

Ellwood Community Primary School

Believe, Achieve, Belong



Safer Recruitment Policy

Date reviewed: July 2023

Next renew date: July 2024

Introduction

Ellwood 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 following the necessary 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).

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 a child or 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 and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

We will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, in line with our school values and equal opportunity policy.

We will comply with the requirements of DfE 2021 Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board 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 Department for Education 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
- monitor any agencies' compliance with this document, such as supply teachers
- 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 Board delegates the power to offer employment for all posts to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will aim to involve at least one governor in the appointment of all teaching staff if this is possible and also in the appointment of other posts, where possible. Selection panels will comprise a minimum of two people (normally three). In accordance with the 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 for teaching staff. However, where there is a 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 advertisements for posts, paid or unpaid, will include the following statements:

"Ellwood 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"

"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, an 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
- A GCC Application Form
- Any other relevant information to the post
- Reference to the Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy, DBS and other pre-employment requirements will be available and self-disclosure form
- An outline of terms of employment
- The closing date for the receipt of applications

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. Gaps in employment and education will be queried.

Candidates submitting an application form completed on line will be asked to sign the form if invited to interview.

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

Short Listing and Reference Requests

The selection panel will shortlist applicants against the Person Specification and job description 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 the 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. Written records will be kept of such exchanges.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. 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 candidate's employment and his/her reasons for leaving.

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

- The referee's relationship to the candidate
- Details of the candidate's current post and salary
- The candidate's 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 candidate's 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 referee 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 areas 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. (Unless H&S restricts this, such as covid-19. In this case the interview will be remote.)

Candidates invited to interview will receive:

- A 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 (if appropriate)
- The questions asked will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirement of the Job Description and the 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 children 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. In line with GDPR legislation, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them. After 6 months, all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

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 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, which is administered by HR.
- Verify the candidate's 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 given by HR)
- Make any further checks that we consider appropriate if the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK including information on sanctions or restrictions imposed by EEA professional regulating authorities.
- Verify professional qualifications (original certificates), as appropriate

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 completion 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 – signed by the applicant
- 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 (if relevant)
- Evidence of DBS clearance, Barred List (where applicable), self-disclosure and Teacher Prohibition checks
- Offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment.

The school will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with 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.

Supply Staff

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

Sports Coaches

We will check they have a relevant DBS from the company they are employed by.

Volunteers

We carry out DBS and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post (as above) and if necessary we require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees. References are taken up, as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips/PTA events) are supervised, in accordance with legislation.

Students on placement

When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course (such as 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.

Students on work experience

Students on work experience will always be supervised.

Contractors

We ensure that contractors or any employees of the contractor, working at the school have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required. However, we try to book all work in outside of school hours. Contractors and contractors' 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.

Monitoring and Review

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

Review: July 2023

By: Mrs Milford

Signed: Mrs Milford

Due to be Reviewed: July 2024