TrustEd Schools Alliance
Keeping Children Safe in Education: Safer Recruitment Processes for Schools and Trust Central Staff 2025

This policy is derived from statutory guidance and has been **shared with** the following professional associations representing Teachers, Headteachers and Support Staff:

- Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
- GMB
- National Association of Headteachers (NAHT)
- National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
- National Education Union (NEU)
- Unison

FREQUENCY OF REVIEW: Every year

COMMITTEE: Personnel Committee

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AUTHOR: Shropshire HR

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Adopted by the Board of TrustEd Schools Alliance

Signed_____ Dated _____
Chair of Trust Board

Signed_____ Dated _____
Chief Education Officer (CEO)

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Signature of Headteacher:		**Date:**	
LGB Gov with lead Responsibility:			
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Name of DSL:			
Name of Dep DSL:			
Notes:			

Monitoring and Review
The Trust will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on an annual basis.

Recruitment Toolkit: Supporting Template Documents

- Welcome letter for candidates
- Application Form
- Shortlisting grid
- Invite to Interview Letter
- Request for additional information: shortlisted candidates
- Reference request form
- Conditional Offer of appointment
- New starter form
- Recruitment flowchart
- Recruitment pack for school governors and volunteers

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Key Steps in the Safer Recruitment Process: KCSiE 2025

This checklist has been created by Shropshire HR to support the Trust in their safer recruitment processes.

*Unless otherwise specified, **'school'** means: all schools within the Trust.*

For additional context and detail, schools should refer to KCSiE 2025. The associated paragraph numbers from KCSiE 2025 have been included in brackets.

1. Safer Recruitment Training

a. those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children should receive appropriate safer recruitment training, covering, at least, the content of ***KCSiE Part 3*** *(212)*
b. at least one of the persons who conducts an interview must have completed safer recruitment training *(213)*

2. Job Description & Person Specification

a. key recruitment documents should set out the safeguarding responsibilities of the role and include the Trust/school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children *(214)*

3. Advertisements

a. job adverts should include the Trust's/school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear to applicants that relevant safeguarding checks will be undertaken prior to appointment confirmation *(215)*
b. they should also set out the safeguarding responsibilities of the post, as per the job description and person specification, along with the requirement for an appropriate DBS check *(217)*

4. Application Packs

a. should include a job description, person specification and application form and child protection policy *(214/217)*
b. application forms should state that it is an offence for someone to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children *(216)*
c. Trust Central Office and Trust schools should only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information *(219)*
d. applicants should be advised that should they be shortlisted, further information relating to criminal records, sanctions and disqualifications will be requested to be considered by the Trust/school and discussed with the applicant at interview *(220-223)*
e. Trust/schools should provide, or direct applicants via an online link to, copies of the Trust's policies on child protection and the employment of ex-offenders *(217)*
f. applicants should be advised that where they have submitted an electronic application, they will be asked to sign a hard copy of the application form, should they be invited to attend for interview *(222)*

5. Shortlisting

a. at least two people should carry out the shortlisting exercise (it is recommended that those who shortlist carry out the interview for a consistent approach), to consider any inconsistencies, look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them, and explore all potential concerns *(224)*
b. Trust/schools should consider carrying out an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the Trust/school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. *(225)*
c. shortlisted applicants should be advised that Trust/school will seek to obtain and verify at least one reference prior to interview *(226)*
d. shortlisted candidates should be asked to complete and return a self-declaration statement of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children *(220)*
e. any information disclosed via the self-declaration should be discussed at the interview *(223)*
f. the panel should check for gaps in employment history and note information of interest and/or concern provided on the application form, any self-declaration statement and/or in references. These should be explored with a shortlisted candidate during interview. *(224)*
g. Any information about past **disciplinary action** or **substantiated allegations** should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case *(232)*

6. Interview Preparation

a. where possible, Trust/schools should seek to obtain references prior to interview *(226),* and in any event, a satisfactory reference should be sought as a condition of an offer of employment in accordance with KCSiE guidance *(235).* Please consult your Trust HR Advisor with any queries in respect of references.
b. the panel should determine an appropriate range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post *(229-231)*
c. pupils/students should be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way. *(233)*
d. a list of questions should be agreed by the panel, based on the information submitted by the applicant via the fully completed application form, reference(s) and any self-declaration statement provided *(229-231)*
e. the panel should agree the process of asking questions and recording notes both during the interview and throughout the interview process, noting reasons for decisions taken *(229)*
f. invitations to interview should be sent to shortlisted candidates to include the list of original identity documents and relevant proof of qualifications they will be required to present for verification on the day they attend in person

7. Appointment & Induction of New Staff

a. all information considered in decision making should be clearly recorded along with decisions made *(234)*
b. offers of appointment should be conditional until the satisfactory completion of all mandatory pre-employment checks *(237)*
c. the 'new starter' checklist should be followed to include updating the SCR with the details of the new staff member *(273-279)*
d. the Induction checklist should be followed, and the process noted as complete on the SCR *(11)*
e. where applicable, a process of monitoring and confirming the successful completion of a probationary period should be recorded *(267)*

8. Agency and Third-Party Staff (Supply Staff)

a. the Trust/schools **must** obtain written notification from any agency, or third-party organisation, that they have carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the Trust/school that the Trust/school would otherwise perform *(290)*
b. where the agency has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate where there has been a disclosure, the Trust/school **must** obtain a copy of the certificate from the agency *(291)*

9. Contractors

a. Where Trust/schools use contractors to provide services, they should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the Trust/school *(294)*
b. the Trust/school should ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the Trust/school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check *(295)*
c. if an individual working at Trust Central Team/school is self-employed, the Trust/school should consider obtaining the DBS check on their behalf *(298)*

10. Volunteers

a. the Trust/school should undertake a written risk assessment and use professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required when appointing volunteers *(309-312)*
b. an appropriate DBS check should be undertaken by the Trust/school where volunteers are engaged in regulated activity *(313).* It is for Trust/schools to determine whether a volunteer is considered to be supervised. *(314/315)*

11. Role of the Trust

Recruitment Process

SLT Recruitment Process

New SLT post – if this is a restructure then this will need to be taken to the Trust Personnel Committee. This can be done by notifying the CEO who will ask the Trust Clerk to add this to the next agenda.

Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher Recruitment Process

If a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher post is going to be advertised, then the Trust need to be involved. The Trust will be involved in running the appointment process.

Headteacher Recruitment Process

A Headteacher post will be run by the Trust and the schools Local Governing Body.

TLR Recruitment Process

A TLR may be involved when restructuring if changes occur in school. As this has a financial implication due to staff taking on extra responsibilities. The Headteacher will be required to take this to the Personnel Committee for approval.

Appointments

- If you wish to appoint, this needs to be run past the Trust HR/Finance department. Teaching posts can be done in house.

- The Trust will provide an appropriate Job Description which will have been evaluated by Shropshire HR. This is vital to ensure that all schools remain consistent and avoid any disputes about pay.

- Vacancies can be advertised by advertising on various platforms such as the Trust Website, Shropshire Opportunities, WM Jobs (endures a cost an invoice must be provided), Shropshire Star, TES (endures a cost an invoice must be provided).

- If you have a new post that has not been held within school before, please contact Scarlett Beach prior to this appointment. The School and Trust can work alongside Shropshire HR Advisors to ensure this carried out appropriately with the correct Job Specification.

- Local Governing Bodies in our Trust schools are required to have an enhanced DBS check and ***may*** also be eligible for a check against the Children's Barred List *(317/18)*
- By using the free GOV.UK service, schools can check if a proposed governor is barred as a result of being subject to a section 128 direction. *(319)*

1. Policy Introduction

Safer recruitment is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education.

TrustEd Schools Alliance (the Trust) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Reference to 'the school' will also apply to 'the Trust' for the purpose of the Safer Recruitment of Trust Central Staff and senior leadership positions.

It is vital that a culture of vigilance is promoted across the setting, and as such, schools has adopted recruitment procedures that seek to deter, reject and identify people who may be unsuitable to work with children and young people.

All elements of the Safer Recruitment Policy ensure that the recruitment and selection processes outlined:

- meet the requirements of the relevant sections of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) (September 2025)
- set out prescribed vetting and checking procedures
- include a robust induction
- provide for ongoing training, supervision and monitoring of staff and volunteers

This policy outlines the steps our Trust and schools will take to ensure those employed are suitable to work with children and young people. Its main purpose is:

- to deter unsuitable individuals from applying to work with us
- to attract and engage suitable candidates
- to promote and maintain a culture of vigilance

The safer recruitment and selection process aims to support the selection of the most suitable applicant for a post based on the appropriate combination of ability, qualifications, experience and attitude, as measured against the job description and person specification.

All those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff **must** ensure that policy, processes and procedures are compliant with current employment legislation.

The KCSiE framework includes the following policies and guidance:

- DBS Guidance
- Low Level Safeguarding Concerns
- Maintaining Appropriate Relationships with Pupils
- Managing Allegations against Staff in School
- Professional Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Single Central Record Guidance
- Suitability Disqualification Guidance
- Whistleblowing Policy
-

2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to the recruitment of all staff and volunteers to include third party and supply staff. Headteacher appointments will follow the same principles with key recruitment responsibilities to be undertaken by the Local Governing Body and Trust Board.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Local Governing Body and Trust Board to monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and to be familiar with the current DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSiE) and its specific requirements relating to Safer Recruitment.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher of our schools to ensure that processes and procedures are in place to support the effective implementation of this policy and that all appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on all staff who work at the school.

Both the Local Governing Body and Headteacher **must** ensure, before convening any interview panel, that **at least one member** of the interview panel has completed training in 'Safer Recruitment'.

Local Governing bodies of schools may choose appropriate training and may take advice from the local safeguarding partners in doing so. The training should cover, as a minimum, the relevant content of the statutory KCSiE guidance with particular reference to '**Part 3: Safer Recruitment'**.

The Interview Panel must ensure that child protection and safeguarding matters are central to the interview process.

Any member of staff involved in the recruitment and selection process must ensure they refer to and comply with all elements of this policy and associated statutory guidance.

4. Preparing to Recruit

a. Identifying the Vacancy

When a vacancy arises, the Headteacher, in conjunction with the Trust/Local Governing Body, if appropriate, will review the needs of the school and ensure the post to be advertised effectively meets those needs.

In line with the school's current and future budget and staffing structure, as set by the Trust, the Headteacher will review the Job Description and Person Specification relating to the vacant post.

Prior to advertising, the Headteacher and Trust will consider the type of appointment to be made and determine the nature and length of the employment contract to be offered.

b. The Selection Panel

The selection panel will be formed as determined by the Headteacher/Local Governing Body/Trust.

With reference to KCSiE 2025, those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children should receive appropriate safer recruitment training, to cover, at a minimum, Part 3 of KCSiE 2025.

At least one of the persons who conducts an interview **must** have completed safer recruitment training.

Interviews must be conducted by a panel of **at least two people**.

c. Declaration of Interest

Any person on the interviewing panel who has any interest in, or is related to, any of the applicants, must declare that interest or relationship. This is to ensure fairness, objectivity and raise awareness across the selection panel.

If appropriate, an individual member may be removed or replaced on the selection panel.

d. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

The job description will summarise the duties and responsibilities of the post.

It should be a clear, concise and fair representation of the requirements of the post holder and should be reviewed and updated annually at appraisal and whenever a post becomes vacant. It should also confirm whether the post is suitable for any flexible working arrangements.

Where a job role is deemed to fall within the definition of regulated activity, the person specification will include the statutory criterion that "*a satisfactory DBS check, at an enhanced level, to include a Children's Barred List check*" is required to be obtained for the appointed candidate.

All posts in school have an element of safeguarding responsibility attached to them which is reflected in the job description and person specification.

The person specification provides a profile of the ideal person for the post. It sets out the qualifications, experience, skills, personal attributes, attitudes and behaviours needed to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the role, as detailed in the job description. Person specifications are divided into education, skills and experience that are either the '**essential**' or '**desirable**' attributes required of the ideal candidate.

All criteria defined as essential are related directly to the job description and evaluated as the minimum requirements for a role to be undertaken effectively.

The person specification will confirm how each essential requirement will be assessed throughout the selection process e.g., at interview, on the application form etc.

These criteria must not be changed after the post has been advertised.

To be shortlisted, candidates must demonstrate, on the application form, how they meet the criteria listed on the person specification.

If there is a legal requirement to do so and/or if it can be objectively justified as essential for the role e.g., Teacher, Higher Level Teaching Assistant etc, relevant qualifications will be listed as essential.

Where a qualification is preferred but cannot be justified as essential, the person specification will include the following statement:

"If you do not have the formal qualifications specified but can demonstrate skills or experience of an equivalent standard, we would still be interested in your application".

To ensure equality of opportunity, consideration will be given when stating the length of previous experience required to undertake the role.

e. The Application Form

A standard application form is used for all vacancies, **except for the recruitment of casual staff** where there is a separate application form. The Trust Application is available from School Business Managers or Trust Central Business Support & HR Advisor.

The standard application form is designed so that information related to recruitment monitoring; age, disability, ethnic or racial origin and marital status, is collected separately. Except for applicants who have a disability, shortlisting will be undertaken without this information being available to the appointment panel.

It will be removed by the school administrator, prior to shortlisting, but will be recorded to ensure the governing body is able to report equality data.

Applicants should be advised that where they have submitted an electronic application, they will be asked to physically **sign a hard copy** of the application form, should they be invited to attend for interview.

f. The Recruitment Information Pack

Applicants responding to job adverts will receive appropriate information about the post, either on paper or electronically via the school website. The pack should be made available electronically or provided within 48 hours of a request.

The following documents may be made available in hard copy or electronic format:

A covering or 'welcome' letter from the Headteacher/LGB/Trust- this will include details of the closing date, interview date (where known), contact telephone number for applicant queries to be directed to, the process of application, shortlisting and deselection i.e., when candidates should assume they have been unsuccessful after a certain date.

Application Form (incorporating Recruitment Monitoring Form)

Job Description and Person Specification

Any specific job-related information (i.e. organisation chart and additional information)

Any relevant background information regarding the school and local area.

Child protection policy / safeguarding statement

Policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Trust Information Sheet

Where a post is defined as **regulated activity**, applicants should be advised that it is an offence for a barred person to apply.

Applicants should be made aware that should they be shortlisted, further information relating to criminal records, sanctions and disqualifications will be requested to be considered and discussed at interview.

Applicants should be made aware that, if shortlisted, online searches may be undertaken as part of due diligence checks.

It should be clearly stated that CVs are not acceptable and only fully completed application forms will be considered for shortlisting.

g. Advertising

The purpose of an advertisement is to attract the best candidate for the job role and to deter unsuitable applicants from applying. The advertisement should give applicants information about the type, age range, location and size of the school.

In order to target under-represented groups, consideration should also be given to advertising in a variety of media.

As a minimum, adverts will be uploaded to the school's website, with consideration given to additional resourcing opportunities such as:

- Trust Website
- Shropshire Council website
- Local press
- The Times Educational Supplement
- Apprenticeship and Kickstart schemes

The school may decide that a post can be filled from within the school's current workforce. Such an appointment will be made based on an internal advertisement and open internal competition.

The aim of the job advert is to provide enough information about a vacant post to attract suitable applicants and provide access to, or direct requests for, further information or detail.

Adverts should:

- state the job title, function, pay (including any allowances) and contractual status of the post
- clearly communicate the usual working location of the role, the working hours attached to the post and whether it is full or part time etc
- contain brief information from the job description and essential criteria from the person specification
- when appropriate, include the statement: "*if you do not have the formal qualifications specified but can demonstrate skills or experience of an equivalent standard, we would be interested in your application*"
- include the statement: "*The school is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory DBS check…*"
- contain language that is non-gender specific
- avoid phrases which imply age restrictions
- where appropriate, contain a contact number for an informal discussion about the vacancy, or to arrange a visit to the school
- specify a closing date for applications
- state the date of the interview(s)

5. Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be undertaken with reference to the criteria set out in the job description and person specification. The panel will consider any inconsistencies in the information provided, look for any gaps in employment and the reasons given for them. This will enable the panel to identify any potential concerns that may be appropriate to discuss with the applicant during the interview.

Shortlisting will be undertaken by a panel convened by the local governing body or delegated to the Headteacher, assisted by appropriate members of staff. It is recognised good practice that an appointment panel should be made up of **at least two people**, one of whom **must** have completed training in safer recruitment.

At least one of those who undertake the shortlisting exercise must also be involved in the subsequent selection/interview process. If possible, one of these will be the line manager to whom the successful candidate will report. Wherever practicable, the panel should have a gender mix.

Receipt of Application Forms

An application form will be used for all school vacancies. Statutory guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe… states that '*schools and colleges should only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information.'(para 219)*

CVs are not acceptable in their own right and information provided on a CV will not be considered as part of the shortlisting process, without a fully completed Application Form having been received.

Where practicable, if a candidate submits a CV (only) before the closing date for the post, they should be given the opportunity to complete an application form, with a request to return the completed form before the closing date. If an applicant is unable to complete an application form due to a disability, consideration may be given to accepting an application in an alternative format.

Please contact the Trust's HR Advisor for further guidance.

Applicants should be notified that incomplete application forms will not be considered for shortlisting.

Application forms received after the closing date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where proof of posting indicates undue delay through no fault of the applicant. Any decision made to accept an application after the closing date will be recorded with the associated reason(s) for doing so.

Applicants should be aware that receipt of applications will not be acknowledged and that no shortlisting will take place until after the advertised closing date for the vacancy has passed.

Personal information about the candidate such as age, gender and marital status, as recorded on the Recruitment Monitoring Form, will be detached from the main body of the standard application form, and not shared with anyone involved in the shortlisting process.

Each application form will be carefully considered, and applicants will be assessed against the criteria listed in the person specification and job description. Those undertaking the shortlisting process will consider, objectively, how each application meets, or otherwise, the criteria from the job description and person specification.

The selection criteria will be applied consistently to all applicants, whether internal or external, and each applicant will be considered in the same way. Candidates who are shortlisted must always meet the essential requirements of the post - the desirable criteria may be used as an additional filter to reach a final shortlist.

Where a qualification is not a legal requirement of the postholder, applicants who do not have the formal qualifications specified, but can demonstrate skills of an equivalent standard, may still be considered for the shortlist.

Recording the decision

If there is a large number of applicants who meet the essential criteria of the person specification, the selection panel may apply and consider the desirable criteria of the ideal postholder.

Any applicants who declare a disability on their application form and demonstrate, through their application, that they meet the essential criteria of the role, will automatically be invited to interview as part of the Council's Disability Confident Scheme.

The results of shortlisting will be recorded on the standard **Recruitment Selection Form** with clear reasons given for shortlisting or rejecting each applicant. The marks scored for each applicant against each criterion on the person specification will also be recorded.

Information obtained during the shortlisting process will be treated confidentially. Comments recorded as to why applicants were, or were not included, must not be discussed or disclosed outside of the selection panel. The panel may, however, provide relevant and appropriate information to an applicant who requests feedback as to why they were not shortlisted for the vacancy.
b
Please contact HR for further advice and guidance.

Shortlisted applicants and the self-disclosure of criminal records

Shortlisted candidates should be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. These might include individuals with a relevant criminal record, inclusion on the children's barred list or if they are prohibited from teaching.

This information must **not** be requested on the application form and only requested of the applicants who have been shortlisted.

The purpose of self-declaration is so that candidates have the opportunity to share and discuss any relevant information at interview, before the DBS certificate is received.

Applicants who are invited to interview should be issued with a self-declaration form asking them to confirm any relevant information relating to criminal records which must be returned to the school before the day of their interview. Where the applicant has provided an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should sign a hard copy of the declaration when they attend, in person, for interview.

Where an individual has voluntarily provided confidential information relating to criminal records as part of their initial application, this information must not be considered as part of the short-listing process.

Where information is provided under secure, separate cover, such as a sealed envelope, on no account will this be opened and accessed until a decision has been made to shortlist the applicant.

Categorically, this information must not be accessed where an applicant is not shortlisted.

Online Search

The school will conduct an online search of shortlisted candidates to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that no online information exists which would potentially make the applicant unsuitable to work with children.

The school will ensure that any information found does not introduce any bias into the recruitment process and result in candidates being inadvertently discriminated against.

The search will be completed by a senior member of school staff not involved in the interview process. Any information found will be passed to the Chair of the interview panel so that it can be appropriately discussed with the applicant during the interview/selection process. This may be within or outside the main interview, dependent on the sensitivity of any information found. The school will follow a similar process in relation to any discussions about potential criminal convictions disclosed during the recruitment process.

The school will ensure that it does not inadvertently discriminate against applicants who may be covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and related legislation (i.e. certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', and not subject to disclosure to employers, therefore they cannot be taken into account.)

Please seek advice from your HR Adviser for further guidance.

Inviting Shortlisted Candidates to Interview

Apart from in exceptional circumstances, all candidates will receive at least 5 days' notice of their interview. Candidates will be sent written or electronic confirmation of their invitation to interview which will set out the following:

- details of the selection process and the makeup of the selection panel
- the date, time and venue of when and where the interview/selection process will take place
- details of any reasonable adjustments, discussed and agreed prior to interview, that will enable the candidate to attend
- the list of documents required to be brought to the interview by the applicant for evidence checking e.g. proof of identity, original certificates relating to professional or educational qualifications
- the requirement for shortlisted candidates to complete and return a self-declaration relating to criminal records, prohibitions and disqualifications, **prior to their interview**

- confirmation that the post is exempt from the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974** and that the successful candidate will be subject to an Enhanced DBS disclosure with a check against the Children's Barred List.

It is good practice to ask the candidate to confirm their intention to attend the interview. This can be accepted by email.

On the day of the interview, the school must verify the identity of all candidates and ensure that they have signed their completed, hard copy application form.

NB. Where a candidate has completed and submitted an electronic application form, a clean hard copy will be presented to them for signing when they attend, in person, for interview.

Inviting Shortlisted Candidates to Visit the School

Where possible and if appropriate, shortlisted candidates should be given an opportunity to visit the school whilst it is operational, and in advance of their scheduled interview.

6. References

The challenges of seeking to access and verify references on all shortlisted candidates, in advance of the interview, are widely acknowledged but **wherever possible**, at least one reference should be requested for all shortlisted candidates (including internal candidates) prior to interview, and in sufficient time for them to be made available to the interview panel.

Where a candidate clearly requests on their application form that no contact should be made with their referee(s) until they have been formally offered a position, it should be clearly communicated, in a conditional offer of employment, that an appointment will **not** be confirmed until all relevant references have been received and deemed to be satisfactory.

The school will ensure that any references provided by the candidate's current employer have been provided by a senior person with appropriate authority.

NB. If the referee is school or college based, the reference must be provided by the Headteacher/principal so that any disciplinary action and/or safeguarding concerns that may have been confidentially recorded on a personnel record can be appropriately disclosed.

Upon receipt of references, the Appointing Officer must contact the referee directly to confirm the authenticity and origin of the information provided and/or to clarify any aspect of the detail given. Clear notes of any telephone discussion with a referee must be recorded along with the date and time the contact was made.

Only in exceptional circumstances should an interview/selection panel member act as a referee. Where this occurs, such as in the case of internal candidates, a further reference should be sought from an alternative referee.

Where references are not available or not supplied in time for them to be referred to and explored as part of the interview and selection process, the school will ensure that they are sought, reviewed, and verified as part of a conditional offer of employment and before an appointment has been confirmed.

Information for Referees

Requests for references must be made on the school's standard reference request form. Reference requests should be accompanied by the job description and person specification.

Requesting References

At least two references are required as part of the appointment process, one from the candidate's current or most recent employer plus one other. A reference will also be requested from a previous school/education employer. Should the current or most recent not be an educational or childcare setting, additionally, schools should consider requesting a reference from a previous employer where a candidate has worked with children. *(227)*

References will be sought directly from the referee named on the application form, with discretion to seek alternative or additional references, as above.

Unsolicited references, sometimes called 'open references', addressed '*to whom it may concern*' and provided directly by the candidate along with the application form, **must not** be accepted at any stage in the recruitment process.

7. The Interview and Selection Process

The main objectives of the interview / selection process will be to:

- determine each candidate's suitability for appointment, as measured against the person specification and job description
- provide candidates with further information about the job
- select the most suitable person for the job

One member of the Interview Panel should be nominated as the **Appointing Officer** with overall responsibility for confirming the final appointment decision.

The Interview

All vacancies will require a face-to-face interview designed to explore an applicant's ability to do the job, as set out in the job description and person specification.

The interview is a key element of the safer recruitment process and is a formal opportunity to identify and reject unsuitable applicants and prevent them from being appointed.

During the interview, the panel should ask the same, previously agreed, **core questions**, devised to provide each candidate with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the job. Supplementary questions may be asked of candidates based on responses to the core questions.

Additional, pre-prepared questions may be asked of individual applicants based on the information provided on their application form and/or in relation to self-disclosure documentation, references etc.

Please seek advice from your HR Adviser for further guidance.

All members of the interview panel must remain objective and ensure they give each candidate equal opportunity to respond to questions asked during the interview.

Whilst each panel member is responsible for keeping clear, concise, objective notes of candidate responses, it is recommended good practice that **at least one panel member** does not take notes whilst the candidate is responding to the question being asked. This provides for appropriate eye contact and engagement with the candidate and will help to ensure that a full and clear response has been given.

The panel should discuss and agree their approach, prior to the interview, identifying the questions they prefer to ask, between them.

At the end of the interview, candidates will have the opportunity to ask their own questions about the job or the school. The Chair of the panel will ensure that candidates are aware of the timetable for the rest of the recruitment process and how an appointment decision will be communicated.

Other Selection Methods

The selection process should normally involve at least one other selection method in addition to the interview.

Presentation to the panel - if this is a requirement of the job, candidates will be advised in advance that they will be expected to make a presentation along with details of the subject or topic and the nature and length of the presentation.

Written Tests - this could involve a job-related task which requires a reasoned, written response that tests each candidate's ability to supply and draw from their own experience and knowledge, as well as their ability to communicate effectively.

Observed Teaching (or other relevant, practical task/activities) – applicants will be advised of the nature or focus of an observed lesson plus the details of any other practical task or activity they are required to undertake during the selection process.

Psychometric Tests – if psychometric tests are to be used, they will be considered in the context of all other selection methods. Psychometric tests must only be administered by someone trained in their use. The administration of the test can be adapted to ensure disabled candidates are given an equal opportunity to participate.

Feeding back to Candidates

Once a decision has been made in relation to an appointment (even where it is decided that no appointment can be made), a nominated member of the panel will contact all shortlisted candidates who have attended for interview, appointed or not) to offer constructive feedback about the application and interview. This will normally be within 5-working days of the interview.

8. Making an Appointment & Pre-employment Checks

All offers of appointment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks has been undertaken. The offer of employment will be made in writing, by the Headteacher or Senior Member of Staff, to the successful candidate as soon as possible after the interview.

This will be in the form of a **written conditional offer** of employment which is subject to satisfactory receipt and verification of all outstanding pre-employment checks.

Once all pre-employment checks have been received and deemed to be satisfactory, a formal confirmation of appointment will be issued to the successful candidate, in writing, by the Headteacher or Senior Member of Staff.

The Appointing Officer must send all appropriate new starter information to the Employment Services Team as soon as possible after the conditional offer of employment. This will ensure that on 'Day 1' of employment, the appointee has been set up on payroll and can be issued with a written statement of employment particulars.

Pre-employment Checks

Appointments are subject to satisfactory receipt and/or confirmation of the employment checks detailed below, and any offer of employment will be conditional, until such time as all checks have been completed and accepted by the school as satisfactory.

Once the pre-employment checks have been completed, the Headteacher will confirm the offer of employment **in writing**, confirming that all necessary checks have been made and confirmed as acceptable.

Proof of Essential Qualifications - all shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring to the interview documentary proof of the qualifications stated on the person specification as an essential requirement of the role. If these documents were not made available at the interview stage, the Appointing Officer will inform the candidate that, if successful, they will be required to present the original certificates prior to the offer of employment being confirmed.

Pre-employment Medical Check - pre-employment medical checks are used solely for determining the fitness of a prospective employee for a specific post, and to ensure an appointment will not present a risk to the health of the applicant or other employees.

All appointments are subject to satisfactory medical clearance by the Trusts Occupational Health provider. Employees should not commence employment until the school has received this medical clearance.

The Appointing Officer will ensure that the Pre-Placement medical questionnaire is issued to the successful candidate along with an accurate and up-to-date summary of the physical and mental requirements of the job. The successful candidate **must** return a completed questionnaire to the Occupational Health team, as soon as possible. The Trust's Employment Services Team will notify the school when medical clearance has been confirmed.

Employees should not commence employment until the school has received this medical clearance.

All medical and health-related information is confidential and will not be released to the school management team unless there is a specific need to do so, and the consent of the appointee has been obtained. Adjustment of duties, assistance with equipment or access to any part of the premises should also be part of any assessment for reasonable adjustment.

Criminal Records Checks (DBS) - all posts which involve working directly with children, young people in school are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974), Section 4 (2) by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) (Exemption) (Amendment) Order 1986.

The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'.

This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account.

School application forms have been revised and updated relating to positions that are eligible for a Standard or Enhanced DBS check, in line with the filtering rules.

Schools are still entitled to ask if a shortlisted candidate has any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and if they have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020.

Shortlisted candidates for school posts are obliged to declare any pending court actions, all previous criminal convictions, bind-over orders or cautions, which for other posts would be considered spent. Failure to disclose this information could lead to an offer of employment being withdrawn.

Further GOV.UK guidance is available here.

The school adheres to the relevant provisions of the DBS Code of Practice and all posts within this school require an enhanced DBS check to be checked and approved prior to a new employee's start date.

The school has a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and a criminal background will not automatically debar an applicant from employment.

The appointed candidate is required to present an original DBS certificate for the School Business Manager/Lead Administrator to view and record the necessary details from it on the Single Central Record.

Where a DBS check reveals information not previously disclosed by the individual and/or discussed at interview stage, a further meeting will be convened with the Headteacher who will make a final decision as to whether employment will be confirmed.

All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and access to such information will be restricted to those with a legitimate need to see it.

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 - The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 ("the 2018 regulations") set out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified from providing 'relevant childcare' or from being directly concerned in the management of such provision.

Where applicable, shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of any such qualification and complete the school's self-declaration form which sets out the relevance of the 2018 Regulations.

Where a positive declaration is made, the Headteacher/School Business Manager will meet with the individual to discuss the declaration further. Employment will not commence until an appropriate decision has been made by the Headteacher.

Please seek further advice and guidance from the Trust's HR Adviser.

Teachers' Qualified Status (QTS) & Prohibition Check - 'Teacher Services' is a free service to check the record of a teacher a school employs or is considering employing. It's accessed through the Department for Education's Sign-in portal.

Schools should use this service before appointing a teacher to check for:

- the award of qualified teacher status (QTS)
- completion of teacher induction
- prohibitions, sanctions and restrictions that might prevent the individual from taking part in certain activities or working in specific positions

Equality and Access Considerations - if a candidate requires any adjustments to be made to enable them to do the job, these will be discussed with the individual prior to the start of their employment.

Right to Work in the UK

The law on preventing illegal working is set out in sections 15 to 25 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (the 2006 Act) which replaced section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

There are two types of right to work checks: a manual document-based check and an online check.

To ensure that a preferred candidate is legally allowed to do the work in question, a 'right to work' check must be made before the school confirms an appointment. If an individual's right to work is time limited, this should be recorded on the Single Central Record and the school should conduct a follow-up check shortly before it is due to come to an end.

Please seek further advice from your Trust's HR Adviser.

9. Non-UK Nationals

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo **the same checks** as all other staff in schools or colleges.

The main visa route for non-UK teachers in England is the skilled worker visa.

DBS checks for non-UK nationals require applicants to provide at least one primary document from the list prescribed by the UK government.

Not all countries provide criminal record information, and where they do, the nature and detail of the information provided varies from country to country. Schools and colleges should also be mindful that the criteria for disclosing offences in other countries often have a different threshold than those in the UK. The Home Office provides guidance on criminal records checks for overseas applicants which can be found on **GOV.UK**.

Please speak to your Trust HR Adviser for more details.

10. Induction and Training

All staff should be aware of the systems within their school which support safeguarding, and these should be explained as part of staff induction.

All new employees will be subject to the school's induction process during the first term of their employment.

The following elements of staff induction will be administered **within the first week** of employment.

Reference and/or introduction to the:

- school's safeguarding and child protection policy (*including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place*)
- school behaviour policy *(which should include measures to prevent bullying, including cyber bullying)*
- staff behaviour policy (code of conduct/handbook)
- school's safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (*including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies)*

Copies of policies and a copy of '**Part one'** of KCSiE (or Annex A, if appropriate) should be provided to staff at induction.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take a key role in ensuring all staff have access to, and opportunity for, continued training and development in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Training opportunities will be identified and agreed during an employee's annual appraisal.

The school will ensure all employees receive appropriate training in accordance with statutory and/or school requirements and priorities as well as to ensure its ongoing commitment to developing its workforce.

Probationary Periods

All new support staff employees will be subject to a probationary period which will be set out in the conditional offer letter and confirmed in the confirmation of appointment and the written statement of employment particulars.

Probationary service shall not apply to any member of staff with previous continuous service with another local authority, or with other previous service accepted by the school, as appropriate to the post being filled.

Single Central Record

In accordance with the provisions of KCSiE, the school must maintain a single central record (SCR) of all the pre-employment checks of employees (including supply staff and regular volunteers) who work in the school. The SCR is subject to inspection by Ofsted.

The school's single central record must cover all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency, and third-party supply staff, even if they only work for one day.

The single central record must indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed, or certificate obtained:

- an identity check
- a barred list check
- an enhanced DBS check requested/certificate provided
- a prohibition from teaching check
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
- a check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

The Trust must record details of the **section 128 checks** undertaken for those in management positions. There is no requirement for schools to record this information on the single central record, but they can if they chose to.

In addition to the statutory requirements of the SCR, schools are free to record any other information on the SCR they deem relevant.

The details of an individual should be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at the school.

11. Contractors, Supply Staff, Governors & Volunteers

Contractors

Where the school uses **contractors** to provide services, they should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the school.

The school will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school or college, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information).

Under no circumstances will a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. The school is responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

If an individual working at school is self-employed, consideration will be given to obtaining a DBS check through the school. This is because self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

The identity of contractors will be checked on arrival at the school office.

Agency and third-party supply staff

The school will seek written confirmation from the employment business supplying the member(s)of supply staff that they have carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates. The date this confirmation was received and whether details of any enhanced DBS certificate have been provided in respect of the member of staff must be recorded on the SCR.

Where the agency or third-party organisation has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate, which has disclosed any matter or information, the school must obtain a copy of the certificate from the provider.

Schools must ensure that this is a clear requirement of any service level agreement.

Governors

Governors are required to have an enhanced DBS check carried out by the school. It is the responsibility of the school to apply for the certificate for any governors who do not already have one.

Governance is not a regulated activity relating to children, so governors do not need a children's barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

The school will also carry out a section 128 check for school governors, because a person prevented from participating in the management of an independent school by a section 128 direction is also disqualified from being a governor of a maintained school.

Please seek further support from your Trust's HR adviser.

Volunteers

Under no circumstances should a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Whilst volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults, the nature of voluntary roles varies. The school will undertake a **written risk assessment** and apply professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required.

The risk assessment will consider:

• the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
• what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents, and other volunteers
• whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability
• whether the role is eligible for a DBS check and, if so, what level is appropriate.

Details of the risk assessment will be recorded.

The school will seek an enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list information) for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity with children i.e., where they are unsupervised and teach or look after children regularly or provide personal care on a one-off basis in our setting.

12. Recruitment Monitoring

The school is required to monitor its recruitment processes and provide information on the ethnic origin of applicants to fulfill its duty under the Equality Act 2010.

All applicants are required to complete a **recruitment monitoring form** as part of their application form. This form will be detached and stored separately and is not seen by any member of the selection panel.

Examples of the type of information we gain from the monitoring process include:

- numbers of applicants for posts
- gender breakdown of applicants
- age breakdown of applicants
- ethnicity of applicants
- disability status of applicants
- where adverts are seen

After an appointment has been made, the Appointing Officer is responsible for the completion of the Recruitment Selection Form. This form, together with all other interview and selection documentation for all applicants, will be retained within the school for a minimum period of 6 months, post the appointment of the successful applicant.