

# Safer recruitment and selection policy

## Safer recruitment and selection policy: document provenance

<b>Approver</b>	School and college trust leaders
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<b>Policy authors</b>	Head of HR Centre of Excellence
<b>Version</b>	1.0
<b>Date of next review</b>	July 2027
<b>Summary of changes in this review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant changes to process to recognise the introduction of our business services model</li><li>• Changes to naming conventions for senior leaders</li></ul>
<b>Related policies and documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DBS and vetting policy</li><li>• Keeping children safe in education</li><li>• Education Act 2000</li><li>• School staffing (England) (Amendment) (No2) Regulations 2006</li></ul>

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, the policy will be reviewed as per the review cycle. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.

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## 1. Policy statement

- 1.1. Recruiting the best people to our trust is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our students. In an academy the principal is responsible for the arrangements put in place to recruit to any post, with the exception of recruitment for a principal; in these cases, the relevant school and college trust leader will lead; in the case of our central posts the responsibility will rest with the relevant functional lead or school and college trust leader.
- 1.2. We are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our students, through ensuring safer recruitment practices in line with statutory requirements and guidance. We will ensure that throughout our recruitment and selection processes no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or parenthood, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. In the very exceptional cases where we are required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement (e.g. a role that has an overriding need to be carried out by a person of a particular gender), this must be approved by the head of our HR centre of excellence who will confirm the reasons for this requirement.
- 1.4. Recruitment decisions will be made on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, knowledge, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant for the job.
- 1.5. At any stage of the recruitment process, if an applicant makes the trust aware that they have a disability, then reasonable adjustments must be considered to ensure the applicant is not disadvantaged by the process.

## 2. Scope and purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting and appointing any employee to work within our trust; as such, this policy applies to the recruitment of all posts in our trust.

Where a reference is made to principals responsibilities, these shall be read to apply equally to functional leads and school and college trust leaders where appropriate.

## 3. Safer recruitment

- 3.1. The current version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out the principles of safer recruitment expected in all educational settings, this policy set out how we will adhere to those principles and ensure that we identify and deter people who pose a risk of harm and prevent them from working with our students.
- 3.2. The recruitment of all applicants and volunteers to our trust must, without exception, follow the principles set out in this document; all offers of employment will be subject to us being satisfied that the applicant or volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people and individuals will not be allowed to commence their role until all of the checks outlined in sections 11 and 12 of this policy have been complete, save for a small number of limited exceptions.
- 3.3. Any person involved in recruiting to our trust must have read KCSIE and our trust's child protection policy. All panels must be led by a senior leader who has undertaken safer recruitment training within the last three years.

## 4. Advertising

- 4.1. Any vacant position will normally be advertised via the appropriate channels to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is obtained:

### **Fixed term internal vacancies (secondments).**

- 4.2. Given the short-term nature of these opportunities (normally less than six months), then the relevant principal, functional lead or school and college trust leader, in consultation with our HR centre of excellence, will determine whether there is an overriding need to make an appointment without advertisement or, if there is a need to advertise the vacancy, the best way of doing this.

### **Permanent internal vacancies.**

- 4.3. Vacancies where applicants are sought from within our trust only will be advertised on our internal vacancies job board for a minimum of one week; where there is a requirement for the vacancy to only be advertised in one academy (or group of academies) then our trust HR centre of excellence will provide advice on the best way to achieve this.

### **External vacancies.**

- 4.4. Vacancies where external applicants are sought will normally be advertised on our career's website for a minimum of two weeks; our HR centre of excellence will be able to provide assistance with sourcing candidates and identifying other places these vacancies could be advertised. There will also be a small number of senior and/or hard to fill roles where the vacancy may be exclusively placed with a recruitment agency to source candidates for.
- 4.5. All advertisements will include the following statement about safeguarding children and young people, and the requirement to have a DBS check:



“Dixons academies trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils and expects all those working for the trust to share this commitment.”

## 5. Job description and person specification

- 5.1. A job description (JD) and person specification (PS) are required for all posts; together they describe the duties and responsibilities of the post in addition to the skills, experiences and qualifications required of the post holder.
- 5.2. Wherever possible recruitment should be made using existing JDS and PSs; where changes are needed, or a new JD and PS are required, they should be written and passed to our trust HR centre of excellence; they will then forward to our trust communications team and relevant school and college trust leader who will confirm that the JD / PS can be used for recruitment.
- 5.3. All JDs and PSs must make reference to responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

## 6. Application form

### **Applicants for teaching roles.**

- 6.1. All applicants are required to fill out our standard application form. CVs do not replace the application form and shortlisting must be based on the information on the application form.

### **Applicants for associate roles.**

- 6.2. Applicants must complete our standard application form; however, where the role is hard to fill or it is felt that asking applicants to complete our full application form, at the initial stages of recruitment would be a barrier to achieving the best possible field of applicants then, with the agreement of our HR centre of excellence, recruiting managers can accept CVs and create a shortlist for interview based these.
- 6.3. When using CVs to create a shortlist for interview, an initial introductory call should be held with each applicant and any gaps in employment identified from review of the CV should be explored and recorded at this stage. Applicants should be asked to complete our full standard application form when being invited to interview, and it is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that no applicant is interviewed who has not completed our application form fully.

## 7. References

- 7.1. All offers of employment for people currently not employed by our trust will be conditional upon receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, with only one reference being required for an applicant making an internal move within our trust. References will:
  - be requested before the interview, unless there is a specific request from the candidate not to contact their most recent employer prior to interview and the role is a non-teaching role.
  - include the applicant's current or most recent employer (where this is a teaching post, the headteacher / principal must be one of the referees). Where an applicant for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, references should include the applicant's most recent employer as a teacher. Where the applicant is an internal applicant their current principal (for school based staff), functional lead or school trust leader must provide the reference.
  - where an applicant's most recent employer is not a school, but the applicant has previously worked in a school setting, references should include the most recent school worked in
  - include details from the current employer of any capability and disciplinary history in the previous two years and the reasons for this.
  - be directly from the referee, and where transmitted by email be from a work email address.
  - not be accepted if they are presented as open letters with the salutation "to whom it may concern".
  - include information on the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. The most recent employer reference must include a statement to the effect that they are not aware of any safeguarding concerns in relation to the individual; where the reference does not state this it should be followed up by email / verbally for confirmation of this.
  - be scrutinised and explored further with the referee and with the applicant during the interview if necessary.
- 7.2. In the event where it has not been possible to obtain references before the interview, any concerns that are subsequently raised will need to be resolved before the appointment is confirmed.

## 8. Shortlisting

- 8.1. Applicants will be shortlisted against the requirements of the person specification. The shortlisting and interviews should be carried out by the same people. The outcome of the shortlisting process will be recorded and retained.



- 8.2. The equal opportunities monitoring form must be removed from the application and not provided to the shortlisting panel.
- 8.3. The shortlisting panel are responsible for scrutinising the application forms and identifying any gaps in employment or other areas that may affect an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. A satisfactory explanation for any concerns must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process and further details included in the application form.

## 9. Interviews

- 9.1. A face-to-face interview must take place before any applicant can be appointed to any post, even where there is only one applicant. The use of videoconferencing may be acceptable for this purpose under specific circumstances, advice can be sought on this from our trust HR centre of excellence if necessary.
- 9.2. At least one person on the panel must have appropriate safer recruitment training in order for the interview to take place, and all panels for senior leaders must include a member of an under-represented minority as part of the panel.
- 9.3. The purpose of the interview is to understand the motivation of the applicant, and to assess the merits of each applicant against the job description and person specification, in order to establish their suitability for the post and work with children and young people.
- 9.4. Interviews should be conducted with a minimum of two interviewers on the panel to enable one interviewer to assess, observe, and make notes, while the applicant talks to the other interviewer.
- 9.5. Before the interview commences, the interview Panel should have:
  - Prepared appropriate questions for the role
  - Prepared appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people
  - Identified any areas for further probing; e.g. If a criminal record has been declared or if there are gaps in employment history, etc
  - Agreed assessment criteria which reflect the person specification
  - Decided on a structure for the interview and established which member of the panel will ask which questions
- 9.6. A set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their responses to these questions will determine whether they are followed up with further questioning.
- 9.7. Any gaps in employment history or declaration of a criminal record or caution must be explored further during the interview process.

## 10. Other selection methods

- 10.1. In addition to a face-to-face interview with the interview panel, a variety of other selection methods may be used, such as:
  - Observation of teaching practice
  - one or more additional panel interviews
  - a presentation
  - in-tray exercises
  - psychometric testing
- 10.2. Those responsible for deciding the arrangements for recruitment to a specific post will determine the selection method(s). These will be relevant and appropriate to the role and will be based on the requirements for the particular post as set out in the job description and person specification.
- 10.3. Candidates will be informed in advance if any selection methods are to be used in addition to a face-to-face interview and given details as to what these are.

## 11. Pre-employment checks

- 11.1. An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following:
  - receipt of at least two satisfactory written references (one of which must be their current or most recent employer) for external appointments and at least one satisfactory written reference for internal appointments. References are not required for the appointment of local academy ambassadors.
  - verification of the applicant's identity, preferably by current photographic identification and proof of address
  - verification of the applicant's medical fitness in relation to the role





- verification of qualifications where relevant
- verification of professional status where applicable; for teachers, this will include checking that the individual has the required teaching qualification and has successfully completed any statutory induction
- satisfactory enhanced DBS check (see DBS and Vetting Policy)
- for teachers and other employees who hold QTS, or who are working in a student facing role, verification that they are not subject to a prohibition order by checking the teacher services system
- for teachers, a satisfactory check of the teachers sanctioned in other EEA member states list to determine any restrictions / sanctions that have been imposed in other EEA member states, through the teacher services system
- for management staff including middle and senior managers and governors, verification that they are not subject to a Section 128 direction
- a clear children's barred list check (for employees and volunteers in regulated activity)
- verification of right to work in the United Kingdom
- any further checks where the applicant has lived or worked outside of the UK with the relevant embassy, including a good character certificate / receipt of criminal record information from overseas
- confirmation, if appropriate, that the applicant is not disqualified under the disqualification regulations (see appendix 1).
- social media checks to ensure the applicant is suitable to work with children and will not bring the organisation into disrepute

11.2. All checks must be confirmed in writing, retained on the personnel file, and recorded in the single central record (SCR).

## 12. Commencing work without all pre-employment checks having been completed

12.1. Normally it is the case that employees and volunteers should not be permitted to start work in our trust without all of the necessary pre-employment checks set out in section 11. There are a small number of circumstances though, where it may be necessary:

### **Starting an applicant without an acceptable DBS disclosure.**

12.2. The requirements and process for this is detailed in our DBS and Vetting policy.

### **Starting an applicant without one of the other pre-employment checks completed.**

12.3. As a minimum the following requirements must be met:

- a risk assessment is carried out (see appendix 2)
- the individual can be appropriately supervised at all times
- there are no gaps in employment that have not been explained / evidenced
- in the case of teaching staff, their most recent employment was in a state school or other academy trust
- we have received a satisfactory DBS disclosure, and only one of the remaining pre-employment checks is outstanding.

12.4. In no circumstances should an individual with no satisfactory DBS disclosure and one or more other check outstanding be allowed to start work in our trust

## 13. Disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks

Given the nature of the work we undertake it is a condition of employment that everyone taking up a post with our trust can provide a satisfactory DBS disclosure on appointment. The types of check to be undertaken, including whether a check of the 'child's barred list' is required, and what constitutes a satisfactory disclosure are detailed in our DBS and vetting policy.

## 14. Alternative Provision

14.1. On occasion, our academies utilise alternative education providers; when this happens, we remain responsible for ensuring that the provider is a safe environment for our students.

14.2. Principals are required to ensure that providers are appropriate and must obtain a letter of assurance confirming that employees of the provider, and any subcontractors it may use, have:

- been recruited in keeping with the safer recruitment provisions set out in KCSIE
- had appropriate checks made with the Disclosure and Barring Service
- had a check undertaken to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (where appropriate)



- had appropriate referencing and work history checks, at least to the standard set out in our trust's Safer Recruitment policy.
- 14.3. Details of the alternative provision and the checks undertaken should be uploaded to the contractor section of the relevant academy SCR.
- 14.4. Principals retain responsibility for the safeguarding of our students placed with alternative providers, and any providers we use must agree to inform us about any changes which may impact the risk assessment made for each student on referral (e.g. changes in staffing that impact who works directly with the student), so that any additional checks can be made as required. Principals who require support should speak with our trust's director of SEND and safeguarding in the first instance.

## 15. Agency, third party and contractors staff

### Requirement to be vetted

- 15.1. It is common to have staff members supplied through an agency, working for third-party partners or our contractors and suppliers in our academies. As a requirement, these individuals must be recruited and vetted in accordance with the safer recruitment provisions outlined in KCSIE. Responsibility for undertaking these checks rests with the relevant employer. While there is no requirement to provide evidence of the individual checks undertaken, the employer must provide a letter of assurance with respect to any individual they send to work in an academy.
- 15.2. It is a requirement of engaging with our trust that agencies and contractors agree to meet, or exceed, the standards set out in our DBS and vetting, safer recruitment and safeguarding policies in respect of any employees who may engage in the course of their relationship with our trust.
- 15.3. For agency and third-party partners, this letter of assurance should be unique to each individual and stored in the individual's record on the relevant SCR. For employees of contractors, the letter of assurance can cover multiple individuals and should be stored with the contractor's information on the relevant SCR.
- 15.4. Employers must confirm that the level of checking meets the requirements set out in our safer recruitment and DBS and vetting policies for a similar role at our trust. Unless this minimum standard is met, or a risk assessment endorsed by our trust's HR service delivery manager or head of HR centre of excellence is completed, an individual should not be allowed unescorted access to our academies while students are present.

### Adverse information

- 15.5. Where an employer is aware of adverse information in relation to an individual, they propose to send the individual to work in one of our academies (e.g. adverse information on a DBS certificate), then they are required to inform us before the person attends one of our sites. The academy, or the relevant functional lead, is then responsible for undertaking a suitable risk assessment and using this to determine whether it is appropriate for the worker to commence work. Our trust HR centre of excellence can support the production of this risk assessment, and a member of our Trust HR Centre of Excellence must countersign it.

## 16. Breaches of the policy

- 16.1. Given this policy sets out how we will meet our obligations to safeguard our students, any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 16.2. Where staff feel that this policy is not being followed correctly then they should raise this with their principal, functional lead, school and college trust leader or a member of our HR team as appropriate.
- 16.3. Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application, will be managed through the trust's complaints policy (for applicants or those who aren't employed by our trust) or grievance policy (for existing employees).

## 17. Record-keeping and data protection

Written records of interviews, application forms, and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept by our trust for the duration of a person's employment in the case of successful applicants and six months for all other applicants, unless a longer time period can be justified by our trust data protection officer. Records will be treated as strictly confidential.

## 18. Review

19. This policy has at its formation, been subject to consultation with recognised trade unions. Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every two years; this will include consultation on any changes with recognised trade unions. Should no substantive change be required at this point, the policy will move to the next review cycle.





## Appendix one

### Disqualification from childcare information for relevant academies and employees

#### Information on Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 and obligations relating to Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 sets out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified and may not provide relevant childcare provision or be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Schools are prohibited from employing (or using as a volunteer) a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision in certain settings. A copy of the statutory guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

As we are a school setting providing childcare, we are required to check that individuals working in relevant roles are not disqualified under the regulations. The role that you have been conditionally offered has been identified as one to which the disqualification declaration applies.

Relevant staff are those working, volunteering or directly concerned with the management of child care of reception age children at any time; or children older than reception until age eight, outside school hours.

By way of a summary, a person is disqualified if any of the following apply:

- they have been cautioned for, or convicted of certain violent or sexual criminal offences against adults and any offences against children;
- they are the subject of an Order, direction or similar in respect of childcare, including orders made in respect of their own children;
- they have had registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare of children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering.

Under the legislation a person is disqualified if they are found to have committed a 'relevant offence', which includes (a) being convicted of a relevant offence or (b) on or after 6 April 2007, being given a caution, reprimand or warning for a relevant offence. A list of the relevant offences that lead to the disqualification of an individual is set out in the tables in the statutory guidance.

Please read through this and contact us before your employment commences if you have anything to declare under the disqualification guidance. If you are unsure if a specific offence / event is applicable to you after reading the Ofsted lists, then please let us know so that we can advise you appropriately. If you cannot access this information via the link, please let us know.

You should also be aware that, from this point forward, if your circumstances change relating to the disqualification guidance, you are obligated to inform us of this without delay.

## Appendix two

### Risk assessment – Screening information not received before starting (Not DBS)

<b>Name of individual</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Post applied for</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Person completing risk assessment</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Post</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Date of risk assessment</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.	<b>Item missing</b>	Choose an item.
<b>DBS Disclosure number</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>DBS Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.

Our safer recruitment policy requires that an individual cannot commence work where more than one of the pre-employment checks is outstanding

<b>Reason for considering commencement of employment prior to receiving clearance:</b>	<b>Consequences to service delivery of waiting for clearance:</b>	<b>Level of access during 'waiting period' (include level of unsupervised access to students):</b>
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Notes from discussion with most recent employer (did they have any safeguarding concerns?)</b>	<b>Information available:</b>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Are all of the other checks complete?</b>	Choose an item.
	If No, the individual cannot commence work without agreement of Head of HR CoE	
<b>Proposed supervision arrangements during 'waiting period' and any other monitoring arrangements / control measures:</b>	<b>Has any adverse information been disclosed?</b>	Choose an item.
Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>If yes, Is the information relevant to the post being taken up?</b>	Choose an item.
	If Yes, the individual cannot commence work without agreement of Head of HR CoE	
	<b>Comments:</b>	
	Click or tap here to enter text.	

## Prospective employee declaration

The information I have provided during this risk assessment is a true and accurate record. By signing, I am confirming that I have no reason to believe that any information, other than that already provided, will be disclosed on the disclosure certificate issued by the Criminal Records Bureau.

<b>Prospective employee name</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Post</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Signature of prospective employee</b>	
<b>Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.

## Assessment of risk

Following the assessment detailed overleaf, I have assessed the risk to be Choose an item.. I have sought the advice of a regional head of HR and our agreed decision is:

- ☐ The prospective employee will not commence work prior to satisfactory clearances.
- ☐ The prospective employee may commence work with the identified control measures. I undertake to personally review the situation at intervals of no less than every two weeks.

### Business Services Team Leader

<b>Name</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Principal</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.

## Reviews undertaken

Date	Details / Outcome of review	Next review due
Click or tap to enter a date.		Click or tap to enter a date.
Click or tap to enter a date.		Click or tap to enter a date.
Click or tap to enter a date.		Click or tap to enter a date.

