



**WHICKHAM
SCHOOL**

**Recruitment Policy
August 2025**

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Policy Review

Last reviewed	By who
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1. Background

1.1. The Academy has implemented this policy to assist with recruitment and employee selection. It outlines the Academy's recruitment procedure to ensure safer recruitment is considered at all levels of the recruitment process.

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

1.3. This policy has due regard and should be read in conjunction to the following guidance:

1.3.1. [DfE Guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' \("KCSIE"\)](#)

1.3.2. [DfE Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.](#)

1.3.3. [DfE Guidance 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'.](#)

2. Definitions

In this policy the following definitions are used.

- 2.1. "Regulated Activity" is work that a barred person must not do. Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA 2006) employers engaged in Regulated Activities must not employ individuals who are barred from carrying out Regulated Activity by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Regulated Activities include:- 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.
- 2.2. 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.
- 2.3. The above definitions are classified as Regulated Activity if they are undertaken regularly. Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes relevant personal care, or health care provided by, or under the supervision of, a health care professional. Personal care includes helping a child with eating or drinking for reasons of illness or disability, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability. Health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional.
- 2.4. A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in Regulated Activity. In such a case:
 - 2.4.1. there must be supervision by a person who is in Regulated Activity; and
 - 2.4.2. the supervision must be regular and day to day; and
 - 2.4.3. the supervision must be "reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children".
- 2.5. "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 'Keeping children safe in education' (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.
- 2.6. "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.

- 2.7. "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.
- 2.8. "Enhanced 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.
- 2.9. "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 applicant is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 167A of the Education Act 2002.
- 2.10. "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.
- 2.11. "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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1. The Academy (or the Headteacher if delegated) is responsible for:
 - 3.1.1. Agreeing and monitoring effective policies to ensure recruitment is undertaken appropriately.
 - 3.1.2. Ensuring that staff recruitment is as safe as possible, as well as fair and compliant with the relevant legislation.
 - 3.1.3. Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the Academy.
 - 3.1.4. Appointing an appropriate recruitment panel on a case by case basis, depending on the nature of the role being advertised.
 - 3.1.5. Ensuring that at least one member of the recruitment panel has undergone safer recruitment training.
 - 3.1.6. Ensuring that all members of the recruitment panel understand their role, i.e. advisory or decision making.
 - 3.1.7. Monitoring the advertising of vacancies (to ensure that each advert contains a statement representing the Trust's commitment to

safeguarding), assessing how they are being advertised and whether the adverts are maximising all of the opportunities to attract the appropriate candidates.

- 3.1.8. Ensuring a member of the Trust Board (who has received safer recruitment training) is on the recruitment panel for a new headteacher.
 - 3.1.9. Ensuring that all members of the recruitment panel are familiar with their obligations with regards to safer recruitment, as set out in KCSIE.
 - 3.1.10. Ensuring that equal opportunities are established and implemented throughout the recruitment process.
 - 3.1.11. Ensuring that the salary of the successful candidate is determined.
 - 3.1.12. Accommodating the needs of new employees and making reasonable adjustments when necessary.
 - 3.1.13. Appropriately delegating responsibility for recruitment to the Headteacher.
- 3.2. The recruitment panel (or the Headteacher where delegated authority is given by the Academy) is responsible for:
- 3.2.1. Creating the advert and ensuring it meets all the necessary requirements.
 - 3.2.2. Shortlisting the potential candidates with the aim of reducing the application field and identifying those with the potential to effectively undertake the role.
 - 3.2.3. Setting appropriate recruitment procedures and criteria for selection.
 - 3.2.4. Ensuring that the interview addresses leadership ability, team working skills, reasons for interest in joining the Academy, integrity, understanding of the Academy's ethos and vision, and why the candidate believes they would be a good fit for the Academy.
 - 3.2.5. Ensuring that the interview addresses safeguarding practices.
- 3.3. The Headteacher (or such other reasonable person if delegated) is responsible for:
- 3.3.1. Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on prospective staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the Academy.
 - 3.3.2. Ensuring that appropriate supervision of employees/volunteers is organised, and for promoting the safety and wellbeing of pupils generally and throughout the recruitment process.
 - 3.3.3. Leading the interview when the candidate is at a lower level than a Headteacher.

4. Equal opportunities

- 4.1. When recruiting, the Academy will adhere to the Equal Opportunities Policy.

4.2. The Academy will not discriminate against any Protected Characteristics (see Equal Opportunities Policy for definition and more information), such as disability, sexual orientation, marital status, age, race, religious belief or gender, and will always promote difference and inclusion throughout the Academy.

4.3. The Academy will, where necessary, make reasonable adjustments to ensure the interview is accessible to all candidates.

4.4. Candidates will not be asked about their health or any disabilities before a job offer is made, unless one of the following exemptions applies:

4.4.1. Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments);

4.4.2. Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment;

4.4.3. Positive action to recruit people with disabilities; or

4.4.4. Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).

5. Advertising and shortlisting

5.1. The recruitment panel (or the Headteacher or such other reasonable person if delegated) will:

5.1.1. Decide on the recruitment timeframe and the process to be followed.

5.1.2. 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 the selection process.

5.1.3. Prepare the documents that will be provided to applicants, including the job description, person specification and application form – ensuring that these documents contain a clear message about safeguarding, the checks that will be carried out and that references will be sought. All application forms should require the applicant to sign a declaration confirming that the information provided in their application is true.

5.1.4. The full requirements of the role will be clearly explained, including any employment vetting requirements such as a DBS check and disqualification / barred list checks.

5.1.5. Depending on the seniority of the role, the recruitment panel may include the Headteacher (or another senior employee if the responsibility is delegated, provided they have

received safer recruitment training), and should be responsible for the management of the entire recruitment process. Where a Headteacher is being recruited, the recruitment panel shall include a member of the Academy Board (who has received safer recruitment training).

5.1.6. Where practicable, the recruitment panel will be an odd number so majority votes can be cast. If this is not possible, the Headteacher (or the chair of the recruitment panel) shall have a casting vote.

5.1.7. At least one member of the recruitment panel will have successfully completed up-to-date safer recruitment training (in addition to the Headteacher if they are appointed to the panel).

5.1.8. The recruitment panel will ensure the job advertisement includes the following requirements:

5.1.8.1. A statement that the Academy within the Trust is committed to safeguarding staff and students and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. All posts are subject to an enhanced Disclosing and Barring Service DBS check. All interviews will include a question about Safeguarding and any anomalies identified in pre-recruitment checks will be discussed at interview.

5.1.8.2. Information specific to the role on offer and the Academy as a whole.

5.1.8.3. The benefits of the role are highlighted.

5.1.8.4. The advertisement is relevant to the target audience.

5.1.8.5. Information about how the application should be submitted.

5.2. Requests for further information from applicants should be replied to promptly within a reasonable period.

5.3. Interviews shall be arranged for the shortlisted candidates.

5.4. A decision will be taken about how and where any vacancies shall be advertised. Usually a job advert will be advertised through external media, such as the local newspaper, education press, website, with due consideration to the Academy's Equal Opportunities Policy, ensuring that the advertisement reaches a wide range of groups.

5.5. Advertisements will include a statement about safeguarding, a job description, a person specification and detail regarding the closing date.

- 5.6. When an advert receives a response, the recruitment panel will ensure that candidates receive the application pack.
- 5.7. The Academy will never accept a CV alone, only completed application forms.
- 5.8. When shortlisting candidates for an interview, all application forms will be considered.
- 5.9. At least two members of the recruitment panel will be involved in the shortlisting process at least one of whom has received up to date safer recruitment training.
- 5.10. Candidates who are shortlisted will meet all the essential aspects of the person specification requirements.
- 5.11. The Academy will ensure that the shortlisting process is as systematic as possible. Each member of the panel will shortlist and the final list will be agreed by discussion.
- 5.12. Applicants will be assessed against the same criteria to ensure a fair process.

6. Invitation to interview

- 6.1. Once a shortlist has been confirmed, the applicants to be invited for interviews will be contacted and suitable interview times will be decided.
- 6.2. The recruitment panel will ensure that all shortlisted candidates are provided with information about the interview arrangements, how they will be conducted, the areas that will be explored and what documents (if any) they should bring.
- 6.3. The recruitment panel will ensure that shortlisted candidates are provided with access to the self-declaration of criminal record form, alongside a copy of the Academy's disqualification form, where appropriate.
- 6.4. Upon inviting candidates to interview, the recruitment panel will state that the successful candidate's identity will be checked and, where appropriate, the necessary pre-appointment checks will be carried out.
- 6.5. Where possible, the recruitment panel will obtain two references before interviewing candidates to allow for any concerns to be explored with the referee and discussed with the candidate. One of the references will be from the candidate's most recent employer.
- 6.6. Where a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving will be obtained from the most recent employer.

- 6.7. References will be from the Headteacher (or deputy Headteacher) of their previous school and not a work colleague.
- 6.8. Open testimonials (for example, "to whom it may concern") will not be relied upon, nor will information that has been provided by the candidate without verifying the information.
- 6.9. Electronic references may be vetted to ensure they originate from a credible source.
- 6.10. References from internal candidates will also always be scrutinised before the interview.
- 6.11. Permission will be sought from the candidates before the recruitment panel contacts referees.
- 6.12. Structured questionnaires will be used to question referees and the recruitment panel will determine the questions on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.13. Information about past disciplinary action or allegations (including any safeguarding concerns) that are disclosed will be considered carefully when assessing the applicant's suitability for the post.
- 6.14. The candidate's current employer will be asked for details of any capability history in the previous two years, including the reasoning.

7. Pre-interview checks

- 7.1. The recruitment panel (which may be delegated to the HR officer or other appropriate employee) will ensure the necessary pre-interview checks take place.
- 7.2. Pre-interview checks will include the following:
- 7.2.1. 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.
 - 7.2.2. Verifying that the candidate has qualifications or experience relevant to the post.
 - 7.2.3. Checking references against application forms and noting down discrepancies or concerns and gaps in employment history, and following up these concerns with referees at the interview.
 - 7.2.4. Checking and, where necessary, following up candidates' self-declaration forms.
- 7.3. The Academy is committed to ensuring that safeguarding is a top priority; therefore, the Academy may check shortlisted candidates' social media or other online activity prior to

interview, in accordance with KCSIE. This process may include a search for the candidate via Google, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and / or LinkedIn. Such a search would include using a search engine to review publicly available social media accounts. Where possible, this search should be conducted by someone not involved in the interview process. Any information obtained that is potentially relevant to the candidate's suitability for the role should be passed to the interviewing panel. Any concerns will be addressed during the interview process.

8. The interview

8.1. Where the applicant has signed their application form electronically, they should be asked to physically sign a hard copy of their application at the point of interview.

8.2. During the interview process, candidates will be asked standard questions and their responses will be recorded for ease of comparison.

8.3. Any concerns raised through contact with referees will be discussed with the candidate at this stage.

8.4. 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 same interview questions will be asked of all candidates.

8.5. The recruitment panel will give the candidate the opportunity to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS check.

8.6. Where applicable, and where this has not been done prior to the interview, the recruitment panel will follow up concerns regarding the content of a self-declaration form.

8.7. The candidate will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns or ask any questions.

8.8. The interview will always comprise a face-to-face interview; however, the recruitment panel may also request that candidates complete one of the following exercises:

8.8.1. Role play exercises

8.8.2. Presentations

8.8.3. Group exercises

8.8.4. Written exercises

- 8.8.5. Aptitude/ability tests
- 8.8.6. Getting the candidate to work in supervised activity with pupils
- 8.9 After the interview has been completed, the recruitment panel will:
 - 8.9.1. Assess all candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria.
 - 8.9.2. Ask the successful candidate to provide proof of identification and qualifications, and to complete the DBS check as soon as possible.
 - 8.9.3. If requested, provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates – feedback may be verbal or written and based on evidence of their performance against the person specification for the role.
- 8.10. Interview notes and assessment materials will be held securely for an appropriate amount of time after the interviews, in line with the Data Protection Policy, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged.
- 8.11. After choosing a successful candidate, the Academy will:
 - 8.11.1. Make a conditional offer of employment to the candidate (conditional upon the relevant pre-appointment checks, see below).
 - 8.11.2. Ask the successful candidate to provide identification and proof of qualifications, if this has not already been done.
 - 8.11.3. Complete the relevant pre-appointment checks.

9. Pre-appointment checks

- 9.1. All appointments will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-appointment checks.
- 9.2. When appointing new staff, the Academy must complete the following checks:
 - 9.2.1. Verify the candidate's identity including that they are who they claim to be, and their right to work in the UK. The Academy should, aware that an individual has the potential to change their name, check the name on the candidate's birth certificate where this is available. If the candidate has lived or worked outside of the UK, further checks may be required
 - 9.2.2. Obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (via the applicant) and, for candidates engaging in Regulated Activity, barred list information. If using the DBS update service the original certificate needs to be obtained.

9.2.3. Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in Regulated Activity before the DBS certificate is available.

9.2.4. Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.

9.2.5. For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check will be carried out.

9.2.6. The recruitment panel will ensure any candidate employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012.

9.2.7. If the Academy 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 Academy to allow the individual to carry out any form of Regulated Activity.

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

9.2.9. A simple online search against the shortlisted candidate shall be undertaken after shortlisting and prior to interview – to check if there are any safeguarding concerns or issues raised.

10. Volunteers

10.1. For volunteers, a shorter recruitment process may be adopted by the Headteacher, however:-

10.1.1. If they are not engaging in Regulated Activity, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained – however, a barred list check will not be required.

10.1.2. If volunteers are engaging in Regulated Activity and are new to the Academy, an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check will be required.

10.2. Existing volunteers in Regulated Activity do not need to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (including barred list information); however, the Academy may decide to conduct a repeat DBS check.

10.3. If a volunteer is not in Regulated Activity, the Academy will use its professional judgement, after the Headteacher (or designated representative) has conducted a risk assessment, to determine whether to seek an enhanced DBS check or barred list check. If the volunteer is there in a professional capacity, such as providing careers advice to the students, their ID should be checked and the Academy should assure itself that the visitor has had the

appropriate DBS check. If this assurance is provided by the visitor's employer then the volunteer's certificate does not have to be seen by the Academy.

11. Candidates who have lived outside the UK

11.1. No exceptions will be made for candidates who have lived outside of the UK. All mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary.

11.2. The DfE's guidance on the employment of overseas-trained teachers will be consulted should an overseas candidate apply for a teaching position.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employing-overseas-trained-teachers-from-outside-the-eea>

12. Agency and third-party staff

12.1. In the case of any employee working at the Academy who is sourced from an agency or third-party organisation, confirmation must be obtained from the organisation, in writing, that all necessary checks have been completed, expressly including that the agency/third party has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information, prior to appointing the individual.

12.2. Confirmation will also be obtained that the individual who presents for work is the same person on whom all checks have been completed.

13. Trainee/student teachers

13.1. The Academy will ensure that enhanced DBS certificates and barred list checks are obtained on all salaried applicants for initial teacher training who are in Regulated Activity.

13.2. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks.

13.3. The Academy will obtain written confirmation from the provider that the checks have been carried out.

14. Existing staff

14.1. 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.

14.2. The recruitment panel will carry out further checks where there is a concern about a member of staff's suitability to work with children.

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

14.3.1. The harm test is satisfied in respect of that harm.

14.3.2. 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.

14.3.3. The individual has been removed from working in Regulated Activity, or would have been removed had they not left.

15. Contractors

15.1. The Academy will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in Regulated Activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information).

15.2. For all other 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.

15.3. 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.

15.4. If a contractor is self-employed, the Academy 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.

15.5. The Academy will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival.

16. Adults who supervise children on work experience

16.1. If the Academy is organising work experience placements, the Academy will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm.

16.2. Barred list checks by the DBS might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. In such cases, the Academy will consider the specific circumstances of the work experience. Consideration will be given in particular to the nature of the supervision and the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary. These considerations will include whether the person providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision to the child on work experience will be:

16.2.1. Unsupervised themselves.

16.2.2. Providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision frequently (more than three days in a 30-day period or overnight).

16.3. If the person working with the child is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the child, the work is likely to be Regulated Activity. In this case, the Academy will ask the employer providing the work experience to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a barred person.

16.4. If the activity undertaken by the child on work experience takes place in a 'specified place', such as the Academy, and gives the opportunity for contact with children, this may itself be considered Regulated Activity. In these cases, and where the child is 16 years of age or over, the work experience provider will consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested for the child/young person in question. DBS checks cannot be requested for children/young people under the age of 16.

17. Governors

17.1. The Governing Board may request an enhanced DBS certificate without a barred list check on an individual as part of the appointment 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.

18. After the pre-appointment checks

18.1. Once the pre-employment checks have been completed, the recruitment panel will:

18.1.1. Agree a start date with the candidate.

18.1.2. Destroy the completed self-declaration forms for unsuccessful candidates.

18.1.3. 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.

18.1.4. Add the required details of the checks carried out to the Academy's SCR.

19. Single central record ("SCR")

19.1. The Academy will maintain and regularly update the SCR.

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

19.2.1. All staff (including supply staff) who work at the Academy.

19.2.2. All others who work in regular contact with children in the Academy or college, including volunteers.

19.3. 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:

19.3.1. An identity check

19.3.2. A standalone children's barred list check

19.3.3. An enhanced DBS check

19.3.4. A prohibition from teaching check

19.3.5. Further checks on people living or working outside the UK, including checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions

19.3.6. A check of professional qualifications (where such qualifications are required)

19.3.7. A section 128 check

19.3.8. A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK

19.3.9. Details of any online search undertaken after shortlisting and prior to interview

19.4. For supply staff, the Academy 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.

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

20. Safer recruitment training

20.1. At least one member of the recruitment panel will have completed formal safer recruitment training (as well as the Headteacher).

20.2. As a measure of good practice, the Academy will ensure that this training is renewed every two to three years.

Appendices

1.0 Flowchart of Disclosure and Barring service Criminal Record Checks and Barred List Checks

