

RECRUITMENT SELECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Within this policy 'we' and 'us' means the Federation, and 'staff' refers to employees, volunteers, governors, trustees and members.
- 1.2 We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and require all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.
- 1.3 We regard our staff as our most important asset. Our policy is to ensure an adequate supply of suitably qualified and experienced staff to meet our human resource requirements and to deliver the Transformation Plan. This policy should be read alongside the Federation Equality and Diversity Policy and the Federation DBS Application and Handling Policy.
- 1.4 We are committed to ensuring all recruitment activity is conducted in line with the Equality Act 2010. The appointment of all of our employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of employment law and other statutory guidance issued by the government relevant to academies, paying particular regard to ensure that children are kept safe.
- 1.5 At all times we follow the safer recruitment practices outlined within the Department for Education's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.
- 1.6 All employees will be selected, trained and promoted on the basis of ability, the requirements of the job and other similar criteria that are as objective as possible. The only exception will be by virtue of legislation or a genuine occupational requirement.
- 1.7 We will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background.
- 1.8 We are an Armed Forces-friendly employer and, as such, will guarantee a job interview to any member of the Armed Forces Community who meets the essential criteria for the role they have applied for.
- 1.9 The procedure for the appointment of the Executive Principal differs from that of other staff as outlined in Annexe 1.
- 1.10 All applications will be processed in line with data protection regulations.

2. SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

- 2.1 It is vital that the Federation creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, we have adopted recruitment procedures that help deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment or volunteering opportunities.
- 2.2 To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.
- 2.3 We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

- 2.4 When advertising roles, we will make clear:
- Our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
 - That safeguarding checks will be undertaken.
 - The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children.
 - Whether or not the role 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.
- 2.5 Our application forms will:
- 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).
 - Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders.
- 2.6 Our shortlisting process will involve at least two people and will:
- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them.
 - Be based only on objective information. The job description and the person specification will be used to set the criteria and standards for inclusion on the longlist and for reducing this to the shortlist of candidates to be invited for interview.
 - Consistently apply the criteria for selection to all applicants.
 - Explore all potential concerns.
 - If the field of applicants is felt to be weak, the post may be re-advertised.
- 2.7 Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask them 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:
- Whether 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.
- 2.8 Candidates will be asked to sign the declaration, confirming the information they have provided is true.

- 2.9 In line with guidance within Keeping Children Safe in Education, an online check will be carried out on shortlisted candidates. It will:
- Be declared on the application form.
 - Be conducted by a member of the HR team who are not part of the shortlisting process.
 - Only consist of search engine checks and checks on LinkedIn.
 - Be carried out with a consistent approach for all candidates.
- 2.10 Results will be checked against criminal record filtering rules, compared with the candidate's application form, employment history and criminal records self-declaration form. If it is still considered relevant, only then will it be shared with the interview panel and explored at interview.
- 2.11 If information is discovered that relates to a serious incident or demonstrates dishonesty with the application and/or self-declaration, the Federation will seek advice from the police and/or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) prior to discussing it with the candidate at interview.
- 2.12 We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview. When seeking references we will:
- Not accept open references.
 - Not accept references from relatives/partners or people writing solely in the capacity of friendship.
 - Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees.
 - Ensure at least 1 reference is from the candidate's current Head Teacher, if the candidate works at a school or college.
 - References are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person.
 - 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.
 - Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current role or most recent post.
 - Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed.

2.13 When interviewing candidates, we will follow safer recruitment guidance, including:

- Probing any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this.
- Exploring any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children.
- Finding out what attracted the candidate to the post and their motivation for working with children.
- Recording all information considered and decisions made.

2.14 The format, style and duration of the interviews are matters for the Executive Principal to decide but the following will be adhered to:

- All candidates will be given information about us to enable the candidate to make further enquiries about the advertised job.
- The questions asked and tasks set will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the criteria listed on the person specification; each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post. The same areas of questioning or task will be asked of each applicant and no questions which would discriminate, directly or indirectly, will be asked. The interview will also deal with the issues of safeguarding through appropriate questioning and/or a specific task.
- Before the interviews, the Executive Principal will decide a procedure for evaluating the candidates at the end of the process. The notes taken and documentation used in this evaluation process will form part of the formal record of why candidates were or were not selected.
- Interview notes for unsuccessful candidates will be retained for six months, in line with our Federation Stakeholder Records Retention Policy.
- Interview notes for successful candidates will be retained on the employee's HR file.
- The Executive Principal will decide the structure of the interview beforehand, determining which area each interviewer or task will cover and the approximate time allocation.

3. PRE-APPOINTMENT VETTING CHECKS

3.1 We will record all information on the checks carried out in the Federation'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.

3.2 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 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 will still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place. We may keep information on the result of the check and recruitment decision taken, in line with data protection requirements.

- 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 two 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 or to lead a class.
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. Where available, these will include:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#).
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked.
- Check that candidates taking up a management position (including, but not limited to, heads of school, principals, vice principals, governors) are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.
- If relevant to the post applied for, 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.

3.3 Regulated activity is defined in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012; further information can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550197/Regulated_activity_in_relation_to_children.pdf

4. EXISTING STAFF

4.1 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.

5. AGENCY AND THIRD-PARTY STAFF

- 5.1 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.

6. CONTRACTORS

- 6.1 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the Federation 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.
- 6.2 We will obtain written confirmation from the contracting company that necessary checks have been carried out and that the contractor has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.
- 6.3 We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- 6.4 We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- 6.5 Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- 6.6 We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.
- 6.7 For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, when relevant, 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.

7. TRAINEE/STUDENT TEACHERS

- 7.1 Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 In both cases, when relevant, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

8. VOLUNTEERS

8.1 We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check for all volunteers, with barred list information for volunteers who will be working in regulated activity.
- When relevant, ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

9. GOVERNORS AND MEMBERS

9.1 All trustees, governors and members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

9.2 They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

9.3 All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)).
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

10. THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

10.1 As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), we comply fully with the DBS Code of Practise (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practise>) and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

10.2 We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

10.3 Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete and physically sign a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. This will allow candidates to have the opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at interview, before the DBS certificate is received.

10.4 We can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about.

10.5 We can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

10.6 We are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background

- 10.7 This Recruitment Policy, including the statement of recruitment of ex-offenders, is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
- 10.8 We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential.
- 10.9 We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- 10.10 We ensure that all colleagues involved in the recruitment selection process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences, and have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 10.11 Most staff at the Federation will be engaging with regulated activity relating to children, in which case an enhanced DBS check which includes children's barred list information, will be required. For all other staff who have the opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate.
- 10.12 All application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position
- 10.13 At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment
- 10.14 When assessing any disclosure information, we will take into consideration the explanation from the candidate, for example:
- The seriousness and relevance to the post applied for.
 - How long ago the offence occurred.
 - Whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents.
 - The circumstances of the incident.
 - Whether the individual has accepted responsibility for their actions.
- 10.15 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- 10.16 Job applicants are made aware of our DBS Application and Handling Policy and a copy is made available on request.

11. DELEGATION OF APPOINTMENTS

- 11.1 The Federation Trust delegates all staff appointments to the Executive Principal. The Executive Principal is expected to involve at least one Director of the Federation in Vice Principal appointments; for other appointments this will be at the discretion of the Executive Principal.
- 11.2 The Executive Principal may not delegate the final decision of appointment to any other senior manager or Director.

12. VACANCIES

- 12.1 In the event that the Federation Resources Committee, in consultation with the Executive Principal, decides to make a new appointment of a Head of School or Vice Principal, the Resources Committee will agree the job description and person specification for the post.
- 12.2 The Executive Principal is responsible for ensuring all other job descriptions and person specifications for vacancies reflect the role being advertised and any contractual, statutory or Federation policies.
- 12.3 Every vacant post (including acting posts of one term or more) will be advertised in a manner likely to bring it to the notice of persons qualified to fill the post, and will be equally accessible to all.
- 12.4 We may decide to appoint internally after advertising across the Federation. In cases of internal advertisement, the details will be emailed to all staff giving at least 5 working days for applications to be made.

13. INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

- 13.1 All applicants for all vacant posts advertised internally or externally will be provided with:
 - A job description outlining the duties of the post.
 - A person specification indicating the qualifications, skills and types of experience or expertise which we regard as essential or desirable in relation to the job.
 - An application form.
 - Information about us and other general information regarding the post.
 - An equal opportunities form.
 - A safeguarding statement.
 - Our privacy notice.
- 13.2 All applicants are asked at the advertisement stage whether they need any reasonable adjustments (often referred to as access requirements) for any part of the recruitment process.

14. INTERVIEWS

- 14.1 The format, style and duration of the interviews are matters for the Executive Principal to decide but the following will be adhered to:
 - 14.1.1 All candidates will be given information about us to enable the candidate to make further enquiries about the advertised job.
 - 14.1.2 The questions asked and tasks set will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the criteria listed on the person specification; each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post. The same areas of questioning or task will be asked of each applicant and no questions which would discriminate directly or indirectly, as outlined in paragraph 1.3,

will be asked. The interview will also deal with the issues of safeguarding through appropriate questioning and/or a specific task.

- 14.1.3 Before the interviews, the Executive Principal will decide a procedure for evaluating the candidates at the end of the process. The notes taken and documentation used in this evaluation process will form part of the formal record of why candidates were or were not selected.
- 14.1.4 Interview notes for unsuccessful candidates will be retained for six months, in line with our Federation Stakeholder Records Retention Policy.
- 14.1.5 Interview notes for successful candidates will be retained on the employee's HR file.
- 14.1.6 The Executive Principal will decide the structure of the interview beforehand, determining which area each interviewer or task will cover and the approximate time allocation.
- 14.1.7 All UK employers have a duty to prevent illegal working and as such must conduct document checks to ensure that all candidates have a right to work in the UK. All shortlisted applicants will therefore be asked to bring to their interview proof of their right to work in the UK.

15. THE SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL

- 15.1 The Board of Trustees will appoint a selection panel of at least three Directors. The proceedings of the selection panel shall be under the control of the selection panel. The Federation Trust will not delegate the power of appointment, only the selection process.
- 15.2 The selection panel will determine the job description, salary range, incentives and interview process for approval by the Federation Trust.
- 15.3 If the need arises, the selection panel will appoint an Interim Executive Principal for a maximum period of 12 months. If an interim appointment is to be made into an acting position, the selection panel will seek to do so by secondment from the existing Senior Leadership Team and will seek advice from our HR advisors on the contracting of such a secondment.
- 15.4 The selection panel will advertise the permanent post in such publications circulating throughout England and Wales as they consider appropriate. All applicants will receive the same information regarding the post and application process.
- 15.5 The selection panel shall shortlist such applicants for the post as they think fit.
- 15.6 If it is able to do so, the selection panel will recommend one of the interviewed applicants to the Federation Trust. The decision of the selection panel will need to be approved by a meeting of the Federation Trust, which must be quorate.
- 15.7 If the Board of Trustees approves the recommended candidate for appointment, the applicant will be offered the appointment subject to staff qualification requirements, medical, and safer recruitment checks.

- 15.8 If the selection panel cannot agree or the Federation Trust does not approve the recommendation, then the Directors may re-advertise the post.

16. STAFF WORKING IN ALTERNATIVE PROVISION SETTINGS

- 16.1 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.

17. ADULTS WHO SUPERVISE PUPILS ON WORK EXPERIENCE

- 17.1 When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.
- 17.2 We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

18. PUPILS STAYING WITH HOST FAMILIES

- 18.1 Where the Federation makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.
- 18.2 Where the Federation is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

19. DATA PROTECTION

- 19.1 We process all personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with the Federation Stakeholder Data Protection Policy.
- 19.2 We do not collect unnecessary personal data from applicants during the recruitment process. For example, we will only request bank account details and next-of-kin contact details from successful applicants. Data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job.
- 19.3 Staff should report immediately any inappropriate access or disclosure of job applicant data in accordance with the Federation Stakeholder Data Protection Policy. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Federation Staff Disciplinary Policy.