



18a. RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND DISCLOSURES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

*Our mission is to develop happy, confident and successful children
who are well prepared for their future.*

Westbrook Hay Prep 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.

The School aims 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 on the School's Application Form and recruitment process must be directed to HR.

An entry will be made on the Single Central Register for all current members of staff at the School, the proprietorial body and all individuals who work in regular contact with children, including supply staff.

The School's proprietorial body is a Board of Governors. The Head Teacher is responsible for the day to day running of the school, reporting directly to the Board.

All checks will be made in advance of appointment or, in exceptional cases and where permitted by regulation, as soon as practicable after appointment.

SCOPE

The Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure herewith refers and applies to staff directly recruited and employed by the School. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, staff are defined as:

Any person working at the School whether under a contract of employment, under a contract for services or otherwise than under a contract, but does not include supply staff or a volunteer.

Agency and Contract Workers

In the case of agency or contract workers, the School shall obtain written confirmation from the agency or company that it has carried out the appropriate checks. The School conducts identity checks on agency and contract workers on arrival in School and, in the case of agency workers which includes supply staff, the School must have sight of the original DBS certificate on arrival.

Supply Staff

The School will check with the relevant supply agency that the required checks have been carried out (identity, enhanced disclosure – renewed every 3 years, right to work in the UK, barred list, prohibition, qualifications, overseas checks plus in line with KCSIE two references, declaration of medical fitness, check of previous employment history). The Single Central Register shows these checks have been made

Contractors

In respect of contractors, unchecked contractors will under no circumstances be allowed to work unsupervised in School. The School will determine the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

TUPE

Any staff who TUPE transfer into the School's staff will be required to undertake the statutory requirements with regard to safer recruitment checks.

If staff are transferred under TUPE (gap of three months or less and information complete) information will be passed to the new employer and a note made on the Single Central Register that details have been accepted under TUPE.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The School will only accept applications from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution, nor in support of completed Application Forms.

The School will make candidates 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. Candidates for employed posts will receive a Job Description and Person Specification for the role applied for.

Checks will be made of previous employment history to identify and obtain satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment. These will then be checked against references and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate.

INFORMATION CANDIDATES MUST DISCLOSE

Criminal Record

Upfront disclosure of a criminal record may not debar a candidate from appointment as the School shall consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age it was committed and any other relevant factors. Information should be submitted in confidence enclosing details in a separate sealed envelope which will be seen and then destroyed by HR / Head Teacher. If candidates would like to discuss this beforehand, they are asked to please telephone in confidence to the HR Manager for advice.

Any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings must be disclosed to the School. However, amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be considered. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website. Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify a candidate for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.

Disqualification from childcare

The statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)" applies 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.



The school takes its 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 the Head Teacher immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings they may receive.

This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration.

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 HR for more details.

Disclosure and Barring Service

The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") for the position. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if they are any reasons why they should not be working with children.

Prevent

The School has 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 assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment; more guidance for schools from the DfE on this can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

Suitability to work with children

If the candidate is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, the School will ask their current employer about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the candidate has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure.

If the candidate is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, the School will ask the previous employer about those issues. Where neither the current nor previous employment has involved working with children, the School will still ask the current employer about the candidate's suitability to work with children. Where the candidate has no previous employment history, the School may request character references which may include references from the candidate's school or university.

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

INTERVIEW PROCESS

The School will short list applicants according to the relevance of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Short-listed applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by the Head Teacher/Bursar/HR or another designated senior member of staff. At least one person on the appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training. The Chair of Governors should chair the panel for the Bursar's/Head Teacher'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 the interviewer should 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.

Wherever possible the interview will be conducted in person – subject to the Addendum re Covid-19 below - and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children.

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 the candidate from the awarding body.

The School requests that all candidates invited to interview also bring with them:

1. A current driving licence including a photograph, a passport and a full birth certificate;
2. A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address or a council tax statement;
3. Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name;
4. Where the candidate is not a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area or Switzerland, 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 the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Addendum – COVID 19

Where it is not possible to conduct an interview in person due to COVID 19 government restrictions, interviews may be conducted via a video conferencing service such as Zoom. The relevant identity and qualifications documentation should be scanned and emailed in advance to the interviewer. The interviewee will be asked to present the original documentation over Zoom; these will be checked against the copies received. Following an accepted offer, the pre-appointment checks will be completed using the verified copies. The originals must be produced and verified by HR prior to, or on the first day employment commences.

CONDITIONAL OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

Pre-Appointment Checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

1. Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received);
2. Verification of identity including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK;
3. A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;
4. For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State. Teaching work is defined in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 to encompass:
 - Planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
 - Delivering and preparing lessons to pupils
 - Assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
 - Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils;
5. Verification of professional qualifications, where appropriate;
6. Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (for teaching posts – applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999);
7. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas such checks and confirmations as the School may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered;
8. Satisfactory medical fitness;
9. Receipt of a signed Staff Suitability Declaration form showing that the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)";
10. For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position [defined as a person who is accountable only to the governors and who carries overall responsibility for the day-to-day management and control of the charity (Head Teacher) and a person who is accountable only to the Head Teacher or the governors, and who is responsible for the overall management and control of the charity's finances (Bursar)] 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.
11. Where the successful candidate will be taking part in the management of the school, a check will be carried out under section 128 of the Independent Educational Provision in England (Prohibition on Participation in Management) Regulations 2014. This applies to all Governors, Head Teacher, Assistant Heads, Bursar, Senior Managers, Leadership Teams and teaching heads of department; and

12. For a candidate that has lived or worked outside the UK, an EEA check using the Teaching Regulation Agency employer access system for information about any teacher sanction or restriction.

Pre-employment Health Questionnaire

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to determine if any reasonable adjustments may be necessary in order to help its employees to do their job. Successful candidates are therefore required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire which is reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for that particular role. Where it is apparent adjustments are required, these will be discussed with the applicant. The information contained in the questionnaire will be held by the School in strictest confidence and processed in accordance with the Recruitment Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy.

References

The School will seek the references referred to in section 5 above for shortlisted candidates (including internal applicants) and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. References must be received by a senior person with appropriate authority. If the candidate does not wish the School to take up references in advance of the interview, they should notify the School at the time of applying.

The School will ask all referees if the candidate is suitable to work with children.

The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

The School will verify all references. Where references are received electronically, the School will ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

The School 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.

Criminal Records Policy

The School will refer to the latest version of the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks.

The School complies 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>.

There are limited circumstances where the school will accept a check from another educational institution which are as follows:

This is where the new member of staff ("M") has worked in: –

- (a) A school or a maintained school in England in a position which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons;
- (b) A maintained school in England in a position to which M was appointed on or after May 2006 and which did not bring M regularly into contact with children or young persons; or
- (c) An institution within the further education sector in England or in a 16 to 19 Academy in a position which involved the provision of education or which brought M regularly into contact

with children or young persons, during a period which ended not more than three months before M's appointment.

A new, separate barred list check will be obtained and an application will be made for a new DBS

DBS Update Service

Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must give consent to the school to check there have not been changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. A barred list check will still be required.

Delayed Disclosure

A short period of work is allowed under controlled conditions, at the Head Teacher's discretion. However, if an 'enhanced disclosure' is delayed, a Head Teacher may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- Without confirming the appointment;
- After a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person will be working in regulated activity and all other relevant checks (including any appropriate prohibition checks) having been completed satisfactorily;
- Provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;
- Provided all safeguarding checks relevant to the position (see pre-appointment checks above) have been satisfactorily completed;
- With appropriate safeguards taken (for example, loose supervision);
- Safeguards reviewed at least every two weeks by the Head Teacher/Bursar and member of staff;
- The person in question is informed what these safeguards are; and
- With a note added to the single central register and evidence kept of the measures put in place.

A DBS Risk Assessment will be completed in all cases and signed by the Head Teacher and Bursar.

RETENTION, SECURITY OF RECORDS AND DATA PROTECTION OBLIGATIONS

The School will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy. Copies of DBS certificates will not be retained for longer than 6 months.

The School will comply with its data protection obligations in respect of the processing of criminal records information. More information on this is included in the Recruitment Privacy Notice and the Data Protection Policy.

Reviewed by Sarah Whitehead, Headmaster's PA on 1.12.20

Approved by the Governor for HR 07.12.20

Formally approved at the Board of Governors Meeting 22.03.21

Appendix 1 - Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any candidate for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an individual has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

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

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence. It is also unlawful for the School to knowingly employ someone who works in the relevant settings and is disqualified from providing childcare under the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)".

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. The School will report the matter to the Police and/or the DBS if:

- the School receives an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- in the case of disqualification from providing childcare, whether the applicant has or is able to obtain an Ofsted waiver from disqualification; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any of the following offences: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving.