



POLICY	Recruitment and selection policy and procedure
STATUS/DATE OF THIS VERSION	July 2022
APPROVED BY	Board of Trustees Oct 22
RATIFIED BY	Board of Trustees Oct 22
REVIEW	Oct 23

This policy is operated by all the schools in Unity Education Trust (as listed below).
There may be sections that are specific to one school and these will be added by the school either as an annex or in place of yellow highlighted sections below.

Any queries about the policy should be directed, in the first instance, to the Headteacher/Head of School:

- **Beeston Primary**
- **Garvestone Primary**
- **Grove House Infant**
- **Kings Park Infant**
- **Northgate High School and Dereham Sixth Form College**
- **The Pinetree School**
- **The Short Stay School for Norfolk**
- **Churchill Park**
- **Greyfriars Primary**
- **Highgate Infant School**
- **Kings Oak Infant School**
- **Wimbotsham and Stow Primary**
- **Magdalen Primary**
- **St Germans Primary**
- **Great Dunham Primary**

Recruitment and Selection model policy and procedure MATs P108

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This model has been subject to consultation with the recognised trade unions at County level. Any Trust looking to adopt, or adapt and adopt, as their own should consult recognised trade unions at local level.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Recruitment and selection is a critical activity within a Trust. In selecting the best person for the role, the need for compliance with employment law, especially in the area of discrimination is clear. Recruitment practices must be safe in the context of appointing people who are suitable to work with children and young people. Recruitment and selection processes should embrace core principles around safeguarding children and young people and employment legislation.
- 1.2. The aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure the requirements of *Safer Recruitment Guidance* produced by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) and general employment legislation are met. It will do this by supporting the principles and recommendations set out in the DfE document 'Keeping children safe in education' statutory guidance. It provides a detailed, step by step, walk through of legislative requirements and best practice recruitment and selection in education.
- 1.3. See *Recruitment checklist C108* for a quick reference checklist to ensure all the important elements of the recruitment process are undertaken.
- 1.4. Through the implementation of this policy and procedure, the Board of Trustees will be mindful of the employer obligation to seek to maintain and protect the mental health and wellbeing of all staff as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.5. Poor appointments to the Trust can lead to unnecessary and costly staff turnover, poor performance, dissatisfaction amongst the workforce and potentially put children at risk of harm. The importance of safer recruitment and recruitment best practice are recognised and underpin the Trust's recruitment processes.

2. Legislation relevant to this policy

Legal requirements regarding the recruitment and selection of staff stemming from relevant employment law and sector specific statute, for example (this list includes any subsequent updates made to the legislation listed): *the Education (Independent Schools and Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended by the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, Childcare Act 2006, Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009, Equality Act 2010* and various statutory guidance documents.

3. Equal opportunities

- 3.1 The Trust recognise their responsibilities under equality legislation, specifically the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 The 'protected characteristics' identified in the Equality Act 2010 of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership will not be used as the basis of

selection for appointment or promotion within the Trust. All employees will be selected, trained and promoted on the basis of ability, the requirements of the job and other similar criteria that are as objective as possible. The only exception will be by virtue of legislation or an Occupational Requirement.

- 3.3 The Equality Act extends, beyond *direct* and *indirect* discrimination, the circumstances in which unlawful discrimination can take place. In respect of some 'protected characteristics', *associative* discrimination (i.e. direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic) and discrimination by *perception* (i.e. direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic). In any recruitment and selection exercise at the Trust, those involved will be alert to any potential unlawful discrimination.
- 3.4 Reasonable adjustments and/or supportive measures will be considered where a known disability exists to allow equality of access and opportunity.
- 3.5 The applicant's date of birth will not be included within the application form due to the risk of age discrimination. See para 8.3 for further information.
- 3.6 All those taking part in the recruitment and selection process have responsibility for applying the policy on equal opportunities to avoid unlawful discrimination.
- 3.7 This policy and procedure forms part of the Trust's wider approach to equality, including the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Trust recognises that all public sector organisations are under a single equality duty (from the Equality Act 2010) to demonstrate that they are achieving equality in their workforce across all the protected characteristics.

4. Responsibilities and application

- 4.1 All governors, trustees, headteachers and employees involved in a recruitment and selection exercises will adhere to the requirements of this policy and procedure and any related policies when conducting the recruitment process and in their decision making.
- 4.2 The Trust Board recognises its responsibility for ensuring at least one member of school staff and one Trustee or governor are trained in Safer Recruitment and that at least one appropriately trained individual (member of staff or Trustee/ governor) is involved in each and every recruitment exercise.
- 4.3 The Trust will ensure their scheme of delegation for appointment of staff is reflected in this policy and procedure, to be clear about where responsibility lies. Decisions taken by the Trust in relation to the discretion to delegate aspects of the appointments process will be reviewed annually and recorded in the appropriate meeting minutes.
- 4.4 This policy and procedure applies to all teaching and support staff posts in the Trust. As well as students, contractors, agency staff, carers or volunteers who work in the Trust or its extended environment.

This Trust operates in accordance with the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and the Burgundy Book are required to pay teaching staff in accordance with the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and to apply 'Burgundy Book' conditions of service for teaching staff appointments.

For support staff appointments, the Trust operates in accordance with Norfolk County Council's Modern Reward Strategy (MRS), the Trust will use model job specifications (which have been job evaluated through the MRS process) or will work with the County Council's HR Service in the development of a bespoke job description which will then be evaluated to establish the appropriate grade.

- 4.5 The Trust will give appropriate consideration to redeployees put forward by the local authority, provided details of the nominated candidate are forwarded to the Headteacher by the stated closing date.

5. Establishing the requirements of a role

- 5.1 In advance of any recruitment exercise, the Trust will consider relevant aspects of workforce planning in advance of advertising a vacancy.
- 5.2 When a vacancy occurs, the relevant post will be reassessed in the context of the Trust's needs, to see if it is still required and, if so, whether changes to the job are needed to meet future needs. Every time a vacancy arises, appropriate individuals within the Trust e.g. Governing board/ Headteacher/ Trustees will be clear about its current and anticipated future budget position, number on roll trends, and other data which will help identify whether an appointment needs to be made and, if it does, whether that appointment should be permanent or fixed-term, full or part-time, etc.
- 5.3 The appropriate individuals within the Trust e.g. Governing board/ Headteacher/ Trustees will consider whether or not recruitment to the post needs to happen, whether a review of the post (and perhaps wider staffing structure) should occur before proceeding. This may be particularly relevant where the Trust is experiencing or anticipates financial 'tightening' perhaps through reducing pupil/student numbers. It may also present an opportunity to remove a post from the structure without the need for a staffing adjustment process. A decision not to recruit or to recruit to a different post (e.g. part-time instead of full-time, for a fixed term, or at a lower scale) may help avoid problems further down the line. A vacant post may well prove to be an opportunity to avoid a redundancy problem in the foreseeable future. The Trust recognises this and is committed to appropriate workforce planning considerations whenever a vacancy arises.
- 5.4 If any significant change in staffing structure arises from such workforce planning considerations, the Trust will carry out appropriate consultation with staff. This is most likely to be appropriate where the Trust is considering a change to the leadership and/or teaching and learning responsibility payments (TLRPs) structures of the Trust.
- 5.5 In reviewing or creating a job description, person specification and other documents linked to a post which is to be advertised, the Trust will have regard to any statutory or local agreement requirements applicable to the group in which the post falls.

- 5.6 If it is decided to recruit to the post there will be a plan for the recruitment exercise, identifying who should be involved, assigning responsibilities, and setting aside sufficient time for the work needed at each stage so that safeguards are not overlooked. For example, it is important to organise the selection process to allow references to be obtained on shortlisted candidates before interview, wherever possible.
- 5.7 Safer practice in recruitment also means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants. Further information regarding safeguarding and checks that will be carried out during the recruitment process can be found at the section below and section 18.

6. Post specification

- 6.1 Deliberate consideration will be given to identifying the duties (job description) and the skills/competencies; knowledge; skills; experience; qualifications (person specification) required to do the job. Writing a good job description and person specification help in the process of analysing the needs of the job and underpins the selection process.

This Trust is signed up to NCC's Modern Reward Strategy and will ensure that all job descriptions for support staff are graded before the post is advertised. Generic (already graded) job descriptions are available on InfoSpace. Non-standard job descriptions should be discussed with EducationHR to help determine a suitable grade.

- 6.2 The job description is a statement of the purpose and scope, line management relationships and principal duties and responsibilities of a post. All job descriptions will clearly state the individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people they are responsible for or come into contact with.
- 6.3 The person specification will translate the duties of the job description into essential and desirable characteristics (the 'core' requirements) needed to undertake the job effectively. It will essentially describe the qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills, competencies, and other attributes of the 'ideal' person to fill the job.
- 6.4 Particular care will be taken when devising a person specification to ensure that the essential and desirable criteria do not unlawfully discriminate against particular groups of people either directly or indirectly.

Examples of unlawful discrimination could be:

- Placing an age limit for applications;

- Stipulating a UK qualification (when a non-UK equivalent may be as high a standard if not higher);
- Requiring a driving licence when in fact few posts in schools require one.

6.5 All material in the recruitment pack, e.g. the application form, job description, information for applicants etc, will clearly set out the extent of relationships and contact with children. All work in a school or similar setting will involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post.

6.6 The recruitment pack will also state that:

- For all posts, a statement needs to be included in the recruitment pack, including the person specification, to make clear the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: *"The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment."*
- where appropriate, the successful applicant will be required to provide a DBS disclosure at the appropriate level for the post and where relevant sign a childcare (disqualification) regulations declaration;
- the prospective employer will seek references on short-listed candidates, and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview;
- if the applicant is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, their current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any in which the penalty is time expired (that is where a warning could no longer be taken into account in any new disciplinary hearing for example). They will also be asked whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection concerns and, if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If the applicant is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues;
- the applicant will be notified 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.

6.7 An accurate, comprehensive job description and person specification will enable those shortlisting and conducting the interviews to make decisions against objective criteria. Clear, precise, measurable and objective criteria will help to ensure the later stages of the recruitment process are more straightforward, consistent and less time consuming.

6.8 Importantly, the criteria will also form the basis for the assessment of the candidates called for interview and enable the Trust to identify the most suitable candidate for the job.

Further resources – Support to Trusts for recruitment to Headteacher posts is available from EducationHR – to access this support the school will need to send the resignation letter of the current Headteacher to The Governance Service.

7. Recruitment advertising

7.1 All posts will be advertised concurrently internally and externally to the school, unless:

- the staffing adjustment process is being applied and recruitment from within can avoid or minimise the need for compulsory redundancy selection; or
- the Trust has agreed to give prior consideration to a person nominated by the Education HR Redeployment Officer under its staffing adjustment scheme; or
- a fixed term worker has occupied the post for a significant period of time (see guidance on employing temporary staff including the use of fixed-term contracts);
- there are clearly sufficient suitable internal candidates, in which case the vacancy can be advertised internally only, for reasons of cost and expediency.
- Internal only adverts will be made accessible to all staff. Regardless of how the post is advertised all staff (including those on family related leave e.g. maternity) will have the same chance to see the advert so as not to discriminate.

Unity Education Trust will decide if 'internal only' means advertising only within the academy where the vacancy is or around the whole Multi-Academy Trust.

7.2 The advert will include the following:

- A statement of the trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children that makes clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken;
- The safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification; and
- Confirmation of whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Which means that when applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employer, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found in the [DBS filtering guide](#).
- If the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, the advert will include the following wording: *This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and you will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check or Enhanced DBS check with barred list. If you have information to declare it may be protected under the Exceptions Orders and you may not be required to declare it. You will be asked to make a criminal conviction declaration if you are shortlisted for the post. [Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice website](#). The *Instruction to advertise form F108h* includes a tick box option to have this paragraph included if you request the publication of a job advert on Education Job Finder.*
- Adverts for roles in scope will include wording to the effect of: *'This post is covered by Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) and therefore the ability to speak fluent English is an essential requirement for this role.'* Job descriptions and person specifications for in scope roles will also reflect this requirement.

- 7.3 Applicants for posts will be sent the Trust's Child Safeguarding policy.
- 7.4 The Trust will comply with the fluency duty as laid out in the Code of Practice on the English language requirements for public sector workers (Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016). The code imposes a duty on public authorities to ensure that public facing workers have the necessary level of fluency in English to perform their role effectively. For further information [see the Code of practice on the English language requirement for public sector workers on gov.uk](#)

8. Applications

- 8.1 We will use an application form to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants. We will only accept CVs alongside application forms. A CV on its own **will not** provide adequate information.
- 8.2 Application forms for all types of post will obtain from the applicant:
- current and former names, current address and National Insurance number;
 - any academic and/or vocational qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant for the position, with details of the awarding body and date of award;
 - a full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education or training, and part-time or voluntary work as well as full-time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment, education or training, and reasons for leaving employment;
 - a declaration of any family or close relationship to any existing employees or employers (including councillors and governors);
 - details of two professional referees from current and/or previous employer;
 - a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to the job description and person specification.

Further information on references is contained in paragraph 13.

Further resources - *Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks model policy and procedure P112.*

- 8.3 The applicant's date of birth will not be included within the application form due to the risk of age discrimination. The applicant's date of birth is provided later on in the recruitment process to enable ID checking and payment of salary (where the applicant is successful) so it will be used then to check any gaps in employment history.
- 8.4 The application form will include an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore that all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared for shortlisted candidates.
- 8.5 It will also require a signed statement that the person is not disqualified from working with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body, e.g. the

Teacher Regulation Agency), and either has no convictions, cautions, or bind-overs, or has attached details of their record in a sealed envelope marked confidential.

- 8.6 Applicants for teaching posts will also be asked:
- to provide their Teacher Reference number;
 - whether they are recognised as having Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) by the Teacher Regulation Agency.

Further information required for applicants who have lived or worked outside of the UK (including EU and EEA member states):

8.7 Applicants who have lived or worked outside of the UK will undergo the same checks as all other staff (set out at paragraph 18), as well as additional checks (see paragraph 19). This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK.

8.8 There is no requirement for the Trust to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate or carry out checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, during a period which ended not more than three months before the person's appointment, the applicant has worked, in a school in England under the following circumstances, in a post:

- They worked in a post which brought them regularly into contact with children; or
- They worked in a post to which they were appointed on or after 12th May 2006 and which did not bring them regularly into contact with children or young persons;
- They worked in another institution within the further education sector in England, or in a 16-19 academy, in a post which involved the provision of education which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons.

8.9 Where available, such evidence will be considered together with information obtained through other pre-appointment checks to help assess an applicant's suitability for the role. Where this information is not available the Trust will seek alternative methods of checking suitability and/or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to appoint the applicant to the role. This must be signed off by the Headteacher. Although sanctions and restrictions imposed by another regulating authority do not prevent a person from taking up teaching positions in England, the Trust will consider the circumstances that led to the restriction or sanction being imposed when considering a candidate's suitability for employment. Further information can be found in the DfE ['Recruit teachers from overseas'](#) guidance.

9. Shortlisting

9.1 For most appointments there will only be a need for a shortlisting process. However, if there are a large number of candidates there may also be a need to carry out an initial longlisting process.

- 9.2 Shortlisting (and longlisting where it happens) aims to match the applicants as closely as possible to the person specification, and at least two appropriately trained people will carry out this task.
- 9.3 Every application will be read, and assessed against the person specification, taking into account the requirements of the job description. Only those criteria that can be measured from the application will be included.
- 9.4 The criteria used in shortlisting will be justifiable in terms of the job, have objective validity, will not be changed half-way through and will be applied to all candidates. All candidates will be assessed against the established criteria without exception or variation.
- 9.5 Candidates will only be shortlisted if they meet all the essential elements of the person specification. If the initial shortlisting exercise produces too long a list of suitable candidates, use the desirable criteria. It is also appropriate to “weight” the desirable criteria in order of importance in arriving at a final shortlist.
- 9.6 The Trust will not discriminate against any applicant when shortlisting, or at any point through the recruitment process.
- 9.7 All shortlisted candidates may have an online search carried out as part of the Trust’s due diligence. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online which the Trust might want to explore with the applicant at interview.
- 9.8 A shortlisting record will be completed for all candidates, whether they have been selected for shortlisting or not, recording the reason(s) for not shortlisting candidates, in case of complaint or requests for feedback. Applicants can request access to the shortlisting record, so it is essential to ensure that the information recorded is relevant to the job and non-discriminatory. Any release of documentation would need to comply with data protection law.

10. Scrutinising and shortlisting

- 10.1 All applications will be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment.
- 10.2 Incomplete applications will not be accepted. CV applications will not be accepted.
- 10.3 Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment will form consideration of whether to shortlist the applicant. As well as reasons for obvious gaps in employment, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work, will also be explored and verified.
- 10.4 Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete the *Disclosure of Criminal Convictions and Suitability to Work Form*. Candidates will not be asked to complete this form prior to shortlisting e.g. on the application form. Where this form is completed electronically, applicants will be asked to sign a hard copy at interview.

11. Shortlisting disabled applicants

- 11.1 Public sector organisations, including this Trust, are statutorily required to be proactive in ensuring disabled people are treated fairly. To ensure that a person with a disability is not placed at a substantial disadvantage, the law requires reasonable adjustments to be made at all stages of the recruitment process.
- 11.2 Candidates are asked to state clearly on the application form if they feel this applies to them. In accordance with disability equality legislation, the Trust will provide any appropriate assistance to enable a disabled person (who meets the stated selection criteria for the post) to attend for an interview.

12. Shortlisting job share applications

- 12.1 Where candidates have applied for a vacancy on a job-share basis, their application will be considered in exactly the same way as other candidates. When shortlisting, ignore the fact of job share.

13. References

- 13.1 The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will be sought and obtained directly from the referee. The referee details provided by the candidate will be verified.
- 13.2 Two satisfactory references will be obtained. One of which will be from the applicant's current employer in work with children. If the candidate is not currently employed references will be sought from their last employer, verifying their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving. Where any applicant who is not currently working with children has done so in the past, a reference will also be obtained from that employer. References will be from a senior person with appropriate authority, not a colleague.

The Trust will not rely on verbal references or testimonials, i.e. "To whom it may concern".

- 13.3 For safeguarding purposes, every request will ask whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children. If the applicant is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, their current employer with children will be asked about:
- any current disciplinary sanctions (including information obtained from the Teacher Services System);
 - any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired;
 - details of any allegations or concerns that meet the harm threshold, which 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, and the outcome of those concerns e.g. whether the allegations or concerns were

investigated, the conclusion reached, and how the matter was resolved. **Note** - Where allegations are made and investigated but found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious (including if there is a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious), they should not be included in the reference.

- 13.4 The Trust will ask the referee whether that teacher has been subject, in the last two years, to their employer's capability procedure. The Trust will also respond to any reference requests asking for this information.
- 13.5 If the applicant is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues.
- 13.6 Where possible references for all shortlisted candidates, including internal ones, will be sought prior to interview, so that any issues of concern they raise can be taken up with the candidate at interview. Where it is not possible to request and/or receive references prior to interview, satisfactory references must be received prior to appointment.
- 13.7 On receipt, references will be scrutinised to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or insufficient, the referee will be contacted and asked to provide written answers or clarify.
- 13.8 All requests for references will seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion. The Trust will use a template reference request form to help achieve that.
- 13.9 If the reference includes information regarding disciplinary investigations and the referee is not the headteacher of the relevant school or academy, then the Trust will ensure that the headteacher (or acting headteacher) has confirmed it as accurate.
- 13.10 Electronically received references will be checked to ensure they originate from a legitimate source.
- 13.11 In all residential and boarding settings, references will always be confirmed by telephone.
- 13.12 References received for the successful candidate(s) will be kept for the duration the employee is employed by the Trust. These will be kept on the employee's personal file. Information on personal files will, if the employee has worked in a role where they have access to children (which applies to all school staff) currently be kept indefinitely. References for unsuccessful candidates will be kept for 6 months.

14. Involving pupils and students

- 14.1 Involving pupils in the recruitment and selection process in some way, or observing shortlisted candidates' interaction with pupils, is recognised as good practice in schools. Candidates for teaching posts may, for example, be asked to teach a lesson; pupils and a member of staff could show candidates round the school. Where the Trust includes this in a recruitment process care will be taken to ensure

judgements are as objective as possible, by ensuring evidence from these processes is gathered by an appropriately qualified individual against pre-set criteria.

15. Constitution of interview panels

- 15.1 The membership of an interview panel will depend on decisions taken by the Trust regarding delegation of authority and the type of post:
- Appointing a Headteacher/Head of School or Deputy Headteacher – the Trust will appoint a selection panel consisting of at least three of its members, excluding the Headteacher.
 - Appointing teachers other than Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers and support staff – the Trust delegates the appointment of teachers and support staff to the Headteacher and one or more governors.
- 15.2 As far as possible, interview panels will always have a minimum of two interviewers, and in some cases, a larger panel might be appropriate. A panel of three interviewers may be chosen to facilitate a fair vote. A panel will, where possible, include both genders for equal opportunities purposes, even if shortlisted candidates are of the same gender.
- 15.3 The members of the panel will:
- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointment;
 - be appropriately trained (one member of interview panels will have undertaken safer recruitment training);
 - meet before the interviews to prepare. See para 16.3 for further information.

The interview panel will need to meet before the interviews start to agree a set of questions and how the interview will be carried out. For example, who will take notes, who will ask the questions, how the candidates will be assessed, what standard is required for appointment.

- 15.4 In addition to those individuals who have been given delegated authority by the Trust, other members of the Trust may be involved in the process and be allowed to input into discussions. Only those with delegated authority, however, will make decisions (or recommendations to the Board of Trustees) about who should be appointed.

16. Interviewing

- 16.1 The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements and explore their suitability. The selection process for people who will work with children will always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate. Interviews will be well structured to be of value. They will be structured to focus on the key areas of the job description and person specification. They test knowledge and understanding, as well as oral communication skills.
- 16.2 Other assessment techniques will also be considered as these further assess suitability for the role, e.g. role plays, presentations, occupational tests, written exercises, practical tasks. More than one method of assessment may be used when assessing a candidate's suitability for the role.

- 16.3 Preparation for successful interviewing involves:
- taking note of the application form and candidate's previous experience;
 - being clear about the focus of the interview, the criteria being assessed against the person specification and the standard required;
 - deciding in advance on questions appropriate to the focus of the interview (ensuring that all questions are related to the criteria and non-discriminatory).
 - In relation to interview questions:
 - Agree on the questions, who is going to ask each one and who will take notes
 - Ensure that hypothetical questions are avoided.
 - Ensure that all questions seek positive examples and evidence.
 - Considering the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask these
 - having a Chair for the interview and a logical ordering of the questions;
 - sharing the questioning out between the panel members;
 - being clear about timings and sticking to the programme; and .
 - having an agreed way of recording the applicant's responses and scoring/ weighting the applicant.
- 16.4 In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also explore:
- the candidate's attitude toward children and young people;
 - their ability to support the Trust's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - gaps in the candidate's employment history; and
 - concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.
- 16.5 Safer recruitment questions will be included at the interview. These questions will explore the applicant's attitudes and motives for working with children. This will help to demonstrate the applicant's suitability and approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- 16.6 The panel will also ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in the light of the requirement for an enhanced DBS check with barred list check (child) or if references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate will also be asked if there is anything they wish to declare or discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to their referees.
- 16.7 The panel will ask interviewees whether they have been subject, in the last two years, to their Trust's capability procedure.
- 16.8 To comply with the Code of practice on 'English language requirements for public sector workers', interviewers interviewing for roles in scope of the code will assess all candidates, fairly and transparently, to ensure they will meet the required standard. This may be done using a formal test or through conversation during the interview process.
- 16.9 The Trust will offer to reimburse candidate's interview expenses.

- 16.10 It is the responsibility of the lead recruiter to check that the candidate is who they say they are, are entitled to work in the UK and that they hold the essential qualifications as listed on the person specification. The invite to interview letter requests that documents to prove these checks are brought to interview. ID documents for the DBS check also need to be brought to interview.
- 16.11 The interview panel will have copies of candidate's ID and certificates and sign them to say they have seen the originals. The initial part of the DBS check will be undertaken online at interview. The successful candidate will then complete their part of the online check once they have accepted the offer. Proof of the checks will also be placed on the successful candidate's personal file held by the Trust. Unsuccessful candidate's information will be confidentially destroyed as soon as possible (interview notes and recruitment records will be retained for 6 months from the date of interview), including deleting their DBS information entered online.
- 16.12 Individuals can join the DBS Update Service at the point an application for a new DBS check is made, enabling status checks to be carried out to confirm that no new information has been added to the certificate since its issue. This allows for portability of a certificate across employers. Before using the Update Service, the Trust will:
- obtain consent from the applicant to do so;
 - confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity; and
 - examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information.

Individuals are able to see a full list of organisations that have carried out a status check on their account

17. After the interview

- 17.1 An accurate written record of the decision making process will be kept, with any decisions made based on evidence rather than intuition.
- 17.2 Recording the Panel's view of each of the candidates in this way has four main purposes:
- ensures rigorous application of the identified selection criteria to the Trust's decision;
 - protects the Trust against any future complaints or allegations of discrimination, provided that the panel has acted in a fair and objective manner;
 - provides agreed, prepared information to the unsuccessful candidates; and
 - provides detailed information, which can be used to evaluate the selection decision.
- 17.3 The Interview record form for the successful candidate will be retained with the appointment papers in accordance with the Trust's data protection policy. Paperwork for unsuccessful candidates will be retained for a period of six months in case individuals wish to receive feedback and/or make an unfair discrimination claim.

18. Conditional offer of appointment

- 18.1 The Trust will send out an offer letter to the successful candidate(s). This will include confirmation of salary and any forms the individual still needs to complete and return, prior to them commencing employment.
- 18.2 The Trust will notify EducationHR of the new starter to ensure they are set up to be paid and receive a written statement of particulars. Offer letter templates are available on InfoSpace.
- 18.3 The *Pre-employment health screening questionnaire F624a* on InfoSpace, will be completed and reviewed by the Lead Recruiter. Where the Trust requires **[EducationHR]** to undertake a pre-employment medical referral on their behalf, this form will be sent to HR, along with *F108b/F108c* as soon as possible to ensure the individual is able to carry out their work responsibilities **before** they start work. Further information regarding health questionnaires can be [read in the Pre-employment health questions: guidance for employers on Section 60 of the Equality Act 2010 on equalityhumanrights.com](#).
- 18.4 An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:
- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references*;
 - verification of the candidate's identity* - the Lead recruiter can choose to request to see a birth certificate as a form of ID when recruiting. This will help to verify a candidate's identity as it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be. This includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name and potentially not declaring it;
 - receipt of an enhanced DBS check with barred list check (child) or an enhanced DBS check (whichever is appropriate to the appointee/role)* The Trust will view the DBS certificate in person;
 - verification that the candidate has the mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities including whether any reasonable adjustments are required to provide effective and efficient teaching/performance – NB the Equality Act 2010 makes it generally unlawful to ask questions about disability and health **before** a job offer is made.
 - verification of qualifications*;
 - verification of professional status where required (including Instructors and Overseas Trained Teachers from 1st September 2009), e.g. QTS status (unless properly exempted), QTLS status. The Teacher Services System can be used to undertake this status check*.
 - verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK*; (This now includes individuals coming from EU countries).
 - (for teaching posts) verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999). The Teacher Regulation Agency can be used for this;
 - (for non-teaching posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period (see guidance on probation);
 - where the appointee has lived outside the UK, additional further checks as are required*. Please see paragraph 19 for further information.
 - The Trust will not obtain an enhanced DBS certificate or carry out checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, during a period which ended

not more than three months before the person's appointment, the applicant has worked:

- in a school in England, in a post:
 - which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons; or
 - to which the person was appointed on or after 12th May 2006 and which did not bring the person regularly into contact with children or young persons; or
 - in an institution within the further education sector in England, or in a 16-19 Academy, in a post which involved the provision of education which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons.

All other pre-appointment checks will still be completed, including where the individual is engaging in regulated activity, a barred list check. The Trust may also choose to request an enhanced DBS certificate.

- Prohibition order check (teachers)¹. This check is a statutory requirement for individuals undertaking unsupervised or undirected teaching work e.g. teachers. The check can be undertaken using the Teacher Regulation Agency*.
- Prohibition order check (support staff): it is not a statutory requirement, but the Trust will undertake this check on all new appointments where they may be involved in teaching work e.g. HLTA's, cover supervisors or where someone applying for a TA role indicates that they have QTS or have previously worked as a teacher. This is to prevent a person from working in a role that would contravene any Prohibition order in place
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 check where relevant. These checks are required of certain staff in the Trust*. See *Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations requirements guidance G112b* for further information.
- Section 128 direction check: A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including Trusts. It also prohibits a person from being a governor if they are subject to a section 128 direction. This check will be undertaken for any successful candidate offered a management position within the Trust and Governors who the Trust proposes will be recruited as a governor. This check can be done via the Teacher Services System. Where the person will be engaged in a regulated activity, a DBS barred list check will also identify any section 128 direction*. The DfE advise that where a DBS barred list check is being undertaken the section 128 check via the Teacher Services System should still be undertaken.

Further resources – *DBS risk assessment for commencing employment before DBS received F112b*

To subscribe to the Teacher Regulation Agency to undertake prohibition order and QTS checks, [visit Teacher status checks: information for employers on gov.uk](#).

¹ Secretary of state Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher. These checks will also identify any existing prohibitions and sanctions made by the General Teaching Council (GTCE) and NCTL before their abolition. The Teacher Regulation Agency now undertakes the prohibition work.

For a clear definition of what management roles are affected by the requirement of a section 128 direction check can be found in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document. [Read Keeping Children Safe in Education on gov.uk.](#)

18.5 The [HMRC new starter checklist](#) may also need to be included in the job offer information sent to the new employee. This is only if the new employee is unable to produce their P45. If there is no P45, timely completion of the HMRC new starter checklist will prevent the employee from being emergency taxed.

18.6 With the exception of an enhanced DBS check with barred list check (child), those mandatory checks above marked * will be completed **before** a person's appointment.

18.7 All checks will be confirmed in writing and retained on the personnel file (subject to the Trust's own data protection arrangements and the arrangements in place for the correct handling, use, storage). Any unsatisfactory checks, or discrepancies in the information provided, will be followed up. No DBS disclosures will be copied or held on file.

19. Overseas applicants or applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK (including EU and EEA member states):

19.1 The Trust will ensure that prescribed checks laid out in para 18.4 are undertaken, including additional checks as appropriate, in respect of staff members who have lived outside the United Kingdom.

19.2 The Teaching Regulation Agency no longer maintains a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states. Therefore, the Trust will make any further appropriate checks so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. These checks could include, where available:

- criminal records checks for overseas applicants (further information can be found [here](#) on the government website)
- obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked. This is usually the Department/Ministry of Education but varies across. Advice about which regulatory or professional body applicants should contact is available from the [UK ENIC](#) and for EU/EEA and Switzerland via the [Regulated Professions database](#). Applicants can also contact the [UK Centre for Professional Qualifications](#) who can signpost them to the appropriate EEA body.

[DfE guidance on employing teachers from outside of the UK can be found here on gov.uk.](#)

A list of documents acceptable as proof of entitlement to work in the UK and guidance notes are included in *Right to work in the UK – evidence of entitlement form F108a*.

20. Criminal convictions and suitability to work with children

20.1 The Trust will take steps to ensure that candidates are adequately assessed for their suitability to work with children, which includes ensuring that any relevant criminal convictions are identified and taken into consideration where necessary. In assessment of these risks, shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete the *Disclosure of Criminal Convictions and Suitability to Work with Children Form F112f*. Candidates will not be asked to complete this form prior to shortlisting. Where this form is completed electronically applicants will be asked to sign a hard copy at interview.

20.2 It is expected that DBS clearance, where it is required, will be obtained prior to employment commencing. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, the Trust has discretion to allow the person to start work but appropriate arrangements will need to be made to ensure the individual does not have unsupervised access to children until the disclosure is received and deemed satisfactory. In these circumstances, other employment checks listed here will be completed:-

- obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from the person, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies;
- obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess the person's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns;
- face to face interview that explores the person's suitability to work with children as well as his/her suitability for the post;
- verifying the person's identity;
- verifying that the person has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
- checking their previous employment history and experience;
- verifying that they have the mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- a check against the DBS children's barred list. This list contains details of those who are banned or restricted from working in an education setting.
- check of their eligibility to work in the UK;
- prohibition order check;
- section 128 direction check (Academies and Free schools management positions and school governor positions only).

The person will not be deployed to work directly with children or in a situation where they can have unsupervised access to children. In other words, all possible action has been taken to ensure that no risk to children could arise. In these situations, a full risk assessment will be undertaken.

20.3 Appropriate supervision for individuals who start work prior to the result of a DBS Disclosure needs to reflect what is known about the person concerned, the nature of their duties and the level of responsibility they will carry. For all employees without completed DBS Disclosures it will be made clear that they are subject to this additional supervision, and that the arrangements for this are to be reviewed regularly, at least every two weeks until the DBS Disclosure is received.

20.4 The Single Central Record (SCR)

As required the Trust will maintain records of the recruitment checks they make in a Single Central Record (SCR).

Note – The link below to guidance and a template for completing the SCR has been provided to help meet statutory requirements and should be used in conjunction with the statutory guidance on the requirements of the SCR as outlined in Part 3 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* statutory guidance.

Strategy consideration: It is strongly recommended that Trusts access the additional advice and information regarding safer recruitment checks and the SCR which can be found via InfoSpace and on the Ofsted website.

[View the Single Central Record template on schools.norfolk.gov.uk.](https://schools.norfolk.gov.uk)

21. Feedback

21.1 Unsuccessful candidates will be informed of the result as soon as possible. However, it may be appropriate to delay this for certain candidate(s) until the successful candidate has definitely accepted the post in case the second (or third) choice needs to be considered should the first choice candidate decline the offer of employment.

Further resources – *Interview – Unsuccessful candidate template letter L108d.*

21.2 Unsuccessful candidates will be offered feedback. It is good management practice for all panel members to discuss and agree the feedback to be given to unsuccessful candidates.

21.3 Feedback will be constructive, focusing on strengths and areas for development in relation to the agreed selection criteria for the post.

21.4 Where feedback is being given face-to-face, arrangements will be made to ensure privacy, freedom from interruption and sufficient time. Timescales for the process may result in feedback being given over the telephone. The quality of feedback and the time taken in such circumstances will be no less than would be given through a face-to-face feedback.

22. Other types of workers

Supply staff and agency supply teachers

22.1 It is important that the same thorough checks are made on anybody who will be working in the Trust on a supply basis. Supply teachers who have not been subject to the appropriate checks will not be employed to work with children.

All supply teachers who are available on the Norfolk Supply Register have been subject to robust pre-employment checks and evidence has been produced. Where you book teachers with the Norfolk Supply Register, we will confirm in your confirmation of booking email that all checks have been undertaken.

- 22.2 Before taking on agency supply staff, the Trust will require the agency to provide a direct written confirmation certifying that all the checks required by the Trust for its own employees have been satisfactorily completed by the agency. Please use the Agency Booking form.
- 22.3 The written confirmation will state that relevant DBS checks have been requested for that individual, whether or not the checks have been received, and if received, whether it included any disclosed information. Where there is disclosed information, the Trust, will obtain a copy of this from the agency. It must also state, where relevant, that a satisfactory childcare (disqualification) regulations declaration has been provided.
- 22.4 If a DBS disclosure is pending, this fact will also be notified to the Trust with details of when the disclosure was sought.
- 22.5 The Trust will record whether they received confirmation of relevant checks from the supply agency on the Single Central Record.

Students (Work experience)

- 22.6 Where individuals undertake work experience placements with the Trust, those aged 16 and over may require a DBS check. Where individuals undertake work experience placements with the school, those aged 16 and over may require a DBS check dependent upon whether they will be left unsupervised with the children at any point as well as the length of their placement. If the length of their placement is short e.g. one week and they are not to be left with the children unsupervised, a risk assessment may suffice as opposed to a DBS check. However, identification checks are required for all volunteers. The Childcare Regulations (including disqualification from childcare) apply to all volunteers providing early years or later years childcare.

Please see the *Disclosure Barring Checks Policy and Procedure P112 for further information*. Identification checks are required for all volunteers. The Childcare Regulations (including disqualification from childcare) apply to all volunteers providing early years or later years childcare.

Contractors and agency staff

- 22.7 Where the Trust uses contractors and/or agency staff, it will ensure that any necessary pre-employment checks, such as DBS checks, have been completed. Where the checks have been undertaken by an agency, the Trust will ensure that they have had sight of the completed pre-employment checks and that they have been recorded on the Single Central Record.
- 22.8 Where the Trust uses contractors and agency staff, it will ensure that the terms of the contract require them to adopt and implement measures in accordance with both Safer Recruitment Consortium and DfE guidance. The Trust will monitor agencies and contractors' compliance with this requirement.

Volunteers

- 22.9 For some types of voluntary work, the recruitment process can be very informal. However, because the volunteer roles, in most cases, have some degree of responsibility (e.g. working with pupils), selection processes need to be robust to ensure only the right volunteers are recruited. Therefore, a similar process to paid staff will be followed when securing volunteers. The recruitment process and checks may need to be adapted dependent upon the particular role, but the principal safeguards and features of the recruitment and selection process will be the same. Please see *Recruiting and managing volunteers G120* for guidance on the specific types of checks.

Barred list checks cannot be undertaken for volunteers except in very specific circumstances (such as unsupervised volunteers). Risk assessments and professional judgement will be used when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (free of charge) for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity.

Existing volunteers will not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which will include children's barred list information if engaging in regulated activity). However, if there are concerns a new DBS check will be considered.

Where volunteers are recruited from another organisation, assurance will be obtained from the organisation that the person has been subject to a proper recruitment process that includes the necessary safeguards.

23. Induction of new employees

- 23.1 The final stage of the recruitment process is effective induction. It is essential in ensuring the new employee is properly equipped to work well and feels part of the Trust to induct them into the organisation. The degree of induction will vary dependant on the type of role the person will undertake, whether the employment is short or long term and other factors. Whatever the induction does cover, no new member of staff will begin without clarity about child safeguarding arrangements, emergency procedures (fire alarm, etc), knowing who they report to, and the location of toilets, staff room, drink/food facilities and so on.

All new employees will follow the Trust's induction process.

24. Employee Files

- 24.1 The Trust will establish and maintain employee files for all Trust staff. These will contain copies of all documents relating to the employee throughout the recruitment process and a copy of the statement of particulars, issued by the HR provider on the Trust's behalf, confirming the terms and conditions of the appointment.

25. Probation

Non-teaching staff will be subject to a probationary period. Those subject to a probationary period will be made aware of this and any concerns are raised with the individual as and when they arise with appropriate support being made available.

Further resources – *Probation model policy*. If significant concerns arise during the probationary period, contact HR for support.

26. Data Protection

The Trust processes any personal data collected during the recruitment and selection process in accordance with its data protection policy. Any data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of operating recruitment and selection. Inappropriate access or disclosure of personal data constitutes a data breach and will be reported in accordance with the Trust's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Trust's disciplinary procedure (See *Discipline model procedure for schools P303* on InfoSpace). Records will not be kept for longer than necessary in compliance with data protection law.