

Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy September 2022

Outcome:

There is a careful selection and vetting of staff and volunteers working with The PLACE Independent School, and monitoring of such people to help prevent unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm children.

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the recruitment process and in staff management development and training. Throughout the processes of recruitment and selection, it is therefore important that applicants for positions working with children are aware of the commitment to safer recruitment and safeguarding children in general.

The company makes sure that safeguarding features highly in all the processes, policies, procedures and practice and we hope to send a clear message to all applicants and existing staff and volunteers and helps to deter unsuitable individuals and inappropriate behaviour.

Aims and Values

As an organisation we recognise the importance of recruiting the right people to work with the children in our care, ensuring that we have a balanced team in terms of gender, ethnicity and age and take stringent steps to maintain the safety of the young people. The PLACE adopts a consistent and thorough process of safe recruitment in order to ensure that those recruited are suitable to work.

What we do

At The PLACE Independent school safer recruitment practice is applied at all stages of the recruitment process. The organisation refers to the Keeping children safe in education 2022 for further reference.

- Advertising and information for applicants
- Selection of candidates through person specification
- Interviewing short-listed candidates, questions and written exercise
- Linking certificates with application form
- Identity check
- Offer of appointment to successful candidates
- References, written and verbal
- DBS Checks
- Induction and supervision of newly appointed staff
- Social media checks

All advertisements clearly state the role and responsibilities required for each post advertised.

An application form is either filled out from a recruitment site (such as TES jobs or Indeed) or sent to the person, along with details on the company, job description and person specification. We do not consider applicants unless a fully completed application form is returned. The application form asks for:

- Full personal details
- A full history of employment, both paid and voluntary, since leaving school including any period of further education or training
- Gaps in employment and explanations for these, if any
- Relevant academic and vocational qualifications
- A declaration that the person has no convictions and cautions
- Referee details

Once candidates are shortlisted against person specifications for positions available, the candidates are contacted and invited to visit the school and spend a day with the staff to allow them and the team. Following this the candidate is then invited for a formal panel interview. At least one week's notice is offered for candidate to attend an interview, unless otherwise agreed. The candidates to bring in ID (including any active DBS) this information is then used for identity checking, and all original certificates and qualifications to link against the application form and information that has already been provided.

Wherever possible young people will be involved in the interview stage, whether this be on the interview panel or offering guided tours around the school. This allows for the candidate's attitude towards children to be viewed and for children to have a part in the decision-making process. Children will not be left alone with candidates at any time.

On arrival, all visitors will receive a lanyard so that everyone on site is aware they are visiting. The lanyard will contain key information such as DSLs, signing in and the fire alarm.

Applicants are again asked to discuss any convictions or cautions, if declared on the application form and gaps in employment are discussed to confirm previous information.

The candidate's fitness to work is asked during the interview stage as part of the interview process. Medical questionnaires are requested as part of a job offer.

The Panel will ask agree questions to candidate relating to the requirements of the post. The questions are then graded. This will be explained to the candidate before the

interview commences. The interview panel will also explore the candidate's attitude towards children, their ability to support and commit to the safeguarding

and promotion of children and any discrepancies arising from the information provided.

The interviewee will ask whether the candidate wishes to add anything or ask any further questions.

A decision is made once all applicants have been interviewed on each particular session, and successful candidates are contacted via email in the form of an offer letter, pending successful references and DBS and other necessary checks (such as right to work in the UK). A candidate may be invited back for an informal chat regarding the role if a decision has not been reached from the first interview, as some areas may not have been demonstrated well or fully covered at the interview.

References are then obtained, with one reference at least being from a current or previous employer. Once the written references are obtained then verbal references are followed up to confirm the viability of the reference and to allow any further information to be passed on that may assist in the decision-making process.

If a candidate provides an existing and clear enhanced DBS that is less than 18 months old and signs an employment contract stating that no other offences have been committed during this period then we will allow the successful candidate to begin work with supervision and no lone working with young people until such time as a DBS has been obtained through the company, including disqualification by association disclosure from the candidate.

Once all relevant documentation has been verified and approved by the manager, a letter is sent to the successful candidate stating such. This letter might also at this stage include a start date and contract of employment. The company will then require that this is sent back signed, along with 2 passport photos for an ID card and personnel file.

The new employee is on probation for six months and only then will be confirmed in post, if performance is not to the standard required employment can be terminated or an individual action plan be put in place and probationary period extended.

All relevant information will be recorded on the single central record.

All staff upon beginning employment will undergo a thorough induction training programme (see training policy).

Staff will receive regular supervision. (see Staff Supervision Policy)

Agency Staff and Contractors

If agency staff are used to work with children, we will obtain confirmation from the staffing agency that the appropriate checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. We will ensure that the contract or arrangement with the staffing agency imposes an obligation on it to carry out the same checks as the company does for its own staff. We will also ask if the DBS disclosure contains information and, if so, obtain relevant information from the agency that obtained it. The same enquiries will be made of any contractor we use to provide services that give rise to the staff having contact with children.