

Alumwell Infant School



Learn, Grow and Achieve

Safer Recruitment Policy

Signed by The Chair of The Governing Board:	Signed copy available.
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Policy Author:	CH

OUR SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

As part of our culture of a commitment to safeguarding our governing body and senior leaders adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities in our school.

Key staff involved in recruitment processes will undertake Safer Recruitment Training offered by the Walsall Safeguarding Partnership

Our recruitment and selection process

Our adverts make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken and make clear our commitment to safeguarding by;

- outlining the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Which means that when an individual is applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. For clarity and further information about filtering offences can be found in the [DBS filtering guidance](#)

Where a role in our school involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children we will include a statement in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children,

We will provide a copy of our school's child protection policy and practices, and policy on employment of ex-offenders in the application pack or refer to a link to Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975.

We require applicants to provide:

- personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award
- details of referees/references - prior to interview (if possible)
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

Our school does not accept copies of curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to [Ministry of Justice guidance](#) on the disclosure of criminal records. (i.e. if they have a criminal history, whether they are included on the barred list, whether they are prohibited from teaching, whether they are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school, information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted, if they are known to the police and Children's Services have they been disqualified from providing childcare and any relevant overseas information). The information will only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted. The information will not be requested in the application form to decide who should be shortlisted.

Our procedures are clear that applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate will physically sign a hard copy of the application at point of interview.

When shortlisting at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise, we consider any inconsistencies, look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them. We explore all potential concerns. As part of the shortlisting process we will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. Candidates will be informed. A privacy notice for Recruitment and Candidates is part of our application pack.

We seek references for all potential candidates (including volunteers) to allow us to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. Wherever possible we request references before interview, this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.

As part of our commitment to safeguarding:

- we do not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern
- we do not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- we ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference will be confirmed by the head teacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations)
- we obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- we secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the

applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer

- we always verify any information with the person who provided the reference
- we ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- we contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- we compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- we establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- we ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

We ensure the information confirms whether we are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding allegations but do not include information about allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious.

Our interview questions will always include:

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

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

- applicants implication that adults and children are equal
- applicants lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- applicants inappropriate idealisation of children
- applicants inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children
- applicants indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours

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

Our school believes children and young people should be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way. Observing short listed candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with pupils/students is common and recognised as good practice in our school.

All information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.

Our schools pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

Such checks will help us identify whether a person may be unsuitable to work with children (and in some cases is legally prohibited from working with children and/or working as a teacher). They are seen as the part of a wider safeguarding regime in our school, which will carry on following appointment.

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. Our school:

- verifies a candidate's identity because it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Wherever possible and as part of best practice we check the name on their birth certificate. We use [government guidance for these checks](#).
- obtains (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children). When using the DBS update service we still obtain the original physical certificate
- obtains a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available
- verifies the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities (as defined in Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003)
- verifies the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then we follow advice on the [right to work website](#)
- checks if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, and make any further checks considered appropriate
- verifies professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA) Employer Access Service is used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation
- ensure that an applicant to be employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State

When obtaining an enhanced DBS; if an applicant is moving from a previous post which ended not more than three months before the person's appointment within our school we will follow guidance as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

We use [DfE guidance DBS and barring checks](#) to ensure that the right level of DBS and barring checks are completed in our school. Once complete we will be able to compare any information disclosed on the certificate with any information shared by the applicant during the recruitment process. When assessing any disclosure information on a DBS certificate we will take into consideration the explanation from the applicant, including:

- the seriousness and relevance to the post applied for
- how long ago the offence occurred
- whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents
- the circumstances around the incident
- whether the individual accepted responsibility for their actions

Once the checks are complete, the DBS will send a DBS certificate to the applicant. The applicant must show the original paper DBS certificate before they take up post.

We will also consider the incident in the context of the Teachers' Standards and Teacher misconduct guidance, if the applicant is applying for a teaching post.

When using the Update Service we will:

- obtain consent from the individual to carry out an online check to view the status of an existing standard or enhanced DBS check;
- confirm the DBS certificate matches the individual's identity
- examine the original certificate to ensure that it is valid for our school
- ensure that the level of the check is appropriate to the job they are applying for

Our schools procedures for prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions

A person who is prohibited will not be appointed to a role that involves teaching work (as defined in the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012). We are aware that a number of individuals are still subject to disciplinary sanctions, which were imposed by the GTCE (prior to its abolition in 2012). We will access details to the TRA Secure Access system where GTCE checks can be made. We have a DfE Sign-in account to log onto the service.

We complete checks under section 128 direction to check if someone is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school. From 01 January 2021 the TRA Teacher Services system no longer maintains a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states.

We maintain a single central record of pre-appointment checks, this is checked for accuracy by senior members of staff and a nominated governors. We keep evidence of all safer recruitment checks. Our single central record includes all staff, including

teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff, (even if they work for one day, all members of the governing body and volunteers. We also record safer recruitment checks for contractors where necessary.

For agency and third party supply staff we 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, the date this confirmation was received and whether details of any enhanced DBS certificate have been provided in respect of the member of staff.

The details of an individual will be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at our school. We know that we do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates in order to fulfil the duty of maintaining the single central record. If we choose to retain a copy of DBS checks we will comply with requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, by recording a valid reason for doing so and that it will not be kept for longer than six months. When the information is destroyed we may keep a record of the fact that vetting was carried out, the result and the recruitment decision taken if they choose to. A copy of the other documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work and required qualifications will be kept on their personnel file.

Our school has procedures in place to check section 128 directions, meaning a person subject to a section 128 direction is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school. Governors in our school are required to have an enhanced DBS check. It is the responsibility of our governing body to apply for the certificate for any governors who do not already have one. As governance is not a regulated activity relating to children, governors do not need a children's barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

(We have procedures in place to undertake the necessary childcare disqualification checks for staff who work with children aged 5 and under, including reception classes, but also apply to those working in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, such as breakfast clubs and after school care. We refer to [Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018](#) for clarity of checks.

Our schools procedures for other checks that may be necessary for staff, volunteers and others

In our school individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK undergo the same checks as all other staff. This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK. In addition we make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Following the UK's exit from the EU we 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.

To consider suitability of the applicant where available we:

- obtain criminal records checks for overseas applicants
- obtain 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, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach.

We are aware and consider that not all countries provide criminal record information, and where they do, the nature and detail of the information provided varies from country to country. We are mindful that the criteria for disclosing offences in other countries often have a different threshold than those in the UK.

To support us in this process we refer to [Recruiting teachers from overseas guidance](#)

When employing third part or agency/supply staff we obtain written notification from any agency, or third party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working in our school. In respect of the enhanced DBS check, we ensure that written notification confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business. Where the agency or organisation has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate before the person is due to begin work in a school, which has disclosed any matter or information, or any information was provided to the employment business, we obtain a copy of the certificate from the agency. We always check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

We ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at our school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information). For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) will be required. Under no circumstances will a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. We check the identity of contractors on arrival at our school.

We have an assurance letter from Walsall Local Authority that Children's Services and Health staff (including Social Workers, Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Officers, SEND Case Workers, Early Help Officers and other roles that involved working with children, young people and their families) and who are in our school have had the appropriate DBS check. We will request evidence of their Walsall Council/Health ID/photo card, we understand that such staff are not required to present their DBS certificate to our school.