



Achieving excellence together

Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding of Child Protection Policy

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Approved by: | Trust Board | | |
| Responsible department: | HR Team | | |
| Last review date: | September 2024 | Last reviewed by: | Katherine Humphreys – HR Manager |
| Last updated: | September 2024 | Last updated by: | Katherine Humphreys – HR Manager |
| Next review due: | September 2025 | | |

1. Introduction

1.1. This Safer Recruitment Policy has been produced in line with the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 24). This policy aims to ensure a safe and fair recruitment and selection is conducted at all times. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people.

2. Recruitment and selection policy statement

2.1 Great Heights Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

2.2 Great Heights Academy Trust is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to the school's performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.

3. Purpose

3.1 To ensure the recruitment of all staff is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner.

3.2 To achieve this purpose, those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all the school employees and governors responsible for and involved in recruitment and selection of all staff.

4.2 The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the Trust Board. The Trust Board has delegated the responsibility to the principals/leader for appointing all staff.

5. Aims and Objectives

5.1 To ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people takes place at each stage of the process

5.2 To ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all Truststaff.

5.3 To ensure all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation.

5.4 To ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

6 Principles

6.1 The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment.
- All applicant packs will include a job description detailing the post holders responsibilities for safeguarding.
- Employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job.
- Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members. At least one panel member will have received appropriate Safer Recruitment Training.
- Selection will be based on a minimum of completed application form, short listing and interview, but, whenever possible, involve other assessments.
- Posts will be advertised on our Trust website and the advert will include reference to the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people.
- The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

7. Equal Opportunities

7.1 Great Heights Academy Trust is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation.

8. Safer Recruitment – Recruitment and Selection Training

8.1 It is a requirement that at least one member of the interview panel has completed approved Safer Recruitment Training prior to the start of the recruitment process.

9. Pre-recruitment Process

9.1 Objective

9.1.1 The objective of the recruitment process is to attract, select and retain staff who will successfully and positively contribute to the future development of the Trust. The first experience an individual has is important; therefore the experience should be positive and all those responsible for recruiting will:

- Leave a positive image with unsuccessful applicants.
- Give successful applicants a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them.
- Take reasonable actions to reduce the risk of a bad selection decision recognising the potential cost and the school's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

9.2 Application Form

9.2.1 A standard application form will be used to obtain a common set of data from all applicants. The application form will be adapted for different posts but will always include key information on safeguarding. As such, candidates must provide information on employment history and if appropriate adequately explain the reasons for any gaps. The candidates must complete, sign and date the declaration and follow instructions regarding the appropriate disclosure of relevant criminal convictions.

9.3 Job Description and Person Specification

9.3.1 A job description and where applicable a person specification will be issued for all posts. In the case of volunteers this will include a volunteer role profile. The job description/volunteer role profile will have a clear reference to an individual's responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

9.4 Criminal Self-Disclosure

All short-listed candidates will be asked to complete a self-disclosure form with their invitation to interview.

9.5 References

9.5.1 The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be requested directly from the referee using the standardised Trust form.

9.5.2 References will be sought on all short-listed candidates and will be obtained, where possible, before interview so that any issues or concerns they raise can be explored further with the referee, and/or taken up with the candidate at interview.

9.5.3 The school will take reasonable steps to verify references received electronically.

10. Online Searches

10.1 In accordance with KCSIE 2024, the Trust will give consideration to online searches on shortlisted candidates for employment (as well as individuals under serious consideration for volunteer roles) as part of their due diligence before any person is confirmed as a new member of staff. This is to ensure that all persons to be interviewed are suitable to work with children and keep them safe.

10.2 All shortlisted candidates should be made aware that they may be subject to an online check and that if anything of concern emerges from this, they will be asked to comment on it at interview.

11. Interviews

10.1 The interview will assess the merits of each candidate for the post, including at least one question exploring their suitability to work with children and young people. The selection process for people who will work with children and young people will always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

11.2 Interview Panel

11.2.1 A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel.

11.2.2 The members of the panel will:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments.
- Be appropriately trained, (at least one member of interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training).
- Meet before the interviews to:
 - reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing
 - consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those.

11.2.3 Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel this will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to consider changing the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

11.3 Scope of the Interview

11.3.1 In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also explore:

- the candidate's attitude toward children and young people;
- his/her ability to support the Trust's ethos for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- any gaps in the candidate's employment history;
- any concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.

12. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre employment Checks

12.1. An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- verification of the candidate's identity
- verification of eligibility to work in the UK
- appropriate overseas check, and references from any overseas education employer after this date
- verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their role
- the receipt of at least two satisfactory and verified references
- verification of qualifications
- verification of professional status where required e.g. QTS status (unless properly exempted)
- a check of the DfE Barred List
- a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure, with the certificate seen and verified by the Trust. (for Volunteers a written risk assessment in relation to the undertaking of an Enhanced DBS Disclosure)
- a check using the Employer Access Online Service to see if a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State for Education or GTCE sanction exists against the individual (for posts carrying out 'teaching work')
- verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999) unless the successful candidate is an ECT undertaking their statutory induction (for teaching posts).
- Any additional checks as deemed appropriate

12.2 All checks will be appropriately documented and retained on the individuals personnel file with information recorded on the school's central record in line with the statutory requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2024). Where information is unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided this will be followed up.

12.3 Where:

- the candidate is found to be on the relevant barred List, or the DBS Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or,
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or,
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

The facts will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

12.4 If an individual's DBS certificate is not completed a member of staff would only be able to commence work if the school is satisfied that:

- appropriate supervision is in place
- other checks (references etc) have are completed satisfactorily
- the DBS risk assessment form has been completed

12.5 The following personnel should have their details entered on the School Central Register

- Staff in regulated activity
- Regular and/or unsupervised Volunteers, including Governors
- Supply Staff
- Regular visiting professionals in regular contact with children – eg Coaches
- Contract staff in regular contact with children

All leavers will be deleted off the school central register immediately

13. Post Appointment Induction

12.1 There will be an induction programme for all staff which includes the arrangements for Child Protection and Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 (or Annex A as appropriate) and Annexe B) and Safer Working Practice Guidance.

14. Supply Staff

14.1 When the school needs to use the services of a supply agency, we will ensure the agency operates a safer recruitment process and provides confirmation that the following have been checked and judged as satisfactory:

- Identity
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure
- Right to work in the UK
- The DBS Barred List
- Any Prohibition Order, Interim Prohibition Order or GTCE sanction for those undertaking 'teaching work'
- Qualifications (where applicable)
- Overseas Checks, including and EEA check where applicable (see Appendix 1)

When the supply member of staff arrives at the school, their identity will be checked and it will be confirmed that they are the same person on the documentation from the agency. The supply staff's details will be entered on the Single Central Record (SCR).

Appendix 1 - Safer Recruitment Checklist

Post _____

Date _____

| Recruitment and selection checklist | Initials | Date |
|--|----------|------|
| Pre-interview: | | |
| Planning - Timetable decided: job specification and description and other documents to be provided to applicants, reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc | | |
| Vacancy advertised (where appropriate) Advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy, that is, statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and need for successful applicant to be DBS checked | | |
| Applications on receipt - Scrutinised – any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for short-listing | | |
| Short-list prepared | | |
| References – seeking Sought directly from referee on short-listed candidates; ask recommended specific questions; include statement about liability for accuracy | | |
| References – on receipt Checked against information on application; scrutinised; any discrepancy/issue of concern noted to take up with referee and/or applicant (at interview if possible) (If received by email – accompanying email to verify authenticity. If not from professional email address, follow up to ensure authenticity) | | |
| Online searches – Online search pro-forma used in order to follow guidelines on searches. Conducted by a member of the HR team who is not involved in the interview process. | | |
| Invitation to interview - Includes all relevant information and instructions and the self-disclosure form. | | |
| Interview arrangements - At least two interviewers; panel members have authority to appoint; have met and agreed issues and questions/assessment criteria/standards | | |
| Interview - Explores applicants' suitability for work with children as well as for the post | | |
| Self-Disclosure – Completed self-disclosure is submitted and seen by the member of the panel who is safer recruitment trained. | | |
| Note: identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents; copies of documents taken and | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| placed on file; where appropriate applicant completed application for DBS disclosure | | |
| Conditional offer of appointment: pre appointment checks. Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of the following pre- appointment checks and, for non-teaching posts, a probationary period | | |
| References before confirmation of appointment: (if not obtained and scrutinised previously) (If received by email – accompanying email to verify authenticity. If not from professional email address, follow up to ensure authenticity) | | |
| Identity (if that could not be verified at interview) | | |
| Qualifications (if not verified on the day of interview) | | |
| Permission to work in UK, if required | | |
| School record sight of DBS certificate - where appropriate satisfactory DBS certificate. | | |
| DBS Barred list check – applicant is not barred from working with Children (this must be completed before the applicant commences work) Only to be performed if a completed DBS check has not been received prior to an employee commencing work. | | |
| Health – the candidate is medically fit Medical Pre-Employment Questionnaire | | |
| Check a Teacher Record – to be checked for teachers. Check includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibition from Teaching, sanctioned or restricted from working in certain education settings • Passed their induction • Have not been found guilty of professional misconduct but did not receive a prohibition order. | | |
| Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Check – (for teaching posts in maintained schools) the teacher has obtained QTS or is exempt from the requirement to hold QTS (for teaching posts in FE colleges) the teacher has obtained a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) or Certificate of Education (Cert. Ed) awarded by a higher education institution, or the FE Teaching Certificate conferred by an awarding body. | | |
| Overseas Checks – for individuals who have lived or worked abroad in the last 5 years. (will include a reference from any education employer overseas in the same period. | | |
| Risk Assessment – for Volunteers a written risk assessment in relation to undertaking an Enhanced DBS | | |

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

CHILD PROTECTION ADVICE FOR EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS & VISITORS

Introduction

At Great Heights Academy Trust all staff/volunteers and visitors to our schools are responsible for ensuring the safeguarding code of conduct is adhered to. Any individual who believes that any aspect of the code has been breached should report their concerns to the school's Safeguarding Lead and Principal or a member of the Senior Management Team.

We believe that:

All children have the right to grow up safe from harm.

No child should suffer harm, at home, at school, or in any other environment in which children should be cared for and supported.

Any concern about the treatment of a child will be taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

Everyone who works with us will be made aware of their responsibility to make sure that all children and young people with whom we come into contact are safe.

This document sets out what you will need to know about what is expected of you. Please ask any member of the Senior Management Team if you are not clear about anything during your time with us. The person responsible for Child Protection at schools are the Principals. Information and guidance is displayed in school staffrooms.

Please remember: if you are worried about the safety of any young person you must report this concern to the person/s mentioned above.

Getting to know children you come into contact with

Children often perceive adults, and especially familiar ones, as being trustworthy. To protect yourself and children you should remember the following:

- **You should avoid being alone in a room with a child, but if, unexpectedly, that does happen make sure that the door is open.**
- **If you find that a child seeks to talk to you on a regular basis, you should let your immediate supervisor know.**
- **If something happens which makes you think a child may make a complaint about you, you should let your immediate supervisor know straight away**
- **Never touch a child on intimate parts of their body and avoid touching a child in any way that could cause offence or be misinterpreted by the child or anyone else.**
- **Never restrain a child unless you need to protect them or others from immediate danger.**
- **Never provide your personal contact details to a child.**
- **Never arrange to meet a child outside of the contracted work arrangements.**
- **Keep a record of the times and dates of any unplanned contact with children and let the person responsible for "Child Protection" have a copy.**

Knowing if a child is being harmed

Young people will sometimes tell an adult if they are being harmed. For example, a child has an injury and says that their Mum hit them, or that they are very frightened of their Grandad when he is drunk. They could tell you that they are being bullied at school, or

even that an adult who works with them was treating them badly. It is also possible that you might notice something that made you think a child might be being harmed e.g. a change in their behaviour or appearance.

If you think that a child may be being harmed, you must not keep it a secret, even if the child asks you to do so. You have a duty to pass the information on to protect the child in the future. You will not get into trouble if you do pass the information on.

Action if you are worried a child is being harmed

If you are worried a child may be being harmed you must:

- **Tell the person responsible for “Child Protection” straight away or as soon as you can.**
- **Write down the things that are worrying you, including the child’s name (if you know it) or as good a description as you can give of the child.**
- **Where a child has told you that s/he is being harmed, write down exactly what s/he said. Avoid asking the child unnecessary questions e.g. only clarify what has been said and do not try to investigate. Write your name and the date at the bottom of any statement. Give the statement to the person responsible for “Child Protection”.**

Action to take if you are worried about the behaviour of a colleague towards a child

If you are worried about another colleague’s behaviour towards a child or young person, you should tell the person responsible for child protection straight away.

If your concern is about the person responsible for child protection, you should talk to the most senior person in the organisation you have access to.

SAFER RECRUITMENT - USEFUL CONTACTS

www.cipd.co.uk

The web site contains useful information relating to good practice in recruitment and selection including advice on the recruitment of those working with children and vulnerable adults

Disclosure and Barring Service

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

Aims to improve people's working lives through better employment relationships. Provides advice and information which is independent and impartial.

Employer Advice Bureau

The ACAS Helpline (0300 123 1100) available to answer employment questions.

Safeguarding Children

<https://www.gov.uk/schools-colleges-childrens-services/safeguarding-children>

Volunteering

Government website contains useful good practice guidance.

[Volunteer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Provides support to children and families, policy development and public awareness in relation to child protection.

Website contains useful online resources including guidance on child protection policies.

www.nspcc.org.uk

Public Concern At Work

The independent authority on public interest whistle blowing. Offers advice and support.

The Green House
244-254 Cambridge Heath Road
London E2 9DA

Telephone (general enquiries and helpline): 020 3117 2520

[Protect \(formerly Public Concern at Work\) Speak up stop harm | Protect - Speak up stop harm \(protect-advice.org.uk\)](http://protect-advice.org.uk)

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Offers advice on equality issues to individuals and employers.

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders

This organisation provides helpful information and advice to employers and others about carrying out DBS disclosures; on interpreting information presented on disclosure certificates and on assessing risk. They can also advise Disclosure applicants about their rights under employment, data protection and Disclosure law.

For further information

0845 600 3194

Email: employeradvice@nacro.org.uk

<http://www.nacro.org.uk/>