

Bickley Park School

Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff in school is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children. Bickley Park School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and will expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy should be read in conjunction with the BPS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school recognises its safeguarding commitments including those under:

- The Education (Independent School Standards Regulations) 2014 (as amended from time to time)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2017) (WTSC)
- Prevent Duty Guidance, Channel Guidance and Prevent Departmental Advice 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) (KCSIE)
- DfE Guidance
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 June 2016
- DBS Referrals Guidance (as amended from time to time)

Bickley Park School recognises the value of, and will seek to achieve, a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. The school will be committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. The school will uphold its obligations under law not to discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

All posts within the school will be exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare in writing spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent and have an Enhanced DBS criminal records check.

The School will be committed to ensuring people who have been convicted are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.

The school will:

- ensure that appropriate staff who undertake recruitment will receive safe recruitment training. The Headmaster, Mr Wenham, and the Bursar, Mr Wood, have undergone Safer Recruitment Training within the last 2 years.
- implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to not appoint a person who is

unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role;

- keep and maintain a single-central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with DfE requirements;
- require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the school to notify the school, in writing, of the offence and the penalty.

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken and the dates of such checks and details of who carried out such checks recorded:

- receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer;
- verification of the candidate's identity (including passport, full birth certificate, address, change of name documentation, current driving licence);
- a Children's Barred List (List 99) check;
- Enhanced DBS clearance;
- verification of the candidate's medical fitness;
- verification of qualifications;
- verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers;
- Prohibition from teaching check via NCTL (where applicable);
- Prohibition from management of independent schools check under s128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Overseas checks including for EEA teacher sanctions/restrictions (where applicable);
- Right to work and reside in the UK (where applicable).

Roles and responsibilities

It will be the responsibility of the Board of Governors to ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers;

It will be the responsibility of the Head Teacher, the Bursar and others involved in recruitment to:

- ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school;
- to monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance;
- promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

It will be the responsibility of all potential and existing members of staff, including volunteers, to comply with this policy.

The final decision will rest with the Head Teacher.

The Procedure

Advertising

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

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

Applications

The school will need a standard application form. CVs will not be accepted. The school will require candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on this form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview. Applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or, if the applicant has been selected, will be dismissed with possible referral to the police and other professional bodies.

References

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointed decisions. References are always obtained and scrutinized and any concerns resolved satisfactorily, before the appointment is confirmed, including internal candidates.

References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after shortlisting. The only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, the reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.

References will be expected to be in writing and be specific for the job for which the candidate has applied. Open references or testimonials will not be acceptable. The school will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend. Only references from a trusted, authoritative source will be acceptable.

In the case of candidates who are not currently in employment, checks will be made with the most recent employer as well as checking the most recent educational employer, if the applicant has worked in an educational establishment.

Internal candidates will also require references before interview, which should be from a senior person with appropriate authority.

When electronic references are received, Head's PA will ensure they originate from a legitimate source: this will be documented.

Reference requests will specifically ask:

- about the referee's relationship to the candidate;
- whether the referee is satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes that the person might be unsuitable.

Referees will also be asked to confirm details of:

- the applicant's current post and attendance record;
- performance history and conduct;
- any disciplinary procedures in which the sanction is current;
- any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children, including any in which the sanction has expired and the outcome of those;
- details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of these concerns.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the

circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or of an allegation that was determined to be unfounded, or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

Self-declaration of convictions by job applicants

The school's policy will require shortlisted applicants for all posts (including volunteers) to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and include any cautions and details of cases pending prosecution.

Such declarations will be made on an appropriate form and will be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked strictly private and confidential to the Head Teacher, prior to the interview.

The Head Teacher will discuss relevant, positive declarations confidentially with the applicant at interview.

The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment, but will be considered in the same way as positive DBS disclosures.

Interviews

The selection process will always include face to face interview and, in the case of candidates applying for teaching roles, some classroom activity with children.

Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK and Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status

Shortlisted applicants for all posts will be required to provide proof of identity by producing documents on the day of the interview and, where applicable, proof of their right to work and reside in the UK.

Shortlisted candidates will also be required to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation on the day of interview. The school will verify that candidates have actually obtained any qualifications legally required or deemed essential for the job by asking to see the relevant certificate or letter of confirmation from the awarding body. If the original documents are not available, the school will require sight of a properly certified copy.

Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the Head Teacher.

Commencement of Employment prior to DBS check being received

In unusual circumstances, it will be permitted to commence employment prior to receiving a DBS check. However a Children's Barred List (List 99) check will be completed.

Employment Offer

With the exception of DBS disclosures, the checks listed must be completed before a person's appointment is confirmed. In the case of DBS disclosures, the certificate must be obtained before or as soon as practicable after appointment.

Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed / received, an offer of employment will be made and the contract of employment issued. The contract will be issued as soon as possible but, in all circumstances, within 8 weeks of employment commencing.

Vetting of volunteers

Further to statutory checks on volunteers, BPS may choose to carry out an enhanced DBS check, without barred list information, in certain circumstances.

Staff currently employed by the school who are deployed to another area of work which is not regulated activity, will be referred to the DBS.

Record Retention / Data Protection

The school will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a 6 month period, after which time the notes will be shredded. The 6 month retention period will allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to the Employment tribunal.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. Applicants who wish to access their interview notes must make a subject access request in writing to the Head Teacher within 6 months of the interview date.

Personal file records

For the successful candidate, the school will retain details of all checks carried out including the following information which will make up part of their personal file:

- Application form
- References – minimum of two
- Proof of Identification (passport, full birth certificate, address, change of name documentation, current driving licence);
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Evidence of medical clearance (signed declaration within application form)
- Evidence of the enhanced DBS clearance (i.e. DBS certificate reference number and date, NOT the actual DBS form or certificate)
- Details of Children's Barred List (List 99) checks
- Details of prohibition from teaching check (via NCTL Teacher Services) (where applicable)
- Details of section 128 prohibition check for staff in management positions (including governors) (where applicable)
- Details of overseas checks including for EEA teacher sanctions/restrictions (where applicable)
- Proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK (where the candidate is not a citizen of a country within the EEA or Switzerland) (where applicable)

Single Central Record

In line with DfE requirements, the school will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The central list will record all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff, supply agency staff, volunteers, Management Board members who also work as volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members. The central record will indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity checks
- Qualification checks
- Registration check with the NCTL, where appropriate
- Checks of right to work and reside in the UK
- Children's Barred List (List 99) checks
- DBS Enhanced Disclosure
- Prohibition from teaching check (via NCTL Teacher Services (where applicable)
- A section 128 prohibition check for staff in management positions (including governors (where applicable)
- Overseas checks including for EEA teacher sanctions/restrictions (where applicable)
- Proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK (where applicable)

It will also indicate who undertook the check and the date on which the check was completed or the relevant certificate obtained.

Probation Period

Newly appointed teachers will be subject to the school's probationary period.

All new staff (including any volunteers) will sign a declaration before commencing employment stating that they have read and understood (i) the schools' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (and any related documentation) and (ii) the schools' Whistle-Blowing Policy. The school will ensure that existing staff have read and signed the same documentation.

The school will adopt a culture of vigilance where all concerns are listened to and taken seriously.

Alternative Provision

If a pupil is placed with an alternative provision provider, the school will continue to be responsible for ensuring that the appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on the individuals working at the establishment.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier, to comply with any changes to legislation.

This policy also applies to the Early Years Department.

Author	Headmaster	
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