Hindhayes Infant School

Safer Recruitment policy

September 2026

At Hindhayes, we believe success is based on the partnerships between pupils, staff and the parent community. We endeavour to enrich and develop each child to be a successful individual that will become an active community citizen of the future.

Approved on: _____

Signed: _____

Role: _____

Introduction

The safe recruitment of all staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency cooperation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

This school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. The school is 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 and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed. This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in the school's Racial Equality Policy.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DCSF guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure

It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers, to comply with this document.

It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.

It is the responsibility of the school's HR provider to:

Deal with the administration of the disclosure system for the school.

In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations, the governing body has delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to lead in all appointments outside of the leadership group.

School governors may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the Headteacher. The Headteacher may delegate the selection process of staff outside of the leadership group to other managers in the school, but remains responsible for the decision to appoint.

The school will:

1. ensure that appropriate staff who undertake recruitment have received safe recruitment training and successfully completed the NCSL (or equivalent) safe recruitment training assessment
2. ensure every appointment panel includes at least one member who has received safe recruitment training
3. implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to 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.
4. keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with DCSF requirements
5. ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. The school will monitor the compliance with these measures.
6. 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:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer
- Verification of the candidate's identity in line with the requirements of The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (photo ID and proof of current address)
- An enhanced DBS clearance including barred list check.
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness (Pre-appointment Short Medical questionnaire)
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers
- Verification of successful completion of induction period (for those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
- Check and sanctions or prohibitions applied for teaching staff.

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. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates, or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

Applications

The school uses a standard application form for ALL posts.

The school requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on this application form. Where an applicant is short listed, these gaps will be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (eg: General Teaching Council for England).

Self-declaration of convictions by job applicants

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

Such declarations will be made on an appropriate form and should be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked strictly private and confidential to the chair of the selection panel / Headteacher, prior to the interview. The chair of the panel / Headteacher 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 CRB disclosures.

Interviews

The selection process will always include the following for teaching posts:

- Face to face professional interview including a question related to safeguarding children
- Activity with children

References

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 that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this 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 must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied - open references or testimonials are not acceptable. References will be requested in hard copy format only (not electronic) and must be a signed by the named referee. 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.

Reference requests will specifically ask:

- About the referee's relationship with the candidate
- Whether the referee is completely 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, salary 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

References will be compared to the application form to ensure that the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant at interview. 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 an allegation 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.

Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK & 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 interview in line with those set out in The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Similar information is also required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check on the preferred candidate. Short-listed 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 and claimed in their application by asking to see the relevant certificate, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body / institution. If the original documents are not available, the school will require sight of a properly certified copy. Where candidates have obtained qualifications abroad, a certified comparability check by NARIC will also be required. Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the chair of the panel / Headteacher.

Commencement of Employment prior to DBS check being received

In unusual circumstances it is permitted to commence employment prior to receiving a DBS check. However, a risk assessment must be completed.

Employment Offer

It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred candidate, however, with the exception of DBS disclosures, the checks detailed above must all 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.

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 destroyed (ie: 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 2018, applicants have a 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 chair of the panel / Headteacher within 6 months of the interview date.

Personal file records

The school will retain the following information which will make up part of the personal file, for the successful candidate:

- Application form
- References
- Disclosure of convictions form
- Proof of identification
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Proof of registration with General Teaching Council (for teaching staff)
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable)
- Evidence of medical clearance from Occupational Health (where applicable)
- Evidence of the DBS clearance (ie: the DBS certificate reference number, NOT the actual DBS form or certificate)

Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks

In line with DCSF 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 whether employed directly or through an agency, volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, eg: specialist sports coach or artist.

The central record will indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

Identity checks

- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job
- Additionally for those applying for teaching posts, registration check with the GTC where appropriate
- Checks of right to work in the United Kingdom
- DBS Enhanced Disclosure
- Further overseas records where appropriate

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

In order to record supply staff provided through an agency on the record, the school will require written confirmation from the supply agency that is has satisfactorily completed the checks described above. The school does not need to carry out checks itself except where there is information contained within the disclosure. However identity checks must be carried out by the school to check the person arriving is the person the agency intends to refer to them.

Probation periods

Early Careers Teachers who are appointed will be subject to the school's probationary period. New School staff will be given a copy of the Somerset guidance on 'Safeguarding Children' and asked to sign a declaration that they have read and understood the document and will follow the guidelines required to maintain professional boundaries at all time

The school has a specific safeguarding related whistle blowing policy which has been disseminated to all staff and volunteers (displayed in the staffroom).