



Safer Recruitment Policy

June 2021

Version 3.0

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout Sonning Common Primary School (SCPS) and to support the creation of a safer culture by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in our care. This policy complies with guidance outlined in “Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 1.2 This policy reinforces the expected conduct outlined in the Code of Conduct for Staff as well as the school’s Whistleblowing Policy with which all staff are expected to be familiar with. All successful candidates for paid employment or volunteers will be made aware of these documents.
- 1.3 The Governing Body recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people. The school is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection activities are undertaken in a fair and transparent way and that appointments are based on the candidate judged to be most suitable. The aims of this policy are to:
 - attract and appoint the highest calibre of applicants;
 - ensure safe and equitable recruitment and selection is conducted at all times;
 - deter, identify and reject prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.
- 1.4 Sonning Common Primary School is committed to using procedures that deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with the school’s safeguarding and child protection procedures and practices.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Governing Body will:
 - ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department for Education Guidance and Legal Requirements
 - monitor the school’s compliance with them
 - ensure that appropriate staff and governors have completed safer recruitment training (and repeat this every 5 years)

2.2 The Head Teacher will:

- ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
- ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in the school
- monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this document
- promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process

3 Equal opportunities

- 3.1 SCPS is committed to providing equality of opportunity at all stages of the recruitment and selection process and ensuring that candidates are treated fairly and lawfully throughout the process. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation or trade union membership.
- 3.2 Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability.

4 Planning for recruitment

- 4.1 Prior to undertaking recruitment activity for vacancies other than the Headteacher, the Headteacher will, working with a senior manager as appropriate, ensure that there is a review of the job description and person specification and ensure that this document is an accurate reflection of the role to be filled.
- 4.2 The Governing Body and/or Headteacher will make a determination as to whether a role is to be filled on a permanent, fixed-term, temporary or any other basis, taking into account any advice received from Education Personnel Services.

5 Advertising vacancies

- 5.1 It will be normal practice for all vacancies to be advertised unless there is a good reason not to do so. Advertisement may be either internally (for example on school noticeboards) or externally, depending on the type of vacancy, the nature of the contract which exists and the current nature of the recruitment market. When advertising externally, the school will ensure that school staff are aware, to allow current members of staff to apply, should they wish to do so.

- 5.2 All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statements:

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We are an equal opportunities employer.

All posts are subject to an enhanced DBS check. The possession of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from obtaining this post.

All applications are considered confidentially and according to the nature of the role and information disclosed. Application should complete the OCC application form, CVs are not accepted.

Advertisements for posts should also make clear that staff will be expected to promote fundamental British values.

- 5.3 All applicants will receive a pack containing the following when applying for a post:

- A statement of the school's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of the pupils
- Job description and person specification
- The school's Safeguarding Policy
- The school's Safer Recruitment Policy (this document)
- The selection procedure for the post
- The school's whistleblowing policy
- An application form
- Copy of the School's Code of Conduct

- 5.4 Prospective applicants must complete, in full, and return a signed application form. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed forms has not passed.

- 5.5 Candidates submitting an application form completed online will be asked to sign the form if called for interview.

- 5.6 A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

6 Shortlisting and selection processes

- 6.1 At least one member of the Selection and Recruitment Panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment within the last 5 years, as per legislative requirements (School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009). The panel will normally consist of at least two senior members of staff.

- 6.2 During the shortlisting process all applications will be assessed equally against the same criteria, without exception or variation. All applications will be carefully scrutinised, with particular care paid to any gaps in employment; repeated and/or regular/frequent changes in employment; and anomalies or discrepancies in information contained within the form. Any such concerns will be taken up with the candidate at interview and will be satisfactorily resolved before any firm offer of employment is made.
- 6.3 Candidates will be short listed against the person specification for the post.
- 6.4 Two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer where possible, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the procedure (note references should come from the head of the previous organisation, not a colleague).
- 6.5 References will be sought directly from the referee, and where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges. Where possible references will be requested in advance of interview.
- 6.6 Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- 6.7 Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:
- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
 - Any substantiated allegations
 - Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people
 - The candidate's suitability for the post, including the candidate's ability and willingness to promote fundamental British values.
- 6.8 Reference requests will include the following:
- Applicants current post and salary
 - Sickness record
 - Attendance record
 - Disciplinary record
- 6.9 Candidates called to interview will receive:
- A letter confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
 - Details of the interview day including details of the panel members
 - A further copy of the person specification
 - Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process

- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview

Candidates will be asked to provide proof of identity on the interview day.

7 The Selection Process

- 7.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the post but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.
- 7.2 Interviews will, except for extenuating circumstances, always be face-to-face and may include additional interview techniques such as observation or exercises.
- 7.3 Candidates will be required to:
- Explain any gaps in employment
 - Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel
 - Declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure
 - Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people and their ability and willingness to promote fundamental British values
- 7.4 A selection decision will be made based on a fair and thorough assessment of the skills and abilities demonstrated by all the candidates against the requirements of the person specification/job description during the selection process.

8 Pre-employment checks

- 8.1 Any offer of employment made to the preferred candidate will be made conditionally, in writing, subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks (satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance).
- 8.2 All successful candidates will be required to:
- Provide proof of identity
 - Complete an enhanced DBS application and receive satisfactory clearance
 - Provide proof of professional status
 - Provide original certificates of qualifications
 - Complete a confidential health questionnaire
 - Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK (overseas police check for any individual who within the last five years has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom, whether they are a British citizen or not).

8.3 All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the school's personnel file
- Recorded on the school's Single Central Record
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received.

8.4 The candidate will not normally commence employment until all relevant pre-employment checks have been completed and must not start until at least the candidate's identity and right to work in the UK have been established. In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may determine to allow an individual to commence employment in regulated activity prior to the receipt of a DBS check. In these circumstances, all other checks, including a separate barred list check where appropriate, must have been completed and he or she will not be left to work unsupervised. A risk assessment will also be carried out to determine whether other safeguarding measures may need to be put in place.

8.5 Contracts of employment will be received by the individual no later than the first day of their employment

9 Other Adults in School

9.1 Sonning Common Primary School will only use those employment agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. Any information disclosed as part of the DBS check will be treated confidentially. These agencies should be able to demonstrate that their staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. SCPS will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives at school.

9.2 For trainee/student teachers who are salaried by the school, the school will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. For other trainee/student teachers, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks and for the school to ensure that such checks have been undertaken prior to deployment within the school.

9.3 For peripatetic teachers (eg literacy tutors, sports coaches, music teachers) SCPS will require that all necessary checks and DBS requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

9.4 For volunteers the school will undertake the appropriate checks in line with the guidance provided by OCC.

10 Retention of recruitment records

- 10.1 For unsuccessful applicants, all paperwork gathered as part of a recruitment exercise will be kept confidentially and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, for a period of 12 months after the interview date to ensure that if there are any claims raised, the school is able to rely on its records to justify its judgment and decision. After this period these records will be confidentially disposed of.
- 10.2 For staff appointed to work at the school, information gathered during the recruitment process will be used to form part of the employee's personnel file and, where applicable, will be mandatorily recorded on the school's Single Central Record.

11 Induction

- 11.1 All staff and volunteers who are new to the school will receive information on the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and guidance on safe working practices which would include guidance on acceptable conduct/behaviour. These expectations will form part of new staff members' induction training.
- 11.2 All successful candidates will undergo a period of induction and will:
- Meet regularly with their induction tutor
OR
 - Meet regularly with their line manager
 - Attend appropriate training including generalist child protection training

12 Review

- 12.1 The Policy is available on the school web site and internal cloud services. The policy and schemes of work are available on request to parents, LA, OFSTED and others working for the school, through the Head teacher.
- 12.2 This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Head teacher and monitored by the Safeguarding Link Governor changes made to ensure that the Policy is relevant and up to date.