



# **Safer Recruitment Policy**

## **2025/2026**

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## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Enhance Academy Trust has implemented this policy to assist with recruitment and employee selection. It outlines the school's recruitment procedure and how the school ensures safer recruitment is considered at all levels of the recruitment process.

The safety and protection of the school's pupils is always at the forefront of the school's concerns, which is why this policy aims to embed a robust safeguarding culture into the recruitment practices of the school.

## 2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020

This policy has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2024) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2025) 'Basic check ID checking guidelines'
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2024) 'Recruit teachers from overseas'
- DfE (2025) 'Right to work checks: employing EU, EEA and Swiss citizens'
- Disclosure & Barring Service (2018) 'Regulated activity with children in England'
- Home Office (2025) 'Employer's guide to right to work checks'
- Safer Recruitment Consortium (2022) 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Teacher Appraisal Policy
- Teacher Capability Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### 3. DEFINITIONS

Regulated activity includes:

- Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children.
- Working for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work undertaken by supervised volunteers.
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

Regulated activities do not include:

- Paid work in specified places which is occasional and temporary and does not involve teaching or training.
- Supervised activities which are paid in non-specified settings.
- A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children.

**Teaching role** – refers to a role involving planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; and assessing and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils. These activities are not teaching work for the purposes of KCSIE if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the Headteacher to provide such direction and supervision.

**Standard DBS** – this provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer, regardless of whether or not they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

**Enhanced DBS** – this provides the same information as the standard DBS, plus any additional information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed.

**Enhanced DBS with barred list check** – this check is required for when people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children. This check allows for additional checks to be made as to whether the person appears on the children's barred list.

**Children's barred list** – the DBS maintains a 'barred list' of individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. In addition, where an Enhanced DBS including a barred list check is obtained, the certificate will also detail whether the candidate is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 167A of the Education Act 2002.

**Section 128 check** – this provides for the Secretary of State to direct that a person may be prohibited or restricted from participating in the management of an independent school (which includes academies and free schools). A person prohibited under section 128 is also disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school.

**Safer recruitment** – this is the safeguarding and protection of pupils during the recruitment and selection process. Its overall purpose is to help identify and deter or reject individuals who are deemed to be at risk of abusing children.

### 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Trust Board to ensure the Trust has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.

The Trust Board has delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to lead in all appointments. The Local Advisory Board (LAB) or Trust may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the Headteacher following discussion with the CEO.

The Local Academy Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the school following appointment.
- Monitoring the school's Single Central Record (SCR) to ensure that the necessary vetting checks for employees are carried out.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Appointing an Appointing Officer who will be responsible for the entire management of the recruitment process.
- Agreeing an appropriate advert, Job Description and Person Specification
- Deciding membership of the Recruitment Panel.
- Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on prospective staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the school.
- Ensuring that appropriate supervision of employees and volunteers is organised, and for promoting the safety and wellbeing of pupils generally and throughout the recruitment process.
- Ensuring that all relevant staff members are familiarised with this policy.
- Ensuring that all references are handled in line with the Data Protection Policy and relevant legislation.

The Recruitment Panel is responsible for:

- Shortlisting the potential candidates with the aim of reducing the application field and identifying those with the potential to effectively undertake the role.
- Ensuring that the interview addresses leadership ability, team working skills, reasons for interest in joining the school, integrity, understanding of the school's ethos and vision, and why the candidate believes they would be a good fit for the school.
- Ensuring that the interview addresses safeguarding practices.
- Agreeing with the successful candidate when other members of the school community will be informed about their appointment, including staff members and parents.
- Ensuring that references have been received where requested.
- Ensuring that all references for a shortlisted candidate are properly scrutinised and that information is not contradictory, unclear, or incomplete, with clarification requested when appropriate.
- Asking previous employers of new staff members whether the individual has been subject to capability procedures in the previous two years.

Some of these responsibilities may be delegated to the Headteacher or Appointing Officer. The Appointing Officer is responsible for:

- Managing the entire recruitment process.
- Acting as a point of contact between candidates and the school.
- Reviewing candidates' applications.
- Preparing the Recruitment Panel to conduct interviews.
- Organising interviews with shortlisted candidates.
- Ensuring the recruitment process is carried out in line with the relevant school policies.
- Ensuring that the candidate chosen to fill a vacancy is suitable for the role.

During the recruitment process, and especially during the initial stages, the Recruitment Panel and the Headteacher be watchful of candidates displaying the following characteristics:

- No understanding or appreciation of children's needs
- Expressing that they want the role to meet their needs at the expense of children
- Using inappropriate language in relation to children
- Expressing extreme views or views that do not support safeguarding practices
- Displaying unclear boundaries with children

- Providing vague answers when asked about their experience and being unable to explain gaps in their employment

The DSL is responsible for:

- Deciding when it is appropriate or necessary to disclose any safeguarding concerns or allegations as part of a reference.
- Discussing with the Headteacher the suitability of a candidate when a reference has disclosed safeguarding concerns or prior allegations.

## 5. PLANNING, ADVERTISING AND SHORTLISTING

The job information and associated documents will be published online. The full requirements of the role will be clearly explained, including any employment vetting requirements such as a DBS check.

The Recruitment Panel will comprise an Appointing Officer, who is responsible for the management of the entire recruitment process, and at least two other members of staff, with the Headteacher usually being one of these (if not the Appointing Officer). The Recruitment Panel will be an odd number so majority votes can be cast. At least one member of the Recruitment Panel will have successfully completed up-to-date safer recruitment training.

Once a vacancy has been identified, the school will allow an appropriate amount of time for planning and structuring the recruitment process.

The Headteacher will:

- Decide on the recruitment timeframe.
- Decide who will be involved in the process and what their roles will be, e.g. who forms the Recruitment Panel and who will lead interviewing.
- Prepare the documents that will be provided to candidates, including the Job Description and Person Specification
- Ensure that application packs, where relevant, state that candidates must be willing to sign the staff disqualification declaration.

## 6. ADVERTISING

The school will consider the following information when advertising for a role within the school:

- The skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post
- The safeguarding requirements, including to what extent the role will involve contact with children and young people and whether the appointed staff member will be engaging in regulated activity.

Advertisements will include:

- A statement of the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils whilst making clear that safeguarding checks, including online checks for shortlisted candidates, will be undertaken.
- The safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and person specification.
- Information surrounding whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.
- Where applicable, the advert will make clear that shortlisted candidates may be subject to online searches.

All vacancies will be advertised on the Trust's recruitment website and, where appropriate, advertised externally, such as DfE's Teaching Vacancy website, local council job boards, and via social media with due consideration to the school's Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to ensure the opportunity reaches a wide and diverse audience. Advertisements will contain a statement of commitment to ensuring equal rights. Advertisements will include, or link to, a Job Description, Person Specification and detail the closing date. The contact details of the Appointing Officer and details of the application process will be clearly outlined.

In some cases, vacancies may be advertised internally only, allowing existing staff, including those on long term sick, or statutory family leave, the first opportunity to apply. Internal postings may be circulated through various methods, including email and on the recruitment portal, typically for five working days, after which, if no suitable candidate is appointed, the role may be opened up to external applicants. This approach supports staff development, succession planning and promotes career progression within our trust, while still ensuring that any internal appointment meets the same rigorous selection criteria as an external one.

## 7. APPLICATION FORMS

All applicants are required to submit an application form via the Trust Recruitment Portal. They will be informed that knowingly applying for a role while barred from engaging in regulated activity with children is a criminal offence.

The school will also provide a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and information on employment of ex- offenders in the application pack.

Applicants will be required to provide the following:

- Personal details, e.g. their current and former names, current address and national insurance number
- Details of their current or most recent employment, including the reason for leaving
- Full employment history, including explanations for any gaps in their employment
- Qualifications, the awarding body and the date of the award
- Details of references
- A statement of their personal qualities and an explanation of why they meet the person specification to be a suitable candidate for the role
- A self-declaration of their criminal record or disclosure of any information making them unsuitable to work with children

The school will never accept a CV. If an applicant cannot use the portal, they may instead be asked to complete the Trust's official application form. When shortlisting candidates for an interview, all application forms will be considered. Candidates who are shortlisted will meet all the essential aspects of the Person Specification requirements. The school will ensure that the shortlisting process is as systematic as possible, and that the Recruitment Panel reads through all applications. Each member of the panel will document their own shortlist. Those shortlists will then be collated and discussed together, with candidates assessed against the same shortlisting criteria to ensure a fair and consistent process.

## 8. SHORTLISTING

Only those candidates who have been shortlisted will be asked to disclose any relevant information including:

- Whether they are included on the barred list.
- Whether they are barred from teaching.
- Information of any criminal offences committed.
- If they are known to the police and children's social care services.
- Whether they have been disqualified from providing childcare.
- Any relevant overseas information.

Applicants will need to sign a declaration which confirms that the information they have provided is true. Information provided on the declaration form will be discussed with the candidate at their interview which is detailed in section 18.

When shortlisting candidates, the school will:

- Ensure that at least two people carry out the shortlisting proceedings (these two people will ideally also conduct the interview).
- Assess whether there are any inconsistencies or gaps in the candidate's employment and consider the reasons

given for them.

- Undertake online searches, as necessary, and explore any further potential concerns.

Requests for further information from candidates will be replied to promptly. All applications will receive notification via their online portal to confirm if they have been shortlisted or not.

Interviews will be arranged for the shortlisted candidates.

## 9. INVITATION TO INTERVIEW

Once a shortlist has been confirmed, the candidates to be invited for interviews will receive notification via their online portal confirming their interview date and time. The Recruitment Panel will ensure that all shortlisted candidates receive information about the interview arrangements, how they will be conducted, the activities that will be undertaken and what documents they should bring.

## 10. PRE-INTERVIEW CHECKS

The Appointing Officer, or delegated nominee will complete the necessary pre-interview checks. Pre-interview checks will include the following:

- Requesting two references from each shortlisted candidate directly from the referees – where possible, one reference will be obtained relating to the role in which the candidate worked with children.
- Verifying that the candidate has qualifications or experience relevant to the post
- Checking references against application forms and noting down discrepancies or concerns, and following up these concerns with referees
- Checking and, where necessary, following up candidates' self-declaration forms

## 11. REQUESTING REFERENCES

Once a candidate, including an internal candidate, has been shortlisted for a position, references will be requested immediately and scrutinised by the recruitment panel. If a candidate does not consent to references being requested prior to interview, the Appointing Officer (or delegated nominee) will consider their circumstances and may request alternative evidence of suitability in line with our safeguarding obligations. Any concerns will be resolved satisfactorily prior to confirming an appointment. References will always be requested directly from the referee and from a senior person with appropriate authority, rather than a colleague.

References will be requested in written form from the candidate's current employer. If they are unemployed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving will be obtained from their previous employer. Wherever possible, at least one reference will be from employment through which the candidate worked with children.

If the applicant has never worked with children, ensure that a reference from their current employer is received.

If the candidate is a school leaver or has not been in work for over two years, a character reference will be requested. When a candidate is applying for a teaching role (including the role of Headteacher), information about the details of any capability procedures in the previous two years that they may have been subject to, and the reasons for these, will be requested from their current or former employer. Concerns raised following a candidate's reference(s) will be explored further with the referee where appropriate and discussed with the candidate at interview.

Open references, e.g. 'to whom it may concern' testimonials, and unverified information provided by the candidate as part of the application process, will not be accepted. Electronic references will be checked to ensure that they originate from a legitimate source.

The Appointing Officer should follow up any references not received prior to the interview. Interviews should not take place until two references are received. In exceptional circumstances, the Appointing Officer may proceed with interviews before references have been received. When this occurs, the officer must clearly document the rationale



behind the decision, including the reasons for proceeding and the extent to which reference outcomes impacted the final hiring decision. It must be made explicit to candidates that any formal offer is strictly subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

If a member of staff moves from one school in the Trust to another on the agreement of the Chief Executive Officer on secondment, there is no need to seek references. The employee's records containing previous references should be passed on to the new school. If a member of staff independently applies for a permanent role in another school in the Trust without the express knowledge of the Chief Executive Officer, for example for promotion or location, references should be requested as part of the recruitment process and considered.

References should be requested through the trust recruitment portal. If this is not feasible, the approved reference template must be used when requesting references by other means. A template reference form is available from HR.

## 12. CHECKING REFERENCES

References will be checked upon receipt to ensure that all questions have been answered satisfactorily and that information is not contradictory or incomplete. The referee will be contacted to provide further clarification where appropriate, e.g. if some answers are vague or insufficient, or contradictory information has been provided. The reference will be compared for consistency with the information on the candidate's application form. Discrepancies between the reference and the application form will be discussed with the candidate at interview. In cases where references are not available at the time of interview, such checks must occur prior to the issuance of a conditional offer of employment.

The Recruitment Panel will ensure that any past disciplinary action or allegations disclosed as part of a reference are considered carefully when assessing the candidate's suitability for the role. If this involves safeguarding or potential safeguarding concerns, the DSL will be consulted to help assess the candidate's suitability.

Before making a decision not to appoint a candidate based on an unsatisfactory reference, the Recruitment Panel will consider if HR advice is necessary. Once the decision is made, the Headteacher will record this within the recruitment file as the reason for non-appointment. The candidate will be formally notified of the outcome in writing.

All members of staff who provide a reference will be responsible themselves for checking the content to ensure that it only contains factual and verifiable statements. If there is any doubt about whether to include information, caution will be exercised, and it will be omitted. Alternatively, advice will be sought from a senior figure, e.g. the Headteacher or the CEO.

## 13. PROVIDING REFERENCES

References will only be provided once written consent has been obtained from the person requesting a reference. The member of staff providing a reference will follow this policy's procedures and the prospective employer's requests as much as is reasonably possible.

The Headteacher will decide in exceptional circumstances if a reference cannot be provided or if certain questions asked by the prospective employer cannot be answered, with HR advice sought when appropriate.

Staff members will make the Headteacher aware when they have been asked to provide a personal reference, e.g. for a current or former colleague. The staff member will make it clear within the reference that it is a personal one and is not written for or on behalf of the school. The staff member will use their own paper or an email address unaffiliated with the school and ensure that the reference is not linked to the school in any way.

Details of any capability procedures in the previous two years for a teacher (including Headteacher) or former teacher at the school, and the reasons for these, will be provided if requested.

If, as part of a settlement agreement, the school has agreed to provide a reference for a member of staff, the Headteacher will ensure it is provided in line with the agreement and this policy. In circumstances where new evidence emerges that indicates information provided in the reference is incorrect, the Headteacher will decide if the reference is changed or withdrawn, with legal advice sought where necessary, and will notify the employee of any decision first.

The school will ensure that any information provided confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children, and only provide the facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations, including a group of low-level concerns about the same individual, that meet the harm threshold.

Any repeated concerns or allegations which do not meet the harm threshold which have been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated, or malicious will not be included in any reference.

#### **14. CONTENT OF REFERENCES**

Basic information will always be expected in references received and provided, e.g. skills, knowledge, duties undertaken, experience working with children, and personal characteristics, in addition to any information relating to safeguarding. Further relevant comments will be made as much as is reasonably possible in line with the employer's requests, provided they are verifiable and objective, e.g. through appraisals or attendance records.

References must provide only objective, factual and verifiable information and will not include speculation, e.g. about a former employee's suitability for a job, or hearsay. The person providing the reference will ensure all comments have a factual basis and that an impression is not given which is misleadingly positive or negative. Performance issues or concerns which have not been discussed or raised with the employee beforehand will not be mentioned.

All members of staff providing references will be made aware that information provided verbally to the prospective employer is subject to the same duties as written information and will avoid making verbal statements. Where it is necessary or appropriate, verbal information will be provided only in line with this policy's procedures, e.g. all statements must be verifiable and objective.

#### **15. PREVIOUS DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that any references requested by the school include a section asking for any past disciplinary action or allegations to be disclosed. Any disclosures will be carefully considered when assessing the candidate's suitability for the role, in line with this policy.

Information from DBS checks will not be included in references provided by the school. Information regarding criminal offences from other sources will not be included, unless the Headteacher deems it appropriate and HR advice has been sought.

When providing references, the disclosure of information about past disciplinary action or allegations not relating to safeguarding will be provided where it is deemed appropriate, e.g. it is relevant to the staff member or former staff member's suitability for the role. Information relating to disciplinary action will generally only be disclosed if penalties or sanctions remain in place for the employee.

Allegations which were proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, e.g. relating to misconduct, will not be included in a reference – this includes if it is a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious. The member of staff providing the reference will make no comments about their own personal views on the veracity of allegations.

If an allegation exists which has yet to be investigated or an investigation is incomplete, the Headteacher will seek HR advice, and legal advice where necessary, on what information, if any, should be provided to the prospective employer.

## 16. USE OF DATA AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Personal data relating to references will be handled in line with the Data Protection Policy. All references will be properly addressed and marked private and confidential.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the UK GDPR any personal information will be processed fairly and lawfully and will be kept safe and secure e.g. in locked, non-portable containers or, for electronic information, password protected. Access will be strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Information relating to an individual's health and sensitive personal data, e.g. information relating to the individual's ethnicity, religion or trade union membership, will not be disclosed as part of a reference unless 'express consent' has been received from the individual for this purpose.

## 17. ONLINE SEARCHES ON SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES

The school is committed to ensuring that safeguarding is a top priority; therefore, in line with KCSIE, the school will carry out online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of their due diligence. Online searches solely aim to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school may want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Online searches will only examine data that is publicly available. Staff will not 'follow' or submit a friend request to shortlisted candidates on social media platforms to access further details or information.

Online searches will be carried out by an individual who is independent of the recruitment process to minimise the risk of bias or discrimination and to ensure that only relevant information is considered. The person responsible for carrying out online searches will have due regard to Part three of KCSIE.

The online search process may include searching for the candidate by name via search engines and social media, such as:

- Google
- Facebook
- LinkedIn

When carrying out searches of shortlisted candidates' online presence, the school will look out for indicators of concern, such as:

- Inappropriate behaviour, jokes or language.
- Discriminatory comments.
- Inappropriate images.
- Anything that suggests the candidate may not be suitable to work with children.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Anything that could harm the reputation of the school or Trust.

Any concerns will be addressed during the interview process. The school will ensure that candidates are given an opportunity to discuss any concerns raised by the online search.

Further guidance on how to carry out these searches is available from HR, along with a template form for recording the details.

## 18. THE INTERVIEW

During the interview process, candidates will be asked standard questions and their responses will be recorded for ease of comparison. Any concerns raised through contact with referees will be discussed with the candidate at this stage. The Recruitment Panel will ask open questions to assess the candidate's experience and suitability for the post, and to explore

the candidate's motivation towards safeguarding and their suitability to work with children.

The school will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. Interview questions seek to:

- Find 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
- Looking at any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently and asking about the reasons for this
- Seek examples of the candidate's previous experience.
- Interviews will also be used to explore the potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children.

Areas that may raise concerns and lead to further enquiry include:

- Implication that adults and children are equal
- Lack of recognition 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
- Attempts to push or overstep boundaries
- Consistent rule-breaking behaviour.

Shortlisted candidates will receive a self-disclosure form as an attachment to their interview invitation, issued via the recruitment portal. Candidates should bring their completed declaration form with them to the interview in a sealed envelope to be given to the Appointing Officer prior to the candidate entering their interview. The candidate will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns or ask any questions. The process will always comprise a face-to-face interview; however, the Recruitment Panel may also request that candidates' complete activities to demonstrate their skills, abilities and experience.

## 19. AFTER THE INTERVIEW

After the interview has been completed, the Recruitment Panel will:

- Assess all candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria.
- Ask the successful candidate to provide proof of identification and qualifications, and to complete the DBS check as soon as possible.
- Contact and provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates – feedback will be verbal and based on evidence of their performance against the person specification for the role.

The school will securely retain interview notes and assessment materials for an appropriate amount of time after the interviews, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged.

After choosing a successful candidate, the school will:

- Make a conditional offer of employment to the candidate.
- Ask the successful candidate to provide identification and proof of qualifications, if this has not already been done.
- Complete the relevant pre-appointment checks.

Once an offer of employment has been made, the candidate's self-declaration form will be reviewed. If a conviction has been declared, and it is spent or filtered, the offer of employment will not be retracted based on this; however, the school will undertake the relevant assessments to determine whether the candidate is suitable to work in the school. A risk assessment form to record the assessment is available from HR.

## 20. REMOTE RECRUITMENT

Remote recruitment will only be used in exceptional circumstances with prior approval from the Chief Executive Officer.

The school will follow all the requirements set out in this policy when recruiting remotely, changing only the in-person nature of the interview, and implementing the necessary additional steps to support this. The trust supports the use of Teams as a suitable online platform through which online interviews may take place. When considering alternative online platforms, the appointing office should take into account ease of use, privacy measures and suitability for the purposes of online interviews. Online interviews will be conducted in line with the school's Data Protection Policy at all times.

Staff members conducting an online interview will ensure they understand how to operate the various relevant functionalities of the online interview platform, e.g. how to share their screen, prior to the interview commencing. Staff members conducting an online interview will ensure privacy settings are adjusted appropriately on the provider's site or application.

The school will be aware of, and have due regard for, the potential risks associated with online communication, e.g. ease of anonymity, and will ensure it takes suitable precautions, e.g. encrypting data where possible. The school will ensure that any tasks set for candidates during the interview are compatible with the online nature of the interview, e.g. they do not require the exchange of physical paper resources.

The school will communicate its expectations to candidates regarding the use of the online platform in good time prior to the interview. These expectations will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- The candidate will participate in the interview with both the video camera and microphone features enabled at all required times
- The candidate will participate in the interview in a suitable setting – a quiet area with a neutral background
- The candidate will keep personal information, which is not relevant to the recruitment process private, e.g. their email password, and will not ask the staff members conducting the interview to share any such private information
- Where necessary, the candidate will be aware that the school will record the online interview, and that they will be required to consent to this in order for the interview process to continue

When recording an online interview, prior permission will be acquired from the candidate in writing via email and all members of the interview will be notified before the interview commences via email, and again once they have joined the interview before recording commences. If the candidate does not provide consent to recording the interview, the school will consider whether the online interview can still take place in line with school's safeguarding and records management responsibilities.

The school will not discriminate against candidates who are recruited remotely; they will be considered fairly alongside any candidates who are not recruited remotely.

If a candidate refuses to interview remotely, the school will consider whether alternative arrangements for an in-person interview are possible, having due regard to the school's equality duties at all times. If this is not possible, then the school will sensitively inform the candidate that the remote interview process is a requirement of the application process, and have a considerate and good-natured discussion with the candidate as to whether they can continue with the recruitment process at this time. The school will direct candidates towards the DfE's advice on 'Attending your first remote interview' prior to the interview.

## 21. PRE-APPOINTMENT CHECKS

All appointments will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-appointment checks. These checks seek to identify whether there is anything that would make the candidate an unsuitable appointment for working with children or as a teacher.

When appointing new staff, the school will:

- Verify the candidate's identity e.g. checking the name and birth date on a birth certificate and verifying any name changes.
- Where it has been deemed necessary, obtain an Enhanced DBS check, with children's barred list information if the candidate will be engaging in regulated activity.
- Prohibition from teaching check for all teachers, HLTAs or Cover Supervisors.
- Verify a candidate's ability to carry out their role.
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK.
- Make further checks on any individual who has lived or worked outside the UK.

Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.

- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals employed to work in Nursery or Reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations.
- For those in management roles (Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher), trustee or governor roles, conduct a section 128 check.

A staff member may only commence employment before the receipt of an Enhanced DBS certificate if the school has obtained a separate barred list check; and if the individual has worked in a school where they were in regular contact with children and young people in the three months prior to the new staff member's appointment to the school.

If a staff member moves from one Trust school to another Trust school on the agreement of the Chief Executive Officer on secondment, a separate barred list check should be undertaken. If a staff member moves from one Trust school to another on a permanent basis following a successful advertisement and recruitment process, all relevant pre-appointment checks, including an Enhanced DBS check, should be completed before the staff member commences employment.

The Recruitment Panel will ensure any candidate employed to carry out teaching work will be checked against the Teaching Regulations Agency's prohibition and sanctions lists to confirm they are not subject to a prohibition order, or any sanction or restrictions that would bar them from teaching. The outcome of these checks should be recorded on the Single Central Record.

The Recruitment Panel will assess all cases fairly and on an individual basis. Where a decision has been made not to appoint somebody because of their conviction(s), it will be clearly documented to enable the school a chance to defend its decision if challenged.

The school will consider the following when assessing any disclosure information on a DBS certificate:

- The seriousness and relevance to the post which they have applied to
- How long ago the offence occurred
- The country where the offence occurred
- Whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents
- The circumstances around and at the time of the incident
- Whether the individual accepted responsibility for what happened
- Whether the offence has been decriminalised

If the school has reason to believe that an individual is barred, it is an offence under section 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 for the school to allow the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

Checks for all prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions will be carried out by using the secure access portal on the Teacher Services' web page



## 22. VOLUNTEERS

The Trust has a Volunteer Policy and Procedure which should be followed when allowing individuals to volunteer for the school.

The school will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.
- Obtain an Enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an Enhanced DBS check without a barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. The school must retain a record of this risk assessment.

For schools with pupils under the age of 8, in addition to the above they will also:

- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where the school decides that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such check, they will retain a record of the assessment. This should include the evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sort.

## 23. CANDIDATES WHO HAVE LIVED OUTSIDE THE UK

For candidates who have lived outside the UK, all mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary. This includes the safer recruitment checks outlined in the KCSIE statutory guidance.

For candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK, the school will make further checks where necessary, including, but not limited to:

- Obtaining an Enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information, including for candidates who have not been to the UK before.
- For teaching staff, obtaining proof of their past conduct as a teacher from the professional regulating authority in the country in which they worked, where available.
- Obtaining evidence that candidates have the right to work in the UK through the government's online portal, using a share code, or the candidate's date of birth.
- Obtaining proof of candidates' immigration status in the UK.

You can request a risk assessment form from HR to record your checks and assessment.

If a candidate is unable to provide the correct documentation, they cannot submit a DBS check. This is because the right to work in the UK cannot be established.

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

## 24. AGENCY AND THIRD PARTY STAFF

In the case of any employee working at the school who is sourced from an agency or third-party organisation, the school will obtain written notification from that provider that they have carried out all the same pre-employment checks the school would carry out for anyone working on its behalf—including those delivering education online. Confirmation will also be obtained in the form of a photographic identity document, that the individual who presents for work is the same person on whom all checks have been completed. A copy of photographic identification will generally be kept on file where appropriate and for no longer than 6 months.

## 25. TRAINEE/STUDENT TEACHERS

Where candidates for initial teacher training are salaried by us, the school will carry out all necessary checks including an Enhanced DBS certificates and children's barred list checks for those who are in regulated activity. This is also the position for Enhance SCITT trainees.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks. The school will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that the necessary checks have been carried out and the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

## 26. EXISTING STAFF

If a member of staff moves from a post that was not regulated activity to one that is, the relevant checks will be carried out.

There is no requirement for checks to be completed if a member of staff moves into a similar role within the same school. Likewise, there is no requirement for checks to be completed for staff moving to a similar role in another school within the trust, unless a significant amount of time has passed since the previous checks were made or new information emerges that warrants a further check.

The expectation is that staff DBS checks will be renewed every five years as a minimum.

### CAPA COLLEGE ONLY

If a member of staff moves from one role that did not involve the provision of education to one that does, the college will treat it as if the individual were a new member of staff and all required pre-appointment checks will be carried out.

The Recruitment Panel will carry out further checks where there is a concern about a member of staff's suitability to work with children. An investigation will be carried out to gather enough evidence to establish if an allegation has a foundation. The employer of the school will ensure they have sufficient information to meet the referral duty criteria as outlined in this policy.

The school will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- The harm test is satisfied in respect of that harm.
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence.
- The individual is deployed to another area of work not in regulated activity, or where they have been suspended.

Referrals to the DBS will be made on conclusion of an investigation where an individual has been removed from regulated activity. Referrals to the DBS will be made as soon as possible after the resignation, removal or redeployment of the staff member.

## 27. CONTRACTORS

The school will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an Enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information).
- Contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an Enhanced DBS check (not including barred list information) will be required.
- Under no circumstances will a contractor in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.



The school will set out its safeguarding requirements in the contract between the contractor's organisation and the school.

If a contractor is self-employed, the school will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account. The cost of the check, plus administration cost may be passed on to the contractor. The school will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, the school will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where the school decides that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and such checks are not carried out, the school will retain a record of their assessment. This will include their evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

## 28. GOVERNORS

The Local Academy Board will request an Enhanced DBS certificate without a barred list check on an individual as part of the appointment and reappointment process for governors. An Enhanced DBS certificate (which will include a barred list check) will only be requested if the governor will be engaging in regulated activity; this also applies to volunteer governors.

All members of the Local Academy Board, Trustees and members will be subject to a Section 128 check if they have retrained or been delegated any management responsibilities.

Newly appointed Chairs of Trustees will be subject to a suitability check, which includes:

- An identity check.
- Confirmation of the right to work in the UK.
- An Enhanced DBS check.
- Where required, additional information if the individual has lived outside the UK for a period of 12 months or longer.
- Section 128 check

## 29. RIGHT TO WORK CHECKS

Before formally offering a job, the school will verify each candidate's right to work in the UK by either conducting a manual document-based check, digitally or by using the government's online portal. This will be done before a candidate is offered a position.

For British and Irish citizens, you can check their British or Irish passport. These can be expired, but can't be 'clipped'

If they don't have a passport or passport card, they can give you:

- A UK birth or adoption certificate
- An Irish birth or adoption certificate
- A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen

They must also give you an official letter or document from a previous employer or a government agency (e.g. HMRC). Further guidance on proving your right to work can be obtained from HR.

You may also use an identity service provider to verify the identity of British and Irish citizens who have a valid passport

EU, EEA, or Swiss citizens need to provide evidence of lawful immigration status in the UK. The majority of EEA citizens now prove their right to work using the Home Office online service. There is no requirement for a retrospective check to be undertaken on EEA citizens who entered into employment before 1 July 2021.

When conducting a manual, document-based check, the school will ensure that the documents received from candidates are acceptable in line with government guidance, and from the appropriate list: List A for candidates with a permanent right to work in the UK, or List B for candidates with a temporary right to work in the UK. Checks on documents will be conducted in line with section 20 of this policy.

The school will obtain proof of candidates' immigration status in the UK.

The school will contact the Home Office in the event that a statutory excuse must be established in the following circumstances:

- The candidate provides a document confirming receipt of an application to EUSS on or before 30 June 2021
- The candidate provides a non-digital certificate of application confirming receipt of an application to the EUSS on or after 1 July 2021
- The school has checked a digital certificate of application and has been directed to the Home Office's Employer Checking Service
- The candidate provides an Application Registration Card stating the holder is permitted to undertake the work in question
- The school is satisfied it has not been provided with any acceptable documents because the candidate has an outstanding application with the Home Office made before their previous permission expired, or has an appeal or review pending against the Home Office's decision and cannot provide evidence of their right to work as a result
- The school considers that it has not been provided with any acceptable documents, but the person presents other information indicating they are a long-term resident of the UK, i.e. having arrived before 1988.

The school will not make assumptions about a person's right to work in the UK, or their immigration status, on the basis of their race, ethnicity, nationality, length of residence in the UK or background. All candidates, including British and Irish citizens, will have their right to work in the UK checked.

Where a candidate's right to work is time-limited, the school will conduct a follow-up check in advance of its expiry. The school may use a certified digital identity service provider (IDSP) to conduct right to work checks on candidates.

Comprehensive guidance on conducting right-to-work checks is available in the Home Office Employers guide to right to work checks. Click [here](#) to view.

### 30. IDENTIFICATION CHECKING PROCESS

When checking the validity of identifying documents, the school will ensure that this is done in the presence of the holder, e.g. in person or via a live video link. In both cases, the school will be in physical possession of the original documents. The school will only accept valid, current and original documentation in its physical form. The school will not accept photocopies or documentation printed from the internet e.g. internet bank statements.

The school will request documents with photographic identity, such as a passport, and compare this against the candidate's likeness. The school will not accept documents that are not in the candidate's current name as recorded on the application form.

The school will ensure that the candidate declares all previous name changes and provides documentary evidence to support the name change. If the candidate is unable to provide evidence to support the name change, the school will hold a discussion with the candidate about the reasons why, before validating their identity.

The school will compare the candidate's address history with any other information the candidate has provided. The school will ensure that all letters and statements provided by the candidate are recent e.g. within a three-month period.

When taking a copy of any document for pre-employment checks, the person who views the original must annotate the copy immediately with the following details:

Original seen and verified by (enter name):

Date:

Signature:

Each copied document must bear this completed statement to confirm that the copy is a true and accurate copy of the original.

### 31. AFTER THE PRE-APPOINTMENT CHECKS

Once the pre-employment checks have been completed, the Headteacher, or another person nominated by the Headteacher will:

- Agree a start date with the candidate.
- Destroy the completed self-declaration forms.
- Submit contractual paperwork, including the completed DBS check, copies of identification, references, proof of qualifications, pre-employment medical enquiry form, P45, application/equal opportunities and emergency contacts.
- Add the required details of the checks carried out to the school's SCR.
- Issue the new employee with a full terms and conditions of employment contract.

### 32. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR)

The school will maintain and regularly update the SCR with leavers and new starters.

All new employees will be added to the record, which will include:

- All staff who work at the school including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff, even if they work for one day)
- All volunteers.

The bullet points below set out the minimum information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An Enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK, including checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check

**CAPA COLLEGE:** The college will record whether the person's position involves 'relevant activity', i.e., regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of persons aged under 18.

For supply staff, the school will include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any Enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

If checks are carried out on volunteers, this will be recorded in the SCR.

The Trust will keep separate SCRs for each academy; it will also ensure that all those who need to see the central SCR can easily do so and that the SCR can easily be filtered by each academy.

The details of individuals will be removed from the SCR once their employment with the school ends.

**NOTE:** When renewing DBS checks for existing staff, you must not replace information about the original checks in your SCR. This is because your SCR must have a record of **pre**-employment checks, and you must be able to show that these checks were carried out for the whole period that the staff member was at your school. This is set out in paragraph 274 of [KCSIE 2024](#).

### 33. SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

At least one member of the Recruitment Panel should have completed formal safer recruitment training. The Trust expects that all Business Manager and at least one governor should also complete relevant training.

As a measure of good practice, the school will ensure that this training is renewed every five years.

Staff and governors involved in the recruitment process will have an awareness of information regarding the following:

- The recruitment and selection process
- Pre-appointment and vetting checks, regulated activity and recording of information
- Other checks that may be necessary for, staff, volunteers and others
- How to ensure the ongoing safeguarding of children and legal reporting duties on employers

### 34. SAFEGUARDING

For references provided to the school, the candidate's suitability will always be assessed with particular regard paid to their suitability to work with children. The DSL will be consulted where appropriate.

The DSL will recognise the school's duty to disclose safeguarding concerns overrides any other duties to an employee, and ensure the school complies with its safeguarding obligations. The DSL will ensure records are kept of all allegations against staff in line with the most up-to-date version of KCSIE.

For all safeguarding allegations, excluding those proven to be malicious, a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, and decisions reached, will be kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused member of staff. Accurate information based on these records will be given in response to future requests for a reference, where appropriate. Safeguarding information will not be given in circumstances where the allegation was found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious – this includes if it is a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious. The member of staff providing the reference will make no comments about their own personal views on the veracity of allegations.

### 35. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust Board, Chief Executive Officer and Headteacher.
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.
- All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2026**.

## FLOWCHART OF DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS AND BARRED LIST CHECKS

