



Recruitment and Selection Policy & Procedure

Adopted By: Board of Trustees

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Date of Issue:	16 October 2023
Policy applies to:	All staff employed by the Wessex Multi-Academy Trust.
Policy Version Number:	02
Purpose of the document:	To provide those with the responsibility of recruitment and selection a policy and procedural document to follow.
Summary of the main points:	<p>The document provides:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Detailed guidance to develop and maintain high standards of professional and effective recruitment. 2. Principles and responsibilities of safe recruitment within the Trust.
Approved by:	This policy has been adopted from the Local Authority and had been discussed with the relevant trade unions.
Reviewer:	Robyn Symes, HR Manager
Summary of amendments:	Amendments to procedure summary to reflect the requirement to conduct online searches. Updated to reflect KCSIE 2023
Next review due:	15 October 2024

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Recruitment and Selection Procedure – The Framework

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Employees are a Trust's most important resource. In serving the needs of its pupils, the Trust can only be as effective as the people it employs.
- 1.2 Successful and thorough recruitment and selection has a fundamental role to play in ensuring the people with the right combination of knowledge, competencies and personal attributes are appointed.
- 1.3 Under sections 175 and 157 of the Education Act 2002 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, Trust Boards and Local Governing Bodies in all schools and academies must ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is vital that the Trust adopts recruitment and selection procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them, in order to safeguard children.

2 Scope

- 2.1 It is vital that measures described in this guidance are applied thoroughly whenever someone is recruited to work in a school. Those are not only people who regularly come into contact with children or are responsible for children, but who regularly work in a setting where nevertheless, they will be seen as safe and trustworthy because of their regular presence.
- 2.2 **The Local Authority will not accept liability for any actions, claims, costs or expenses arising out of a schools decision not to follow this recommended policy or procedure, where it is found that the Board of Trustees/Local Governing Body have been negligent or has acted in an unfair or discriminatory manner.**

3 The Policy

- 3.1 This policy and procedure has been designed to provide detailed guidance to develop and maintain high standards of professional and effective recruitment practice.
- 3.2 The policy provides guidance in planning, monitoring and carefully undertaking recruitment.
- 3.3 The Wessex MAT and its schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its recruitment practice and expects all school-based employees and volunteers to share this commitment.

- 3.4 Good practice and equality of opportunity are integral to Wessex MAT recruitment and selection processes. Recruitment and selection in Wessex MAT and all its schools shall be approached in a fair, consistent, equitable, transparent and effective manner, with due regard for Equal Opportunities legislation.
- 3.5 In cases of redundancy and redeployment, alternative recruitment practices will apply.

4 Guiding principles

- 4.1 Guiding principles, which reflect good employment practice and appropriate employment legislation, are the minimum principles established by the council, in consultation with Headteachers/Heads of School and the recognised Trade Unions and professional associations. These principles must be observed in recruitment and selection in schools.
- 4.2 These principles are highlighted as key steps in the following procedure summary.
- 4.3 These principles should be viewed as minimum 'must dos' designed to assist schools in making sound, informed employment decisions. The standards ensure measures to safeguard children.
- 4.4 Schools may introduce further standards, providing they do not conflict with these essential requirements.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Board of Trustees will be responsible for the management and implementation of this policy.
- 5.2 They will ensure that managers involved in recruitment and selection in the Wessex MAT and its schools are aware of their responsibilities within this policy.
- 5.3 The Board of Trustees will ensure that at least one person on an interview panel has received Safer Recruitment training in accordance with the School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Recruitment & Selection Procedure Summary (updated October 2022)

STEP 1: ESTABLISH THE VACANCY NEED

- The Headteacher/Head of School should establish whether the vacancy must be filled and if so the nature of the work that will be undertaken. **(Appendix 1)**
- The cost implications on the school's budget will be a consideration as will any changes in workload that are foreseen or any plans for restructuring posts and or work allocation.

STEP 2: PREPARE THE JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

- A job description **(Appendix 2)** should be made available for each vacancy, outlining the job purpose and principal duties and responsibilities. The pay range for the post must be established at this stage ensuring that the pay range reflects the level and responsibility of the post.
- Every job description should make reference to the employee's responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Job descriptions for non-teaching employees can be accessed via the school's JE portfolio. If you cannot find a suitable job description within the portfolio and wish to create a new job description, please discuss this with the HR team before advertising the position.
- A person specification **(Appendix 3)** should be drawn up for each vacancy, outlining the essential qualities (i.e: skills, qualifications, experience and personal attributes) required in the post. The person specification should include specific reference to the suitability of the person to work with children and the degree of responsibility they will have for children in the particular role.

STEP 3: PLAN THE RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

- Every appointment should be carefully planned and a clear, realistic timetable produced covering each stage of the recruitment process. Ensure enough time is allowed for each stage, incorporating adequate time for potential candidates to serve notice in existing employment.
- Within each stage of the timetable, the following should be included:
 - The methods to be used in the selection process (e.g. psychometric testing, group exercises, lesson observations etc)
 - Who will be involved at each stage of the process and what their responsibilities will be (book the necessary times, dates, room locations in their diary for shortlisting, interview planning, ensure at least one person on the interview panel has successfully completed safer recruitment training, testing and interviews etc)

STEP 4: ADVERTISE THE VACANCY

- Vacancies should be advertised in appropriate media allowing adequate time for its publication.
- Headteachers, Heads of School and deputy headteacher vacancies should be advertised in National Press unless there is a good reason that has been agreed with the LA as to why not (e.g. a restructure)
- The content of the advertisement should include:-
 - An appropriate headline (e.g. job title and location)
 - A brief summary of the role and person specification
 - The rewards (e.g. pay and other benefits e.g. TLR or SEN)
 - Terms and conditions (e.g. teachers or non-teaching pay and conditions, part time, status etc)
 - If the post is fixed term, include reason and duration of the fixed term period (see Appendix 20 for a list of suitable reasons for a fixed term contract)
 - The action necessary to respond

- The closing date for applications
- Equal opportunities statement
- Safeguarding of Children statement
- The disability 'two tick' symbol (optional)
- The date the interviews will be held
- Right to Work in the UK Statement
- The school and (if appropriate) the County Council logo
- See **appendix 5 & 6** in the toolkit (sample advertisement and advertising checklist)

STEP 5: PROVIDE A JOB INFORMATION PACK & CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS FOR SELECTION PROCESS

- On receipt of application requests, the school should issue a job information pack.
- The nature of the post to be filled will determine the precise information to be sent. As a minimum the following is recommended:
 - Application form
 - Job description (**Appendix 2**)
 - Person specification (**Appendix 3**)
 - Criminal Records Declaration Form
 - Appropriate information about the school
 - Statement of the Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection policy
 - Statement of the terms & conditions relating to the post

NB: if advertising online please ensure you send attachments electronically so they can be linked to the advert.

STEP 6: SHORTLIST CANDIDATES

- Each applicant should be individually assessed against the criteria specified in the person specification
- Decisions should not be based on assumptions or generalisations about particular groups or categories of people. Care should be taken not to discriminate unfairly in any shortlisting decision.
- Shortlisting should be carried out by a minimum of 2 people (as nominated by the Chair of the interview panel who may themselves be involved), maintaining a gender balance where practicable.
- Generally, all candidates who meet the essential criteria should be shortlisted for interview unless large numbers are involved, when it may be necessary to shortlist against both essential and desirable criteria in order to produce a suitable final shortlist. (**Appendix 6**)
- Once the shortlisting has been completed, those candidates selected for interview should be written to and invited to attend interview. (**Appendix 7**)
- Also included with the invite to interview letter should be the criminal records self-declaration form, HR14 (**Appendix 5**), a request that the candidate brings appropriate identification with them to enable completion of the employee identity check and right to work in the UK check (**Appendix 13**) and any qualification certificates to be viewed and recorded, as these will be needed for the DBS and single central record. Where the applicant falls under the requirements of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations, you should also send the form entitled 'Form to assess suitability of staff and volunteers – Childcare Disqualification Regulations' for completion and for them to bring to interview (**Appendix 5a**)
- Those applicants who have not been shortlisted should be written to and advised that they have been unsuccessful on this occasion. Alternatively, the original advert for the post can state the date by which candidates can assume they haven't been successful if they do not receive a response from the school.
- Records of all applicants (successful and unsuccessful) and the justification for the shortlisting decision must be maintained for up to a year in order to respond to any claims of unfair discrimination.

STEP 7: OBTAIN REFERENCES

- Obtain references from two sources for all shortlisted candidates including internal and external applicants, one of which must be a previous employer. (**Appendix 9**)

- References must be in writing and should ask specifically about a candidate's suitability to work with children, as well as their suitability for the post, and should be obtained prior to interview.
- Offers of employment can be made subject to references where not available at interview.

STEP 8: ON ARRIVAL FOR INTERVIEW

- Record details on Employee ID check and view original documents for DBS check.
- View and record Right to Work in the UK information and keep a copy of the evidence.
- View and record Qualification certificates for the single central record.
- Give candidate medical questionnaire and ask them to complete and return to Occupational Health asap if they are successful at interview.
- View completed Childcare Disqualification form (where applicable) to ascertain whether they are eligible to work with this group of children.

STEP 9: INTERVIEW

- The interview panel should consist of at least 2 people, maintaining a gender balance where practicable. At least one member of the interview panel MUST have successfully completed the safer recruitment training.
- The interview should be held in a suitable room where the interviews can take place uninterrupted.
- Interview questions should be planned and structured in advance.
- Core questions should be applied consistently and asked of all candidates.
- If a fixed term appointment, explain reasons and duration during interview.
- Notes of each interview should be recorded with due regard to equal opportunities legislation. **(See appendices 10-12)**
- Following interviews, all candidates should be assessed against all aspects of the objective selection criteria.

STEP 10: THE SELECTION DECISION

- The decision taken should be based on determining who is the most suitable candidate as assessed against the person specification and job description. **(Appendix 14)**
- All candidates should be given equal consideration.
- Reasons for selection/non selection of candidates should be objective, relevant and clearly recorded.

STEP 11: PRE EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

- Post offer, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT all pre-employment checks should be obtained as quickly as possible to include:
 - Identity checks
 - Confirmation of the right to work in the UK (retain copies of documents seen)
 - Any outstanding references
 - DBS with barred list check
 - Medical clearance (**ONLY** send for clearance once offer has been made and accepted)
 - Verification of qualifications where a requirement of the job
 - Prohibition from Teaching check
 - Online search of candidate's suitability to work with children – care should be taken to ensure the search is purely about the candidate's suitability to work with children and to avoid any unconscious bias or risk of discrimination. A person not involved with the appointment panel should conduct the searches and only share if and when findings are relevant and of concern.

- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 requirements are met (where applicable)
- If the person has lived or worked outside of the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate
- For management positions in Independent schools, including academies and free schools a check that a person is not subject to a Section 128 direction is required.
- **SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT START APPOINTEES IN POST**, until all of the appropriate checks have been carried out, in order to ensure that children are safeguarded and that the individual is fit to undertake the role. (See further guidance on pre-employment checks overleaf and full guidance in **Appendix 15**)
- Successful candidates should be advised not to resign from any existing employment prior to clearance being obtained.

STEP 12: OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

- A provisional verbal offer will normally be made in the first instance to the successful candidate. It must be explained this offer is subject to pending DBS checks (where appropriate), medical clearance, and references where not already obtained (and anything else, such as sight of original qualifications or work permit) and after the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations requirements have been checked (where applicable).
- Once a verbal offer has been made this should be followed up in writing:-
 - For support staff see **Appendix 16**, additionally a copy of the supplementary information at **Appendix 17** should be included.
 - For teaching staff see **Appendix 18**, additionally a copy of the supplementary information at **Appendix 19** should be included.
- When offering a fixed term appointment, state the reason and duration of the appointment and follow this up in writing. (**See guidance at Appendix 20**)
- Be careful not to quote full time salary rates for part time work.

STEP 13: RECRUITMENT FILE / COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- A structured recruitment file should be maintained for at least 6 months for each vacancy, including copies of all documents relating to the recruitment process.
- This should be stored for 6 months following the appointment to ensure any claims or requests for information made after the appointment can be appropriately responded to.

STEP 14: POST APPOINTMENT INDUCTION

- All new appointees must receive an appropriate induction programme regardless of previous experience. (See guidance at Appendix 21)
- The purpose of the induction:
 - Provide training and information about the schools/Trusts policies and procedures
 - Confirm the conduct expected by the Trust
 - Provide opportunities for the new employee to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities
 - Enable the Headteacher/Head of School or line manager to identify any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

GUIDANCE ON PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

Any offer of employment should be conditional upon:

- Receipt of 2 satisfactory references if not already received
- Satisfactory identity checks, and confirmation of eligibility to work in the UK
- Satisfactory enhanced DBS with barred list check
- Verification of candidate's occupational health clearance to teach / operate in support staff capacity
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional status (e.g.: QTS, QTLS, NPQH, HLTA)
- For teaching posts – verification of a statutory induction period for those who obtained QTS status after 7 May 1999
Prohibition from Teaching check via the Teaching Regulation Agency - <https://www.gov.uk/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers>
- Online search of candidates suitability to work with children – care should be taken to ensure the search is purely about the candidates suitability to work with children and to avoid any unconscious bias or risk of discrimination. A person not involved with the appointment panel should conduct the searches and only share if and when findings are relevant and of concern.
- For non-teaching posts – satisfactory completion of a 6 month probationary period (no probationary period is required for existing employees changing jobs within local government, however an appropriately structured induction is recommended)

In cases where it is essential, due to the needs of the pupils, to engage a new employee prior to the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks, a risk assessment MUST be undertaken, and a check made of the Children's barred list.

Further reference documents and legal considerations

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Statutory Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>
- Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools 2021 - [Staffing and employment: advice for schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staffing-and-employment-advice-for-schools)
- Teaching Regulation Agency - [Teaching Regulation Agency - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/teaching-regulation-agency)
- Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 - [School Standards and Framework Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/26)
- The Education Act 2002 - [Education Act 2002 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/26)
- School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 - [The School Staffing \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/si/2013/1220)
- Equality Act 2010 - [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15)
- The Childcare Act 2006 - [Childcare Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/26)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 - [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) Regulations 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/si/2009/1220)
- Safer Recruitment training (Mentor via The Safeguarding Company)
- Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach of Teachers and Entrants
- Criminal Records Checking (CRC) Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

***Should further guidance be required, please contact your Human Resources Adviser
Appendices can be found in the Recruitment and Selection toolkit on NEXUS.***