



Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

Reviewed by: Trustees

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1. Terms of Reference

1.1 This procedure applies to all recruitment at West Norfolk Academies Trust.

1.2 Definitions:

- “Executive Headteacher” also refers to any other title used to identify the Executive Headteacher, where appropriate, or other Senior Manager delegated to deal with the matter by the Executive Headteacher.
- “Line Manager” refers to the person delegated to manage the probation period. This may be a Senior Manager other than the direct Line Manager.
- “West Norfolk Academies Trust” may also be referred to as “WNAT” or “the Trust”.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Trustees are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all employees and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

2.2 The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, Keeping Children Safe in Education (available via www.gov.uk) and the school’s Equality and Diversity Policy and Objectives.

2.3 The Trustees will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction. In the very exceptional cases where the Trust is required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement, advice must be sought from the Trust HR team and permission granted by the Executive Headteacher.

2.4 The Trustees will comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education with regard to DBS and other pre-employment checks.

2.5 The Trustees will ensure compliance with the Data Protection regulations and the more stringent requirements contained within the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The GDPR encompasses the core principles of the Data Protection Act and provides more onerous responsibility and accountability for fair and transparent processing. Our general Privacy Statement can be found on the West Norfolk Academies Trust website. Within this, under the section entitled ‘If You Become A Staff Member Or Service Provider At WNAT’ is our Recruitment Privacy Statement which provides specific details in accordance with the GDPR principles.

3. Delegation of Appointments and Constitution of Appointments Panels

- 3.1** 3.1. The power to offer employment for all posts below Headteacher level is delegated by the Trustees to the respective school Headteacher. The Headteacher may delegate the power to offer employment to any other senior leader.
- 3.2** The Headteacher is expected to involve at least one Trustee in the appointment of senior leadership posts.
- 3.3** Shortlisting panels will comprise a minimum of two people (normally three). In accordance with the statutory requirement, every shortlisting panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. It is recommended that those who shortlist carry out the interview for a consistent approach).

4. Advertising

- 4.1** All permanent vacant posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates, or employees are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before, or instead of, an external advertisement. In these circumstances, the shortlisting panel may decide that certain parts of the recruitment process may be omitted but all candidates will be subject to a formal interview, the satisfactory reference requirements and any other necessary checks.
- 4.2** The advert will include the level of DBS check required depending on the role being recruited for and whether the role will involve regulated activity.
- 4.3** The advert will specify 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 certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers. If they are disclosed, they will not be taken into account.
- 4.4** All adverts state the requirement for a certificate of good conduct where applicable, in addition, for teaching posts, a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked.
- 4.5** Within the advert the applicant will be provided with the school's policy and practice in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

4.6 In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school will consider carrying out an online search as part of the due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Where an online check will be carried out, this will be indicated in the advert and/or recruitment pack.

5. Information for Applicants

5.1 All applicants for all vacant posts will be provided with:

- A job description outlining the duties of the post and an indication of where the post fits into the organisational structure of the relevant school.
- A person specification may also be provided. This will also include a statement on behalf of the Trustees of their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- An application form. CVs will not be accepted.

Information will be available on the Trust and School's website to provide the following information to potential applicants:

- A description of the School relevant to the vacant post
- Reference to the School's Equality and Diversity Policy
- Reference to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- DBS and other pre-employment checks required
- Reference to online checks for shortlisted candidates
- A statement that canvassing any employee, or member of the Governing Body, directly or indirectly, is prohibited and will be considered a disqualification
- The closing date for the receipt of applications
- An outline of the terms of employment including salary
- Reference to the School's Recruitment and Selection Policy

6. Short Listing and Reference Requests

- 6.1** The shortlisting panel will use an agreed shortlisting form. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants based on the essential and desirable criteria for the post. The shortlisting panel will agree the candidates to be called for interview.
- 6.2** The shortlisting panel may take up at least two references on each short-listed candidate. If a candidate for a post working with children is not currently working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment working with children, to confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving. Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm:
- The referee's relationship with the candidate.
 - Details of the applicant's current post and salary.
 - Performance history.
 - All formal time-limited capability warnings which have not passed the expiration date.
 - All formal time-limited disciplinary warnings where not relating to safeguarding concerns which have not passed the expiration date.
 - All disciplinary action where the penalty is "time expired" and relate to safeguarding concerns.
 - Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children.
 - Whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children. 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.
- 6.3** References are the "property" of the shortlisting panel and strict confidentiality will be observed. Employer testimonials or 'bearer references' 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 shortlisting panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the candidate. References will be verified and any discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate at interview. Electronic references will be checked to ensure they originate from a legitimate source.
- 6.4** References will be checked against information on the application; any discrepancy/issue of concern noted to take up with applicant at interview. The school will contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- 6.5** On receipt, equality monitoring information must be separated from applications

- 6.6** If the field of applicants is felt to be weak the post may be re-advertised.
- 6.7** Where the school has carried out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of the due diligence, any concerns which arise may be discussed with the applicant at, or prior to the interview stage.
- 6.8** All shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. For example:
- If they have a criminal history
 - whether they are included on the barred list
 - whether they are prohibited from teaching
 - whether they are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school
 - information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted
 - if they are known to the police and children's social care
 - have they been disqualified from providing childcare (Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018)
 - any relevant overseas information
- 6.9** Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate will be asked to physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

7. Interviews

7.1 The format, style and duration of the interviews are matters for the Headteacher to decide in consultation with any Trustees involved in the process but the following will be adhered to:

7.1.1 Briefing:

All candidates will be given relevant information about the relevant school to enable the candidate to make further enquiries about the suitability of the advertised job.

7.1.2 The formal interview:

Before the interviews the selection panel will agree on the interview format including any other assessment methods. 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 2010 will be asked.

The selection process for every post, will include exploration of the candidate's understanding of child safeguarding issues. Questions will include:

- Finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children
- Exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role
- Probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking for the reasons for this

The interview will also explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further probing include:

- Implication that adults and children are equal
- Lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- Inappropriate idealisation of children
- Inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children
- Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

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.

- 7.2** The recruitment documentation will be retained for six months from the date of interview. Applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. After 6 months all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

8. Offer of Employment by the Selection Panel

8.1 The offer of employment by the selection panel and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties' subject to:

- Verification of identify (including Birth Certificate)
- Verification of right to work in the UK
- Proof of relevant qualifications
- Satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure
- A certificate of good conduct (if applicable) which may include EEA sanctions and restrictions
- Barred list check
- Teacher prohibition (if applicable)
- Section 128 check (if applicable)
- Pre-employment medical screening
- Satisfactory references
- Disqualification under the Childcare Disqualification Act 2006, as amended.

The successful candidate will be informed, normally by offer letter, that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks.

8.2 Candidates who are selected and attend an interview will be notified by the relevant recruitment lead if they are unsuccessful.

9. Personnel File and Single Central Record

9.1 Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of their employment with the school and Trust 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 (including Birth certificate)
- Proof of right to work in the UK
- Proof of relevant qualifications

- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable) which may include for teaching positions, a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked
- Evidence of medical clearance from the Occupational Health service
- Evidence of DBS clearance and barred list check
- Teacher prohibition checks (where applicable)
- Evidence of a Section 128 direction (where applicable)
- Offer of employment letter (where applicable) and signed contract of employment
- Disqualification under the Childcare Disqualification Act 2006, as amended (where applicable)

9.2 Retention of personal information for the successful candidate following the end of their employment will be in accordance with the Trust's Privacy Notice (available on the Trust's website), which is compliant with relevant Data Protection Act. When retained documents have reached their data retention limit they will be securely destroyed.

9.3 The relevant school will destroy information obtained by a vetting exercise within six months. A record of the result of the vetting or verification of the successful candidate will be retained on the employees file and the Single Central Record.

9.4 The relevant school will normally collect personal information from applicants only where they have consent to do so, or where they need the personal information to perform a contract with, or involving, an applicant, or where the processing is in the school's legitimate interests and not overridden by the applicant's data protection interests or fundamental rights and freedoms. In some cases, the relevant school may also have a legal obligation to collect personal information from the applicant or may otherwise need the personal information to protect the applicant's vital interests or those of another person. The school will retain a record of consent as evidence that they have obtained consent to collect and process the data and that applicants have been advised of the purpose of the collection and processing.

9.5 Applicants have the right to withdraw consent at any time and can do so by informing the Trust's Data Protection Officer, with the exception of documents that are required for a statutory requirement. Details on how to withdraw consent are published on the Trust's website.

9.6 Where agency staff are employed, the Trust will impose an obligation on the agency to perform all relevant recruitment checks, as set out in 9.1. The Trust will obtain written confirmation from the agency that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory.

9.7 The relevant school will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks for all staff, including agency workers, in accordance with the DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (available via www.gov.uk).

10. Start of Employment and Induction

10.1 The pre-employment checks listed in paragraph 9.1 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.

10.2 All new employees will be provided with an induction programme which will cover all relevant matters of school and Trust policy, but in particular safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, this will include the:

- Child protection policy which will include amongst other things the policy and procedures to deal with peer on peer abuse
- Behaviour policy (which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct)
- safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies)

Copies of all policies and a copy of Part one or Annex A of KCSIE, if appropriate will be provided to all staff at induction