



Southfields Primary School

Safer Recruitment Policy

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Introduction

Southfields Community 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 are committed to using disciplinary procedures that deal effectively with adults who fail to comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures and practices, including referring any allegation of abuse against an adult working with children to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of the allegation being made. A referral will be made if an adult has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards child/children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

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, keeping children safe in Education and the School's single Equality Scheme.

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

We will comply with the requirements of DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body 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 DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the school's compliance with them.
- Ensure that appropriate staff and Governors have completed safer recruitment training.

The Head Teacher will:

- Ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and up-dated 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 eg DBS
- Monitor any contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- Promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process.

Delegation of Appointments and Constitution of selection Panel

The Governing body delegates the power to offer employment for all posts to the Head teacher. The Head Teacher may not delegate the power to offer employment to any other senior manager or Governor. The Head Teacher will aim to involve at least one Governor in the appointment of all teaching staff and also in the appointment of other posts, where possible, non-teaching staff – this will not be a requirement. Selection panels will comprise a minimum of two people (normally three). In accordance with statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

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 reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before an external advertisement is placed. Any internal recruitment process will follow the procedures set out in this policy.

All adverts for posts, paid or unpaid, will include the following statements as from 2016.

“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, and enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references”.

Information for applicants.

All applicants will be provided with:

- A job description, outlining the duties of the post and a person specification

- An application form (CVs will not be accepted)
- Links to the school website
- Reference to the school's policy on single equality
- Reference to the child protection policy, safeguarding policy, safer recruitment and selection policy, DBS and other pre-employment requirements.
- An outline of terms of employment including salary
- The closing date for the receipt of application

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 on line will be asked to sign the form if a formal job offer is made.

A CV will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

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.

Two references, one of which must be from the candidate's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of selection process. 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, s/he will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

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 candidates' employment and his/her reason for leaving.

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

- The referee's relationship to the candidate
- Details of the candidates current post and salary
- The candidates 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 candidates 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 refer 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.

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 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 area 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.

Interviews

Before the interviews, the selection panel will agree on the interview format.

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.

Interviews will always be face to face. Telephone interviews may be used at the shortlisting stage but will not be a substitute for a face to face interview (which may be via visual electronic link).

Candidates invited to interview will receive:

- An email/letter confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
- Details of the interview day
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- The opportunity to discuss the process 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 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 child safeguarding 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 child and young people.

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. Under the data protection Act, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. After 12 months, all information about unsuccessful candidates will be destroyed securely.

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 a 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, using the employer access online service
- Use the employer online service to check information about any teacher qualifications held and whether induction has been passed.
- Verify the candidates mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities (a job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.)
- Verify the candidates 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 on the GOV.UK website)
- Make any further checks that we consider appropriate, if the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK
- Verify professional qualification (original certificates), as appropriate
- Require the candidate to complete the school's staff suitability declaration (to check for potential 'by association' safeguarding concerns) where applicable to the role in school i.e. relevant childcare role Appendix ii

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.

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 offer letter, that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completions of these checks.

Personnel file 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:

- Application form.
- 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 Offer of employment letter/signed contract of employment

The school will maintain a single central record of employment checks in accordance with the DfE guidance.

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 which will cover all relevant matters of school policy including safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, child protection procedures, whistle blowing and guidance on safe working practices.

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

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 local authorities who ensure and confirm that necessary checks and DBS requirements have been satisfactorily completed for peripatetic staff.

Volunteers

We carry out DBS checks on regular volunteers. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (eg trips) are supervised, in accordance with legislation.

Students on placements

When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course. ie 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. We will also require students to complete the staff suitability declaration if they are working within the EYFS.

NQTs

Newly appointed teachers who are new to the employment of the governing body will be subject to the school.

Supply Teachers

Southfields Primary School will consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, for example, supply teachers provided by an employment agency or business (referred to in this section as 'the agency'). Whilst Southfields Primary School is not the employer of supply teachers, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly.

In no circumstances should Southfields School decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the local authority designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. Governing bodies and proprietors should discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher, or redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst they carry out their investigation.

Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social services. Southfields Primary School will take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other school staff, so they will not be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process. Supply teachers, whilst not employed by Southfields Primary School, are under the supervision, direction and control of the governing body or proprietor. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.

When using an agency, Southfields Primary School will inform the agency of its process for managing allegations. This will include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

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 contractor's 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 or college.

This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory.