



**St George's**  
School Edgbaston

# SAFER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Revised: July 2021



**This policy applies to Upper and Lower School and EYFS.**

## **Scope of the Policy**

The Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy applies to any individual working in any capacity at or visiting, the school. This includes:

- Teaching and non-teaching staff
- Supply Teachers
- Contractors and other staff supplied by third parties
- Governors and other volunteers

The school recognises its commitments under:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2021)
- Disclosure & Barring Service Code of Conduct
- Equality Act 2010

and will comply with these regulations and statutory guidance.

## **The Importance of Safer Recruitment and Selection**

Recruiting people who are wrong for the School can lead to increased staff turnover, increased costs and lowering of morale in the existing workforce. Such people are likely to be discontented, unlikely to give of their best, and end up leaving voluntarily or involuntarily when their unsuitability becomes evident. They will not offer the flexibility and commitment that the School requires and seeks.

Adherence to this policy will ensure that the School recruits and selects the best applicants for employment who are engaged and are committed to the education of the children and are sympathetic to and believe in the values and ethos of the School. It will also deter, identify and allow the School to reject applicants who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuitable to work with children and young people.

## **The School's Legal Responsibility and the Importance of Fairness**

The School and its representatives have a legal responsibility to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs in the recruitment and selection process on the grounds of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment and religion or belief.

The safer recruitment policy is aimed at ensuring that the experience for all candidates is fair, non-discriminatory and that the chosen candidate is recruited on merit, ability and suitability for the post.

Selection decisions are made in accordance with equality principles and the School will comply at all stages of the recruitment experience with its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) including the School's responsibility for making reasonable adjustments to enable disabled applicants to partake in the recruitment process and enable a successful candidate with a disability or health need to take up their appointment.

This policy will be reviewed as and when required and updated to adhere to appropriate legislative changes and/or statutory requirements regarding recruiting and safer recruitment.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Equality of opportunity is an integral part of the recruitment and selection process, and to this end the School may offer training and encouragement to any under-represented groups.

## **Principles**

The School recognises that its staff are its single most important resource. Therefore recruitment and selection of all levels of staff are activities of major importance. Recruitment is not an isolated task but rather the beginning of the employment relationship.

All Staff involved in any level of recruitment or any stage of the process should ensure that:

- They act in accordance with the School's safer recruitment policy
- All appointments are made on merit, against objective criteria which are applied consistently across all candidates
- Appropriate confidentiality is maintained at all times regarding candidates' details
- The School attracts and retains a high calibre of staff
- The highest quality of teaching and support is provided to all children and young people
- A favourable and positive image of the School is promoted through its recruitment and selection activities

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff to share this commitment and to undergo appropriate checks where appropriate including enhanced DBS checks and, where appropriate, checks of the relevant barred list(s). This commitment is embedded in all our procedures and pre-employment checks.

Training will be provided for key staff with responsibility under this policy, along with the provision and support of legal advice. All staff involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children at the school will have received appropriate safer recruitment training, the substance of which will as a minimum cover the content of Part Three of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance September 2021.

In addition, St George's is committed to ensuring that at least one person who is responsible for interviewing applicants has completed appropriate safer recruitment training (i.e. training provided by a person approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of ensuring that those who undertake it know how to take proper account of the need to safeguard children when recruiting staff). In addition, the person responsible for the school's recruitment processes will have completed this training.

### **The Recruitment Process**

Adverts and all recruitment materials will make clear the school's commitment to safer recruitment, that safer recruitment checks will be undertaken, the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification and whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. The School will consider both internal and external candidates for advertised roles and applicants will be treated fairly and equally through the recruitment stages in accordance with the principles of this policy.

Applicants for employment will be expected to complete in full the School's application form, detailing their experience and referees who will be contacted, with the applicant's permission, prior to the interview.

Shortlisted candidates will undergo a selection process to determine their suitability for employment, against objective criteria.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a criminal history self-disclosure prior to the date of their interview. Candidates will be provided with information on the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) (amended 2013 and 2020) which provides for offences that are protected not to be disclosed to, or taken into account by, employers. See annex A for more information

on protected offences. Any relevant disclosed information will be shared with the panel in order to give candidates an opportunity to discuss their information in interview, and for that information to be assessed for relevance by the School.

The selection process will reflect the requirements of the post but will as a minimum involve an interview with an appropriate and trained member of staff.

All notes written by interviewers will be kept with all paperwork for each recruitment exercise and feedback where agreed will be provided to unsuccessful candidates.

Reasonable adjustments to the selection process under the Equality Act (2010) will be made for individuals with disabilities or health needs.

Staff involved in interviewing are required to ask candidates to:

- account for all gaps in employment history
- account for discrepancies in application forms or references
- demonstrate their understanding and ability to safeguard the welfare of children and young people

Any person involved in the interview or selection process whose impartiality is compromised in any way in relation to an applicant must declare it immediately to their immediate superior and, if so required, withdraw from the interview/selection process either completely or in relation to that applicant.

## **Appointment**

The appointment of the successful candidate will be provisional and subject to completion of pre-employment checks. The level of checks required will depend on the role and duties of an applicant to work in the school.

For most appointments the applicant will be engaged in a 'regulated activity' – that is if as a result of their work they:

- Will be responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children;
- Will be working on a regular basis in a specified establishment, such as a school, for or in connection with the purposes of the establishment, where the work gives opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engage in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once

Regulated activity includes:

- a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for (see (c) below) or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children;
- b) work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers.

Work under (a) or (b) is regulated activity only if done regularly. Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes:

- c) relevant personal care, or health care provided by or provided under the supervision of a health care professional:
  - personal care includes helping a child with eating and drinking for reasons of illness or disability or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability;
  - health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional.

Regulated activity will not be:

- paid work in specified places which is occasional and temporary and does not involve teaching, training; and
- supervised activity which is paid in non-specified settings such as youth clubs, sports clubs etc

The school will carry out the checks identified in the Part III of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance, September 2021.

Any concerns raised during the employment checks will be investigated and a written note kept on the employment file of the further investigation conducted and its conclusion. Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the Local Authority designated officer for allegations against staff (the LADO).

All offers of appointment for positions that involve working in regulated activity will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. Normally, the successful candidate will not commence employment until all pre-employment checks have been completed and are satisfactory. In exceptional circumstances, employment may commence for a short period 'under supervision' based on business need and the completion of risk assessment conducted by the

Headmaster and Senior Admin person responsible for recruitment. The following conditions must be met for this to be permitted:

- The appointment is not confirmed
- The DBS application has been made
- All other checks have been completed including a stand-alone children's barred list check has been undertaken, together with a prohibition check(s) if applicable
- Appropriate safeguarding and supervision arrangements have been documented.
- The safeguarding and supervision arrangements are reviewed at least every two weeks
- For posts in early- or later-years childcare, completion of a Childcare disqualification declaration form as required under the Childcare Act 2006 Regulations (31 August 2018)

## References

The school will always ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. One reference must be from the current or most recent employer. If a candidate is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, the school will check with the school, college or setting at which they were most recently employed with children, to confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving.

References should provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be obtained, scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily, before the appointment is confirmed.

Wherever possible, references will be sought on short-listed candidates before interview. References will always be requested directly from the referee and must be supplied on the school's standard reference form which requires answers to specific questions. Open references, for example in the form of 'to whom it may concern' testimonials are not acceptable.

References will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. The referee will be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate. They will also be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form and any discrepancies will be taken up with the candidate. Electronic references will be verified to ensure they are from a legitimate source.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered carefully when assessing the applicant's suitability for the post including any information obtained from the DfE Sign-in website.

### **Confirmation of Appointment**

The candidate must bring the original of their DBS certificate to the school for verification. If this is not completed within 28 days of the date of issue, and no reasonable explanation has been given, the School reserves the right to withdraw the offer of employment.

Candidates who are registered with the DBS update service must bring their original certificate plus evidence of identity to the school for verification. The school will check that the certificate is at enhanced level and for the correct workforce (children's) and will then undertake a DBS status check online with the consent of the individual. The status screen will be printed and retained in the candidate's personnel file.

When all pre-employment checks have been completed satisfactorily, the offer of employment will be confirmed in writing.

Copies of identity documents, evidence of the right to work in the UK and relevant qualifications will be retained on the employee's file.

Candidates who are not able to satisfy the pre-employment checks will have their conditional offer of employment to the School withdrawn.

Any candidate who applies for a role in the school despite being on the Barred or Prohibited lists must be reported to the appropriate authorities at once.

For existing employees, failure to provide relevant documentation for repeat checks and/or new documentation where there is an expiry date will result in the School following the Disciplinary Policy, which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal without notice. It may also lead to referral to the LADO for advice and / or to any relevant statutory or regulatory body.

### **Record Retention**

For unsuccessful applicants, the documents gathered as part of the recruitment process will be retained securely for 6 months and will then be destroyed in an appropriate confidential manner. For the successful applicant(s), the records and data will be retained in their personnel file and, where required, on the SCR.

## **Agency and Third-party Staff, Visiting Professionals**

The School will obtain written notification from any agency or third party organisation that supplies staff to the School that the organisation has carried out **all** the checks on an individual who will be working at the School that the School would otherwise perform. This must include, as necessary, a barred list check and, if applicable a check on prohibition orders, prior to appointing that individual. Where a DBS check has resulted in a disclosure the agency must provide a copy of this to the school. Supply agencies are required to provide the School with the date that it or another agency received an enhanced disclosure for a member of staff it supplies and the date of that disclosure. If applicable, the supply agency must also provide written notification of the contents of a disclosure. Supply agencies must undertake a fresh disclosure every three years or earlier if there are concerns or a break in service of three months or more.

The School will verify the identity of the supply person on arrival. Details of third party or supply agency notifications and the date / initials of the person who saw evidence of their identity are to be kept on the SCR.

## **Contractors' Staff**

Where the School use contractors to provide services, the safeguarding requirements will be set out in the contract between the organisation and the School.

Contractors working at the school will be subject to the same checks as School staff with written confirmation supplied by the employing organisation. The School will carry out an identity check of such staff on arrival.

Where employees of contractors will have access to areas of the School where regular unsupervised contact with children is possible the School will require written confirmation that relevant DBS checks have been undertaken by the contractor and will also carry out identity checks on arrival.

In cases where the contractor does not have opportunity for regular contact with children, the School will decide on whether a basic DBS disclosure would be appropriate

Where a contractor working regularly at the School is self-employed the School will obtain the appropriate level of DBS check.

Under no circumstances should a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children.

## **Volunteers**

The arrangements for volunteers will vary according to the individual and activity.

Volunteers in a regulated activity must undergo the same checks as staff employed at the School. This will include all volunteers who accompany residential school trips.

Regular volunteers not engaged in a regulated activity, including those who are supervised at all times, may require an enhanced DBS certificate without a barred list check.

The School will undertake a written risk assessment for every volunteer that is not in regulated activity to determine whether checks are required and proportionate

'One-off' volunteers for day outings concerts etc. do not require vetting checks but must be supervised at all times by a suitably checked member of staff and may not undertake any kind of personal care of pupils. This will be identified by the volunteer risk assessment.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

## **Trustees**

Trustees are volunteers and will be treated on the same basis as outlined above for other volunteers. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will ensure that all Trustees are subject to an enhanced DBS certificate without barred list check as part of the appointment process. If a Trustee will be engaged in a regulated activity a barred check will also be requested. All trustees are checked against the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) s128 list (prohibition from management of an independent school) via the DfE Sign-in website.

### **The Chair of Trustees**

The Chairman of Trustees will be subject to the following checks by the Secretary of State for Education:

- Enhanced DBS check
- Confirmation of identity
- Confirmation of right to work in the UK
- TRA s128 list check
- Overseas and other checks as appropriate

## **Staff not in a Regulated Activity**

Some staff may come to the School on an infrequent basis to work under supervision – for example a visiting specialist running a workshop. Identity checks will be carried out when such staff arrive at the School.

## **Single Central Register**

The School will maintain a Single Central Register which records whether or not the following checks have been carried out and the dates on which these were completed:

Recruitment checks include:

- Enhanced DBS & DBS Barred list
- TRA Prohibition Register(s) including prohibition from teaching and GTCE sanctions
- For those in management of the School, a s128 check
- Check for any teaching sanctions in other EEA nations
- Employment history
- Written requests for employment references
- Evidence of identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Address
- Qualifications
- For those who have worked or lived abroad – the School will make any further checks considered appropriate (see paragraphs 262-267 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance, September 2020)
- Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- For those in early- or later-years childcare, completion of a Childcare disqualification declaration form as required under the Childcare Act 2006 Regulations (31 August 2018)

The Single Central Register will include the following people:

- All staff including supply staff who work in the School
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the School, including volunteers
- All members of the Board of Trustees

The details of an individual should be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at the School.

**To be reviewed July 2022 or as and when  
statutory guidance / legislation changes**

# Annex A: Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) (amended 2013) – Protected offences flowchart (UNLOCK 2020)

