



# Safer Recruitment Policy

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## **SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

Safer recruitment is an important part of safeguarding children and is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. White Spire School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The school sees it is vital that there is a culture of safe recruitment and has adopted recruitment procedures that will deter, reject, and identify people who might be unsuitable to work with children and young people.

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

- meet the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025);
- are robust and have relevant vetting and checking procedures.
- include a detailed induction for new staff.
- provide an ongoing training infrastructure.
- meet the requirements as detailed in the Milton Keynes Safer Recruitment Toolkit.

This policy outlines the steps White Spire School will take to ensure those employed in this school are safe to work with children and young people and its main purpose is:

- to prevent unsuitable people working within our school.
- to attract the best possible candidates to work in our school.
- to create and maintain a safe workforce.

The recruitment and selection process aims to ensure the identification of the person(s) best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualifications, experience, and attitude as measured against the job description and person specification.

If during any part of the recruitment process, there are any safeguarding concerns the school will contact the LADO for advice.

All those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff will ensure all processes are conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Governing Board to monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and to be familiar with the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Sept 2025) and its specific requirements related to Safer Recruitment.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that structures 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 Governing Board and Headteacher will ensure before convening any interview panel that at least one member of the interview panel has completed Safer Recruitment Training.

The interview panel will ensure that Child Protection/Safeguarding matters are central to the interview process.

Any member of staff involved in the recruitment and selection process will ensure they comply with all the elements of this policy.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to the recruitment of all posts in this school, **any alternate provision (AP) providers that the school may use and work experience providers**. The Governing Board will undertake Headteacher appointments.

### **4. Equalities Legislation**

The Governing Board will comply with relevant equalities legislation, specifically: Equality Act, Employment Relations Act, Employment Rights Act, The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations, The Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations and The Agency Workers Regulations.

The Governing Board will promote equality in all aspects of school life, particularly with regards to all decisions on advertising of posts, appointing, promoting, and paying staff, training, and staff development. It will ensure that its processes are open, transparent, and fair and all decisions will be objectively justified.

### **5. The Vacancy**

When a vacancy arises the Headteacher, in conjunction with the Governing Board if appropriate, will review the needs of the school and ensure the post to be advertised meets the school's needs effectively.

The Headteacher will assess and analyse the vacant post taking into account the school's current and future staffing structure and budget, which is determined by the Governing Board. The Headteacher will consider what type of appointment should be made and will ensure the implications of the different types of contracts are considered prior to advertising.

### **6. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications**

The Job Description will summarise the duties, responsibilities, content, and context of a post. It will be clear, concise and a fair representation of the post. It will be reviewed and updated annually at appraisal and when a post becomes vacant. It will also confirm if the post is/is not suitable for any flexible working arrangements.

The person specification will include the criterion "a satisfactory DBS check at an enhanced level." All posts in this school have an element of safeguarding responsibility and this will be

reflected in the job description and person specification.

The Person Specification will provide a profile of the ideal person for the post. It will list the qualifications, experience, skills, personal attributes, attitudes, and behaviours needed to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the post as detailed in the job description. Person specifications are divided into essential and desirable criteria. All criteria defined as essential will be on job-based grounds. The person specification will confirm how each essential requirement will be assessed during the whole selection process, e.g., at interview, on the application form etc. These criteria will not be changed after the post has been advertised. Candidates must demonstrate on their application form how they meet the criteria listed on the Person Specification in order to be shortlisted. A prescribed qualification/status will be used in a person specification if there is a legal requirement and if it can be objectively justified as essential for the role e.g., Teacher, Higher Level Teaching Assistant.

## **7. Application Form**

A standard application form will be used for all vacancies. The standard paper application form, where required, is the Milton Keynes Council application form. The application form is designed so that information regarding disability, ethnic or racial origin and marital status of applicants is confined to the back sections.

Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity).
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

## **8. Advertising**

The purpose of an advertisement is to attract only the right type of person for the job. Advertisement will give information on the type, age range, location, and size of the school. Adverts will appear on MKC Website and the school's website as a minimum but will be advertised on the following as appropriate: The Times Educational Supplement, Recruitment Agencies, the DfE recruitment website, Indeed and Job Centres.

The school may decide that a post be filled from within the school's current staff, such an appointment will be on the basis of internal advertisement and open internal competition. The aim of school adverts will be to give enough information about a vacant post to attract suitable applicants to apply for further details.

Adverts will:

- state the post title, function, and pay (including any allowances) and contractual status - the appropriate pay range or hourly rate where appropriate will be included.
- state clearly the hours/full-time equivalent and location.

- contain brief information from the job description and essential criteria from the person specification.
- include the statement "The school is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check."
- contain language that is non-gender specific.
- avoid phrases which imply age restrictions.
- contain a contact number for an informal discussion about the vacancy, or to arrange a visit to the school, if appropriate.
- specify a closing date for applications.
- state the date of the interview(s).
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

### **9. The Recruitment Information Pack**

Applicants responding to White Spire School adverts will receive appropriate information either electronically or via the individual school's website about the post to assist them in deciding whether or not to proceed with an application.

The main details which all applicants for posts will receive are:

- an application Form,
- adverts include details of the closing date, interview date (where known), telephone contact number, and details of the post being subject to a DBS check will also be included; where a paper application is requested a covering letter will be sent to include this information.
- all candidates are contacted after short listing regardless of outcome.
- 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.
- a link to our child protection policy.
- a link to our Safer Recruitment Policy.

The pack will normally be sent within 48 hours of the applicant's request.

### **10. Receipt of Application Forms**

The application form will be used for all school vacancies. CVs are not acceptable.

If a candidate submits only a CV before the closing date for the post, they will be given the opportunity to complete an application form with a request to return the completed form before the closing date. Applicants must fully complete the application form. Any application form received and deemed to not be fully completed will not be shortlisted. 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 reason(s). Receipt of applications will not be acknowledged.

No shortlisting will take place until after the closing date.

### **11. Shortlisting**

Shortlisting will be undertaken with reference to the set criteria as outlined in the job advertisement and will be undertaken by a panel or be delegated to the Headteacher, assisted by appropriate members of staff. A minimum of two people will always be involved in shortlisting. At least one of those who undertake the shortlisting process will also be involved in the subsequent selection/interview. If possible, one of these people will be the line manager for whom the successful candidate will report to and wherever possible ensure a gender mix.

Our shortlisting process will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them.
- Explore all potential concerns.

We will also carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online; this is completed by two individual members of staff who are not involved in the shortlisting process. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

### **12. Objective Assessment**

Each application form will be carefully considered, and applicants will be assessed against the criteria listed in the person specification and job description. Those shortlisting will apply the criteria from the job description and person specification objectively based on the information provided within the application form. The selection criteria will be applied consistently to all applicants, whether internal or external, and each applicant will be dealt with 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 the final shortlist. Applicants who do not have the formal qualifications specified, but can demonstrate skills of an equivalent standard, will still be considered for the shortlist with exception of QTS if appropriate.

### **13. Equality Issues**

As a Council maintained school, the school is committed, amongst other measures, to guarantee an interview for candidates with a disability who meet the essential criteria laid down in the person specification, and to consider them on their abilities. Once all the application forms have been received, they will be checked as to whether any applicant has declared that they have a disability and whether there are any adjustments required for interview. If a candidate has a disability where they are likely to be at a substantial disadvantage because of working arrangements, then the school are legally required to consider any reasonable adjustments, which could be made at the workplace if they were to be appointed.

### **14. Numbers to shortlist**

If there is a large number of applicants who meet the essential criteria on the person specification, the selection panel may use the desirable criteria. If this is not effective in reducing the number, pre- screening may be used to reduce the numbers before the main selection process takes place. Any applicants who declare a disability will not be part of any pre-screening.

### **15. Recording the decision**

The results of shortlisting will be recorded on the standard Recruitment Selection Form with clear reasons given for shortlisting or rejecting each applicant, and marks allocated against the criteria on the person specification. Information obtained during the shortlisting process will be treated as confidential. Comments recorded as to why applicants were or were not included will not be disclosed outside of the selection panel, or only to an applicant who requests feedback on why they were not shortlisted for the vacancy.

### **16. The Interview and Selection Process**

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

- determine each candidate's suitability for appointment as measured against the person specification and job description.
- give all candidates a fuller picture of the job.
- select the right person for the job.

One member of the Interview Panel will be nominated as the Appointing Officer with overall responsibility for making the final decision.

### **17. Contacting Shortlisted Candidates**

All candidates will receive 5 days' notice of the date for interview (apart from in exceptional circumstances). Candidates will receive written confirmation of their invitation to interview which will state the following:

- the interview process time and venue.

- any reasonable adjustments which disabled candidates need in relation to the selection process.
- an online check will be carried out before interview.
- confirmation of documents needed for evidence checking e.g., original certificates relating to professional or educational qualifications.
- the successful candidate will be subject to a DBS check.

All candidates will need to bring evidence of their identity and 'right to work' with them to the interview.

### **18. Visits by Candidates**

Shortlisted candidates are given an opportunity to visit the school whilst it is operating and should be able to meet and talk to other members of staff who will not form part of the selection process.

### **19. Visits to Candidates (Teaching Staff)**

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to carry out an observation at the candidate's school. Considerable care will be exercised where visits are arranged, and information will be gathered in an agreed and systematic way. It will be clear in the job information that observations will form part of the overall assessment. Consistency of approach feeding back to the panel is essential to ensure fair treatment in this area. A common schedule of factors will be drawn up and applied to each visit.

### **20. Interviewing Panel**

The interviewing panel should be constituted according to the determination of the Governing Board. Interviews will be conducted by panels of at least two people.

### **21. The Interview Process**

All vacancies will require a face-to-face interview which will explore each applicant's ability to do the job applied for as set out in the job description and person specification. During the interview candidates will be asked the same pre-prepared core questions. The process will give all candidates an equal chance to demonstrate their suitability for the job. Supplementary questions can be asked of candidates based on responses during the interview and also any questions which arose from the application form. All members of the interview panel must remain objective and ensure they give each candidate equal opportunity during the interview.

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently and ask candidates to explain this.
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children.

- Record all information considered and decisions made.

Each panel member will be responsible for keeping clear, concise objective notes of the interview process which will be available to candidates should they so request afterwards. Any information disclosed by the candidate on their application form related to allegations, disciplinary action, cautions or convictions will be discussed during the interview, and subsequent follow up with the Headteacher.

Candidates will have the opportunity at the end of the interview process to ask questions about the job or the school. The chair of the panel will ensure the candidates are aware of the decision-making timescales and how decisions will be communicated.

## **22. Declaration of Interest**

Any person on the interviewing panel who has any interest in, or is related to, any of the applicants will declare that interest or relationship so that all the other members of the interviewing panel are aware of it. If appropriate such a person may be removed or replaced on the selection panel.

## **23. Other Interviewing Methods**

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

- Oral Presentation - if this is a requirement of the job being applied for, candidates will be advised in advance if they will be expected to make a presentation and what is expected of them.
- Written Tests - this could involve a job-related task which requires a reasoned written response, testing each candidate's ability to supply and draw from their own experience and knowledge, and their ability to communicate effectively.
- Observing Teaching (or other practical task/activities relevant to the position) - any observations undertaken during the selection day will follow a similar process and will be outlined to the candidates in advance.
- Psychometric Tests - if psychometric tests are to be used, they will be used as an aid to all other selection assessment material. Psychometric tests will only be administered by someone trained in their use. The administration of the test can be amended/changed to ensure disabled candidates are given an equal opportunity to participate.

## **24. Equality Issues**

The interview panel will be mindful of Equality legislation to ensure questions do not indicate any form of discrimination; however, issues of disability which may affect the job should be addressed positively and discussed during the interview. The panel will discuss with the candidate during the interview, what reasonable adjustments would be required

in order to fulfil the role of the post.

### **25. Asylum and Immigration Check**

In line with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, the school is required to check that employees are legally able to reside and work in the UK. To adhere to this requirement, candidates for interview will be asked to bring with them a passport showing that the holder is a British citizen or has a right to live in the UK or other relevant proof. A photocopy of the relevant document will be taken and kept as part of the employee's personal file.

### **26. Pre-employment Checks**

Appointments are subject to all of the pre-employment checks detailed below and any offer of employment will be conditional subject to satisfactory receipt of all such checks. Once all the pre-employment checks have been received and deemed to be satisfactory by the Headteacher, an unconditional offer of employment will be confirmed.

### **27. References**

References will be requested for all shortlisted candidates (including internal candidates) prior to interview and in sufficient time for them to be made available to the interviewing panel except when a candidate requests clearly on their application form no contact with their referee(s) until they have been formally offered the post in question. An offer of appointment will not be confirmed until all references have been received and are deemed to be satisfactory.

The Appointing Officer will contact the referee directly in order to clarify any aspect of the reference. Any telephone discussion with a referee will be recorded with full notes being kept of the conversation. References received will, on request, be disclosed to applicants under the General Data Protection Regulations.

Interview panel members should not act as a referee unless in exceptional circumstances (this will sometimes happen, particularly with internal candidates). Candidates will be asked to name an alternative referee. References will be used to check the appointment and to reinforce decisions made as part of the interview/selection process. References will be checked against information on the application form and from the interview/selection process.

### **28. Information to Referees**

Requests for references will be on the school's standard reference request form and no open references will be accepted. Requests will be accompanied by the job description and person specification.

### **29. Use of References**

References received before the interview process will be checked by the appointing officer/chair of the interview panel prior to the interview. References will be shared with other panel members after the interview. The appointing officer/chair of panel will clarify or probe any discrepancies from within the reference during the interview if appropriate.

### **30. Need for References**

At least two references will be required, one from the current employer and one from the other most recent employer. A reference will also be requested from a previous school/education employer should the current and most recent not be. In addition, a reference may also be requested from a previous employer when a candidate worked with children. References will be sought directly from the referee. References provided directly by the candidate with the application form or at interview will not be accepted. Previous employers not named as referees may be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. This will only be in relation to administrative details and not used as an informal means of canvassing views as to any applicant's potential suitability for the post being applied for. On such occasions, the candidate will be notified in the first instance.

### **31. Qualifications**

All shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring with them to interview any relevant original qualification certificates (i.e., stated as essential requirements in the person specification). If these documents are not available at the interview, the Appointing Officer will inform the candidate that, if successful, they will be required to provide the certificates prior to the offer of employment being confirmed.

### **32. 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 their placement in a post will present no risk to the health of the applicant or other employees. All appointments are subject to satisfactory medical clearance by Occupational Health. The Appointing Officer will ensure that the medical questionnaire includes an accurate and up to date summary of the physical and mental requirements of the job. The successful candidate(s) will be provided with either a hard copy or electronic copy of the medical questionnaire with the conditional offer letter. Candidates must then return this to Occupational Health as soon as possible. The Appointing Officer will receive confirmation from Occupational Health once the candidate receives appropriate medical clearance. All clinical information is confidential and will not be released to the school's leadership unless there is a specific need to do so, and the consent of the applicant has been

obtained. Adjustment of duties, assistance with equipment or adjustment to premises should be part of any assessment.

### **33. Disclosure and Barring Service 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) and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Candidates for these 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 the offer of employment being withdrawn.

All posts require an enhanced DBS certificate. Therefore, a satisfactory DBS certificate must be obtained prior to a new employees start date. The successful employee will be required to provide the DBS certificate to the School Business Manager as soon as possible after receiving it. All teaching and support staff posts will also be subjected to prohibition checks. These will also be carried out annually throughout a person's employment within the school. Birth certificates are to be checked as part of the DBS process (KCSIE 2025) alongside photo ID.

A criminal background will not automatically debar an applicant from employment. Where a disclosure is made at interview and/or following DBS check, the candidate must be interviewed by the Headteacher who will make a final decision as to whether or not employment will be confirmed. Where appropriate, the Headteacher/DSL will contact the LADO as a further safeguarding check and a referral may be made, if appropriate.

Part of the due diligence checks will be an internet/online searches including Social Media.

Information given by candidates will be treated in the strictest confidence. Access to the information given will be restricted to those with legitimate need to see it.

#### **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

#### **34. Overseas Applicants and Checks**

If a candidate has lived or worked overseas in the five years prior to appointment, a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' must be obtained and provided by the candidate. If an applicant is unable to obtain the document, they must provide evidence confirming the attempts made and then a risk assessment will be undertaken by the Headteacher regarding confirmation of employment. All other pre-employment checks must be satisfactorily completed.

#### **35. Teachers Status & Prohibition Check**

The school will undertake a check against the Department for Education 'Employer Online Service' to confirm that a teacher has qualified teacher status and is not prohibited from teaching.

#### **36. Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK (Asylum and Immigration Act)**

All applicants will be required to provide evidence of identity in line with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. The school is required to check that employees are legally able to reside and work in the UK. To adhere to this requirement, candidates for interview will be asked to bring with them appropriate evidence of identity.

#### **37. S128 Checks for leadership and management posts**

All applicants who will be undertaking a leadership or management post will be required to undertake a Section 128 check.

#### **38. Offer of Appointment**

The offer of employment will be confirmed in writing by the Headteacher to the successful candidate(s) as soon as possible after the interview. This will be a conditional offer of employment and is subject to satisfactory receipt of all pre-employment checks. Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily received a formal unconditional offer of appointment will be confirmed in writing by the Headteacher to the successful candidate.

The Appointing Officer will send all appropriate information from the recruitment process to the SBM who will file confidentially.

#### **39. Equalities Issues**

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 their start of employment.

#### **40. Probationary Periods**

All new support staff employees will be subject to a probationary period, and this will be confirmed in the unconditional offer of employment.

#### **41. Recruitment Monitoring**

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

All applicants are asked to complete a recruitment monitoring form as part of their application form. 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 will be retained within the school for a minimum period of 6 months after appointment.

#### **42. Single Central Record**

Each school will keep a single central record of all the pre-employment checks of employees (including supply staff) who work in the school in accordance with KCSIE and Ofsted. Volunteer information will also be part of this record.

#### **43. Induction & Ongoing Training**

All new employees will be subject to the school's induction process during the first term of their employment. In addition, the school recognises that as part of its commitment to create a safe workforce and culture it needs to ensure all staff receive appropriate personal and professional development.

The aims of the school's induction process are to:

- familiarise employees with their new environment.
- be aware of the appropriate behaviours and standards of conduct expected.
- help them to develop skills and the knowledge to do their job.
- gain an awareness to how their post relates to the rest of the school.
- gain an awareness of the culture of the school.
- become a motivated and effective member of staff as quickly as possible.

Training opportunities will be identified and agreed during an employee's annual performance management meeting. The school will ensure all employees receive

appropriate training in accordance with any statutory or school requirements/priorities as well as to ensure its on-going commitment to developing employees.

#### **44. Alternate Provision**

When White Spire School places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil. The school will complete the following

- Schools will obtain written confirmation from the alternative provision provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment/working with the key pupil (online only). This is to also include written confirmation that the alternative provider will inform the commissioning school of any arrangements that may put the child at risk (i.e. staff changes).
- White Spire School will meet/call the pupils home weekly (two staff members if home visit).
- If there are any changes to where a pupil is based during the school hours, this must be agreed by the school before any changes are made.
- They school will should regularly review the alternative provision placements.
- If a safeguarding concern arises, the school will review the placement immediately. If necessary, the school will terminate, unless or until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.

#### **45. Work experience**

- Pupils at White Spire School attend work experience with a White Spire Staff member at the placement who has completed the safer recruitment checks.
- Pupils attend offsite work experience after age of 16. Due to this, when pupils attend a school, there is opportunity for contact with children and could be considered regulated activity relating to children. In these cases, the work experience provider e.g. school or sixth form college may ask for a DBS enhanced check.
- For pupils completing work experience over the age of 16 at White Spire School, the school may request a DBS enhance check.

#### **46. Monitoring and Review**

The Headteacher and Governing Board will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on an annual basis.