

Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Number 31

Review of the Policy

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as necessary.

Date reviewed: November 2025

Next review due: November 2028

Issue 3

“Inspiring us all to create a better world”

Matthew 5 13-15 “You are the salt of the earth....you are the light of the world.”

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Holmer C of E Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- recruit the best possible staff to vacancies, on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

The contents of this policy have been adapted from a model policy that reflects the guidance from DfE on safer recruitment. It also reflects the training in safer recruitment.

1 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

There are some statutory requirements for the appointment of some staff in schools – notably head teachers and deputy head teachers. Holmer C of E Academy will ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education – September 2022 (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance), any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and in compliance with current employment legislation. These requirements change from time-to-time and must be met.

2 IDENTIFICATION OF RECRUITERS

Subject to the availability of training, the school aims to have at least two members of the governing body who have successfully received accredited training in safe recruitment procedures.

Currently, training is held by:

Head Teacher: Jayne Maund Deputy Head Teacher: Anna Keating

Governors: Samantha Lewis Emma Stackhouse Amy Barnstaple

INVITING APPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Advertisements for posts – whether in newspapers, journals or on-line – **will** include the statement:

“This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.”

Commented [CJ1]: Should also include safeguarding responsibilities of the post
Whether the post is exempt from rehabilitation of offenders act 1974 and that amendments to the act provide that certain offences are protected - See Par 210 KCSiE 2022

- 2.2 Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

- job description and person specification;
- the school’s safeguarding policy;
- the school’s recruitment policy (this document);
- the selection procedure for the post;
- an application form

- 2.3 All prospective applicants must complete, in full, an application form. A **curriculum vitae (CV) alone is not sufficient**; candidates must complete a **full application form** even if they submit a CV

- 2.4 If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual’s application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

- 2.5 All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

3 SHORT-LISTING AND REFERENCES

- 3.1 Short-listing of candidates will be against the person specification for the post.

- 3.2 Where possible, references will be taken up before the selection stage, so that any discrepancies can be probed during the selection stage.

- 3.3 References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted.

- 3.4 Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

- 3.5 Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

- 3.6 DBS certificates do not need to be retained to meet single central record obligations. If retained, they must only be stored for up to six months, and securely disposed of thereafter, in line with data protection protocols.

- 3.7 As part of due diligence, short-listed applicants may be subject to an online search of publicly available information. Candidates will be informed accordingly

3.8 Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to
- the safeguarding of children;
- the candidate's suitability for this post.

3.9 School employees are entitled to see and receive, if requested, copies of their employment references.

4 THE SELECTION PROCESS

4.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.

4.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be aware of the school's filtering and monitoring systems, understand their role in online safety, and ensure related training is in place.

4.3 Interviews will always be face-to-face. Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face interview (which may be via visual electronic link).

4.4 Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters;
- to declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure;
- to demonstrate their capability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people;
- to declare any information that is likely appear on any staff childcare disqualification disclosure.

5 EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

5.1 All offers of employment are conditional upon the following:

- provision of proof of identity
- satisfactory DBS clearance
- provision of actual certificates of qualifications
- completion of a confidential health questionnaire
- provision of proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK
- two references which are considered satisfactory by the school
- satisfactory Prohibition Order check, where applicable.
- New guidance (KCSIE 2023) requires school safeguarding protocols to apply when **external agencies use school premises**. Usual safeguarding procedures and referral pathways should apply.

5.2 The School will:

- verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website;
- obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check which will include barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity;

- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.
- verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, should follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks considered appropriate
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- verify that a candidate is not subject to a prohibition order GTCE Check issued by the Secretary of State, using the Teacher Regulatory Agency accessed through Employer Access Online service .

If the school allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, then they should carry out a risk assessment and ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed.

5.3 Single central record

The school will keep a single central record, referred to in the regulations (described in the following paragraph) as the register. The single central record must cover the following people:

- all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school: in colleges, this means those providing education to children; and

The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- an identity check;
- a barred list check;
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate;
- a prohibition from teaching check;
- further checks on people living or working outside the UK;
- a check of professional qualifications; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

For supply staff, schools should also include written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of supply staff, and the date that confirmation was received.

Where checks are carried out on volunteers, schools should record this on the single central record.

5.4 Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders:

- as an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions 1975 2013 2020) Order using criminal

record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Holmer C of E Academy complies fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly

- Holmer C of E Academy undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed
- Holmer C of E Academy can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that Holmer C of E Academy are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)
- Holmer C of E Academy can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected
- Holmer C of E Academy is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background
- Holmer C of E Academy has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process (this document)
- Holmer C of E Academy actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records
- Holmer C of E Academy select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- an application for a criminal record check is only submitted for a DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position
- Holmer C of E Academy ensures that all those in Holmer C of E Academy who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences
- Holmer C of E Academy also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Exceptions Order 1975 2013 2020
- at interview, or in a separate discussion, Holmer C of E Academy ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment
- Holmer C of E Academy makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice and makes a copy available on request
- Holmer C of E Academy undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

6 INDUCTION

- 6.1 All staff who are new to the school will receive induction training that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices.
- 6.2 Regular meetings will be held during the first 3 months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s).

7. Low Level Concerns

“The policy includes a robust low-level concerns framework. Staff may share concerns internally, including behaviours that do not meet harm thresholds but may suggest risk. These will be addressed according to our confidential low-level concerns process.”