

OLDHAM HULME GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SAFER RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & DISCLOSURE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This policy is applicable from EYFS through to year 13

Introduction

Oldham Hulme Grammar School is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The school places the highest possible importance on safeguarding and expects all of its employees to share this commitment. The school is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The school recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The aims of the school's recruitment policy are as follows:-

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, disability or age;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the DfE in *Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment* and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS];
- To ensure that the school meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

Recruitment & selection procedure

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form. The school will only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information. Any gaps in employment history will be explored at interview.

Applicants will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for. The applicant may then be invited to attend a **formal interview** at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. Every interview panel will contain at least one member who is safer recruitment trained.

Shortlisted candidates (not those who do not make the shortlist) will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children which would allow for this information to be discussed at interview.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, the school will carry out an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. NB These checks should only be for checking suitability for working with children and not other areas of a person's life

If it is decided to make an **offer of employment** following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the school's standard terms and conditions of employment;

- the receipt of two satisfactory references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School consider satisfactory; and
- the receipt of a disclosure at the appropriate level from the Disclosure and Barring Service with which the school is satisfied.
- If the offer is accepted and the above conditions are satisfied, the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of employment.

Pre-employment checks

In accordance with the statutory guidance given by the DfE in *Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment*, the school carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

Verification of identity, address and qualifications

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, address and qualifications:-

- current driving licence (including photograph) or passport or full birth certificate and two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address; and
- documentation confirming their National Insurance number (P45, P60 or National Insurance card); and
- documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

References

References will be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend. Referees should be a senior person with appropriate authority.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role which the applicant has applied for. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:-

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.

The school will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials. The school will take steps to verify that electronic references originate from a legitimate source.

The school will compare all references with any information given on the application form in order to verify information provided by the candidate. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.

Barred list check

If an individual were to start work in a regulated activity before the enhanced disclosure certificate is available a separate barred list check would be undertaken. In these circumstances the school would undertake a risk assessment which would ensure that appropriate supervision is in place.

Criminal records check

Due to the nature of the work, the School applies for criminal record certificates from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members, governors and volunteers.

Enhanced disclosure (with barred list check)

For posts involving regulated activity.

An enhanced disclosure will contain details of a person's criminal records, including spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer. The DBS acts as a 'one-stop shop' for the checking of teachers and others working with children. An enhanced disclosure may also contain details of information held on local police records which the police consider to be relevant to the person's post or position, also details of those considered unsuitable to work with children and young persons or vulnerable adults. The Police Act 1997 makes unauthorised disclosure of any information in a 'disclosure' a criminal offence.

If the enhanced disclosure is delayed the Principal may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- without confirming the appointment;
- if all other relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily;
- after a satisfactory barred check list has been made in advance;
- a DBS application has been made in advance;
- with appropriate safeguards taken (e.g. appropriate supervision) and reviewed at least every two weeks (relevant staff, including the person in question, will be informed what these are). These safeguards would be determined by and recorded in a written risk assessment;
- by adding a note to the SCR and maintaining evidence of the measures.

Overseas Checks

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence (3 months or more in the last 10 years) and those with little or no previous UK residence the school will carry out further checks having due regard to government guidance. They may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s). Extra references will be requested from applicants from countries which do not provide criminal records checks.

Following the UK's exit from the EU, the school will use the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

These checks could include, where available:

- criminal records checks for overseas applicants - Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK; and for teaching positions
- obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professions database. Applicants can also contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

Where available, such evidence will be considered together with information obtained through other pre-appointment checks to help assess their suitability.

Where this information is not available the school will seek alternative methods of checking suitability and or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment.

Prohibition from Teaching Orders

Candidates to be employed in a teaching role would be checked to ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using Teacher Services formerly known as the Employer Access Online service. Whilst the school recognises that prohibition from teaching checks for teaching assistants are discretionary, these are nonetheless carried out.

Medical and Physical Fitness

Candidates will be required to complete a medical questionnaire with details of their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. This will be checked by the school nurse and if necessary external medical advice would be sought. This is in order for the school to satisfy itself of the medical fitness of staff to carry out the duties of the post applied for.

Right to work in the UK

The School will need to verify the candidate's right to work in the UK. Should there be any uncertainty the school will follow the advice on the GOV.UK website.

Staff Suitability Declaration

The school will comply with statutory guidance about disqualification from childcare under the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006. The school will inform relevant staff of the legislation (or ensure they have been informed by others such as their supply agency). The school will take steps to gather sufficient and accurate information about whether any member of staff covered by the statutory guidance is disqualified and will keep a record of the date disqualification checks were completed, on the Single Central Register. The school will gather this information by requiring relevant staff to complete a self-declaration form.

The school will notify Ofsted of any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of any person who is in regular contact with children where childcare is being provided. The School will provide Ofsted with the following information about an employee when relevant:

- details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006;
- the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the ground for disqualification arose;
- the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and
- a certified copy of the relevant order;

The school will notify Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, and at least within 14 days of the date school became aware of the information.

From 31st August 2018 'disqualification by association' has been disapplied to schools. However the school will make staff aware that their relationships and associations both within and outside of the workplace (including online) may have implications for the safeguarding of children in school. The school ensures that it creates a culture where staff feel comfortable to discuss matters outside of work which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. Such discussions would: help safeguard staff welfare; establish if arrangements are need to support staff; manage children's safety by establishing if there are measures that need to be put in place to safeguard children (e.g. by stopping or restricting a person visiting school where a potential risk to children has been identified.)

Prohibition from the management of independent schools

For appointments to relevant roles (including the board of Governors) the school will comply with the duty to check for prohibitions from the management of independent schools through the Secure Access or routes as appropriate. A Section 128 prohibition check will be undertaken on all those taking on a managerial role e.g. the school's management team, heads of department, proprietors and all members of the proprietorial body (governors), using the Employer Access Online service.

Temporary Staff (Supply)

School must receive written confirmation from the relevant supply agency that the required checks have been carried out to the extent relevant to that person: identity, enhanced disclosure, right to work in the UK, barred list/List 99,

prohibition from teaching, prohibition from management of an independent school, qualifications, overseas checks. The school will carry out an identity check on any staff supplied by such an organisation. The school will also see each criminal record certificate, whether or not it discloses any information.

Contractors

Where there is interaction between the school and employees of another organisation (contractors) the school will ensure that relevant checks have been carried out. This will be through obtaining written confirmation from the employer and such written confirmation will be retained. Such written confirmation will be specific to particular employees of the company in terms of names, checks and dates rather than a 'catch-all' assertion i.e. "we check all staff". The relevant minimum checks will include: barred list check for those in regulated activity; appropriate DBS check; identity check on arrival; any other role-specific checks.

For occasional or temporary workers who are not frequent or regular school will risk assess (and record this in writing) whether a DBS check is necessary and will proceed accordingly. In the case of an unchecked worker carrying out emergency repairs school will determine the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

Internal Appointments

When appointments are being made where only internal applicants will be considered the school will treat applicants equally and fairly. Normal procedure will be:

- For posts to be advertised electronically and posted on the appropriate staff noticeboards.
- Applicants will be invited to submit a written application within an appropriate time period.
- All shortlisted applicants will be asked the same questions at interview.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome in a timely fashion and feedback provided if requested.
- Such appointments will be communicated to the wider staff body electronically and posted on the appropriate noticeboards as soon as possible.
- Suitability references will be sought where applicable.
- Existing staff being internally appointed to a 'management position' as described above will be subject to a prohibition from the management of an independent school check.

The Principal reserves the right to act flexibly and decisively in the matter of internal appointments when it is in the best interests of the school to do so.

For the school's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders see **Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders**

Retention and security of disclosure information

The school's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information. In particular, the school will:-

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the school's senior leadership team and the HR Officer.
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. In most cases, the school will not retain such information for longer than 6 months although the school will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken.
- ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding;
- prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information.

The school complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on request.

Retention of records

If an applicant is appointed, the school will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after 6 months unless the applicant specifically requests the school to keep their details on file.

Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter they should contact the Head of Finance and Support or the Principal as applicable.

Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure policy reviewed: August 2022

Next Review Due: August 2023