



APPLICATION AND SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1. General

Woodhouse Grove School (“the School”) is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority.

We aim to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

All queries regarding our safer recruitment process must be directed to Shiela Bano, Head of HR.

The aims of the School's Safer Recruitment Policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education, the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

2. Recruitment and Selection

Advertising of Posts The aim of advertising is to attract a wide range of high quality candidates from diverse backgrounds. All advertisements for posts, whether in newspapers, journals, or online, should include a statement confirming that the School is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of children and that all candidates will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check.

Job Descriptions and Person Specification The qualifications, skills, experience, knowledge, aptitudes and abilities that are required for the post will be clearly identified in the job description and person specification. The job description will also state that it is the individual's responsibility to promote the welfare of children and young people s/he is responsible for or comes into contact with.



3. Application Form

Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms but are permitted to be submitted alongside a completed Application Form.

Candidates should be aware that all posts in the School involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Applicants will receive a Job Description and Person Specification for the role applied for.

As the job for which you are applying involves substantial opportunity for access to children, it is important that you provide us with accurate answers.

The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") for the post and, where appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS will be made. Any offers of appointment will be made conditional on obtaining such satisfactory checks. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify us immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children.

The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 apply to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 AND to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

We take our responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect his/her suitability to work with children must notify their Line Manager / HR immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings he/she may receive.

Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the Head of HR for more details.

We have a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to understand the factors that lead people to support terrorist ideologies or engage in terrorist related activity, be able to confidently recognise susceptibility to terrorism and be aware of what action to take in response. We also ensure that those at risk of radicalisation are identified and appropriate support is provided. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment.

If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection concerns or allegations and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. Any information about past disciplinary action or substantiated allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.



If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children. Where you have no previous employment history, we may request character references which may include references from your school or university.

You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

4. Invitation to Interview

Applicants will be shortlisted according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

As part of the shortlisting process, we will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of our due diligence. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we may want to explore with an applicant at interview. This forms part of our wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working in a school environment.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration form in relation to their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by the Headmaster or another designated senior member of staff. The Chair of Governors should chair the panel for the Head's appointment. The interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Chair as to whether or not an interviewer should therefore withdraw from the panel. Should the Chair have a conflict of interest, the Vice Chair shall decide whether the Chair should withdraw from the panel.

The interview will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children (including discussion of any details provided on the candidate's self-declaration form).

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by you from the awarding body.



All candidates invited to interview must also bring with them:

- A current driving licence including a photograph and paper counterpart or a passport and a full birth certificate;
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;
- Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name;
- Where applicable, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

Please note that originals of the above are necessary. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform us of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

5. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received), including for internal appointments. All references should be provided by a senior person with appropriate authority, subject to the satisfaction of the School;
- Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK;
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;
- For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the historic General Teaching Council for England before its abolition in March 2012;

Verification of professional qualifications, including, where applicable, any award of Qualified Teacher Status;

Verification of successful completion of a statutory induction period (for teaching posts – applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999), where relevant;

Where the successful candidate has lived or worked or been resident outside the UK, such further checks and confirmations as we may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This shall include the candidate providing us with a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which they have worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and/or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach; ¹

¹ The requirement to check an overseas' teacher's teaching status for proof of past conduct as a teacher is included in KCSIE at paragraphs 285-289. Schools and colleges **must** make any further checks they think appropriatewhich **could** include obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions,



Evidence of satisfactory medical fitness;

- Confirmation from the candidate that they are not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006”.
- For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position as set out within our Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure, receipt of a signed “senior charity manager positions: automatic disqualification declaration” confirming that the candidate is not disqualified from acting in a senior management position for a charity in accordance with the automatic disqualification rules for charities;
- If you are undertaking a management role, a check that you have not been prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools.
- It is our practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by us in strictest confidence and used as set out in our Recruitment Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School etc.
- It is our practice that a successful candidate will be invited to subscribe to the DBS Update Service. Successful candidates must complete the School’s DBS Update Service Consent Form to authorise the School to undertake status checks on an annual basis as part of the School’s wider safeguarding due diligence. We are aware of our duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

6. Prohibition Checks (Including EEA Sanctions)

Any offer of employment for a position involving teaching children will be subject to a Prohibition from Teaching check, and will not be confirmed until the School is satisfied that the individual is not prohibited from teaching. If the candidate has worked in the EEA in the past five years, an EEA sanctions check will also be undertaken.

Management positions at the School will also be subject to a s128 Prohibition from Management check. Candidates who are found to be prohibited from teaching/and or management will not be appointed to work at the School. Prohibition from Teaching Orders – prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools and other settings in the UK.

and/or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. We recommend that, where available, these additional checks are carried out for all overseas teacher appointments. Where this information is not available, KCSIE notes that schools should seek alternative methods of checking suitability and/or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment.



The School will check the UK's Prohibited List before confirming an applicant's employment. EEA Sanctions – these list persons for whom prohibition from working with children orders have been applied in the wider EEA area.

The School will check the EEA sanctions list if a candidate has worked in the EEA in the past five years, prior to confirming an appointment. Prohibition from management directions (Section 128 directions) - The School is required to check for the existence of directions made by the Secretary of State under s.128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 barring individuals from taking part in the management of an Independent School. The scope of the barring directions covers membership of proprietor bodies (including Governors), the Head, all staff on the senior leadership team (including non teaching staff) and Teaching positions with departmental responsibility.

7. References

We will seek the references referred to in section 4 above for all shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. If you do not wish us to take up references in advance of the interview, please notify us at the time of submitting your application.

For internal candidates, formal written references may be sought from a senior person with appropriate authority.

All referees will be asked if the candidate is suitable to work with children and to provide facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that meet the harm threshold set out in Part 4 of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

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

We will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the application form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

If the candidate is not currently working with children, the School will secure a reference from a relevant employer in relation to employment in which the candidate worked with children. If the candidate has never worked with children, the School will obtain a reference from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting.

8. Criminal Records Policy

We will refer to the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks.

We comply with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request or accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>.



9. Retention and Security of Records and Data Protection

The School is legally required to undertake the checks outlined in this document. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, the School will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and qualifications.

All information collected in relation to recruitment and selection will be held in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act guidelines. We will observe strict confidentiality and only handle and store information in line with the School's Privacy Policy.

Disclosures will only be made for payroll, pension, HR administration and statistical purposes.

Medical information may also be used to help the School to discharge its legal duty of care as an employer (e.g. so that the School may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee has a disability, or to assist with any other workplace issue).

Employees involved with shortlisting and appointments will have limited access to data provided, such as that on the School's application form.

This information will not be disclosed to any other party outside the School. This documentation (with the exception of DBS information) will be retained by the School for the duration of the successful applicant's employment.

After employment ends it will be retained in accordance with the School's Data Retention Policy.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.

10. Referrals to the DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed.

Whilst these are pre-employment checks, the School also has a legal duty to make referrals to the DBS and/or TRA in circumstances where an individual:

- has applied for a position at the School despite being barred from working with children; or
- has been removed by the School from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child (Harm Test).