in a "designated shortage" occupation, or
- It passes the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT)
- The job is at NQF6 Level or above
- Minimum salary levels are met.

The Trust will only be able to issue a CoS. In addition to the CoS the applicant must apply for entry clearance/leave to remain through the UK Visas and Immigration and provide personal evidence of competence in English and ongoing maintenance. The process can take up to three months and staff cannot, under any circumstances, be employed until permission is given. Detailed advice on the above is available from the Business Manager.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the school policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Children Policy, and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities. All new members of staff will receive Safeguarding Training. Annual refresher training is also delivered.

Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in school and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks (including prohibition order checks for teachers) is kept in accordance with the DFE requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Business Manager. The Single Centralised Register will contain details of the following:-

- all employees who are employed to work at the school;
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the school whether employed directly or through an agency;
- all others who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, governors, trust, peripatetic staff and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for students but who are not staff members eg: sports coaches etc.

A designated Governor will be responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting his/her findings to the full Governing Body during the Summer Term meeting.

Record Retention / Data Protection

Breckland School will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie: shredded). The 6 month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal.

All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the Business Manager's Office in a locked and secure cabinet.

Ongoing Employment

Breckland School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The school will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff where necessary.

Leaving Employment at Breckland School

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there may be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. Any allegations of abuse will be reported to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for safeguarding and the School will follow DFE guidance on dealing with allegations of abuse.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289327/Dealing_wit_h_allegations_of_abuse_against_teachers_and_other_staff.pdf

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Business Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the school.