

Recruitment and Vetting Checks Policy



Bishop Road Primary School

Adopted by: Finance, Buildings, Health & Safety Committee

Adopted: October 2020

Review: October 2023

This policy has been written with consideration of with the following school documents:
Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018,
Whistleblowing Policy, Safeguarding and the school Equalities Plan

Bishop Road Primary School is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and as employers are responsible for ensuring that they follow guidelines for the recruitment and selection of staff in accordance with the "Keeping Children Safe in Education" guidance issued by the DfE in September 2018 and "Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings" 2015 and this policy is intended to cover these areas.

Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is an integral factor of school management. Robust and rigorous recruitment and selection practices helps deter or reject unsuitable applicants from gaining positions within schools and helps to ensure that the workforce is fully committed to the safe welfare of children who contribute to a safe and secure school environment. The purpose of this policy and associated guidance is to collate principles of good practice and to provide guidance that incorporates the nationally recommended approaches to safeguarding children. All new appointments to Bishop Road Primary School are subject to recruitment and vetting checks.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school. However all staff, governors and volunteers have an integral responsibility in ensuring that the school environment is safe and secure for children and that appropriate procedures are followed. 1 staff member has attended Safer Recruitment training and every recruitment panel has at least one person on the panel with this training.

Equal Opportunities

Bishop Road Primary School is committed to securing genuine equality of opportunity. Our staff are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to equality by taking action which eliminates discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity. The recruitment and selection process will be applied fairly and consistently to all applying for positions within this school regardless of gender, race, marital status, national or ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexuality, sexual orientation, age, religion, trade union membership/non membership, status and number of hours worked.

Safeguarding Statement

Bishop Road primary School is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

Bishop Road Primary School will implement a range of checks to minimise the possibility of children and young people suffering harm from those whom they consider to be in positions of trust.

To this end, we will ensure that appropriate checks and Child Protection procedures are in place for those members of staff who work with children and will ensure that all our practices reflect this commitment.

Identity checks will be carried out on all appointments to the school before a placement is offered to the applicant.

Bishop Road Primary School will ensure that any supply staff who come to the school have undergone the necessary checks to assess their suitability for the post, and that DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) criteria have been met. The school will also ensure that any agency providing staff will have made the appropriate checks and have followed the regulations regarding disclosure information; preferably by confirmation of a contract with the organisation and by sending through confirmation of safer recruitment booking confirmations.

The Recruitment Process

The main elements of the process are:

- Ensuring job descriptions/person specifications are up to date and make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Ensuring that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children
- Using application forms to obtain and scrutinise comprehensive information about applicants
- We use the City Council's application forms for "people applying to work with children or vulnerable adults" which is available through the TWS website and E-teach.
- The recruiting manager will arrange for the receipt of applications within the school by someone who is not involved in the process and has no interest in the position.
- Any disabled candidate who meets the essential criteria or who may do so with reasonable adjustments will be shortlisted.
- The forms will be stored confidentially until they are passed to the recruiting manager for shortlisting. Before being passed to the recruiting manager the personal details of the applicants (i.e. name, date of birth ethnicity) should be removed so that the shortlisting is undertaken anonymously.
- Records of shortlisting will be kept to allow constructive feedback to be given to applicants upon request.
- Ensuring references are obtained that help assess applicants suitability for the post through specific focused questions. References should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee. Where possible references should be obtained prior to interview, so that any concerns can be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. Where a reference has not been obtained prior to interview, Bishop Road Primary School should ensure that it is received and scrutinised and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed. All requests for references should seek objective information and not subjective opinion.

- Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case
- Conducting face to face interviews that ask appropriately robust questions
- Verification of applicants identity: original documents showing photographic ID must be seen, photocopies not acceptable unless a certified copy
- Verification of qualifications and skills: original certificates and documents should be seen, photocopies not acceptable unless a certified copy
- Verification of an applicant's previous employment history and experience
- Completion of mandatory employment checks, through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Any gaps which appear in an application form which are not accounted for will be followed up by questions at interview.
- Verification that the applicant has the health and capacity for the job
- Induction programmes that ensure a 'safeguarding children' culture is adopted and embedded into continuing practice
- Performance Management/Appraisal.
- All candidates will be subject to the same selection process including an interview
- Reasonable adjustments will be made available to any disabled candidate.
- A minimum of two people will be on the selection panel and three people for Head Teacher interviews.
- Interviews will be structured and planned.
- All candidates should be asked the same questions but supplementary questions may be asked, and questions to clarify particular information, e.g. from application form should be asked.
- Candidates who meet the criteria and who are appointable but were not the best candidate on the day can be identified as 'reserve' candidates for 12 months.
- Where requested, feedback should be given within 10 working days, or as soon as possible.

Conditional Offer of Employment

Any offer of employment with the School will be conditional on the satisfactory completion of the following: –

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
- Satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure and where the appointee has lived outside the United Kingdom, a certificate of good conduct (or equivalent) if applicable;
- Confirmation of the candidates medical fitness (through a pre-employment health check);
- Verification of qualifications by the individual by providing original certificates;
- Verification of professional status where required;
- Verification that the candidate has not been prohibited from teaching or carrying out teaching work by the Teaching Regulation Agency where relevant;
- Verification of the candidates identity;
- Verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK.

A record will be kept to show that the above checks have been carried out for all employees.

The details of checks will be reported to the police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if:-

- The DBS disclosure shows that an applicant has been disqualified from working with children;
- An applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his or her application; or
- There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children gained from other legitimate information sources (e.g. references).

Pre-employment Checks

References

References will normally be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the Job Description and Person Specification for the role that the applicant has applied for. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:-

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people;
- The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials;
- The School will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.

Central Record of Pre–Employment Checks

In addition to the various staff records kept in schools and on individual personnel files, a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks will be kept in accordance with Ofsted requirements.

The record will contain details of checks on the following people:

- All staff who are employed to work at the school
- All staff who are employed as regular supply staff to the school whether employed directly by the school or local authority or through an agency
- All others who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers within the school, and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, e.g. a specialist sports coach or artist.

The record of checks will be kept up to date by the School Office and be readily available for Ofsted and HMI Inspections.

For the purposes of creating the record of checks for supply staff provided through a supply agency (whether local authority or commercial), the school requests written confirmation from the supply agency that it has satisfactorily completed all relevant checks. Identity checks will be carried out by the school to confirm that the individual arriving at the school is the individual that the agency intends to refer to them.

Information disclosed as part of a DBS Disclosure will be treated as confidential. It is an offence for the DBS information to be passed to anyone who does not need it in the course of their duties. Only if the subject gives written consent can a disclosure be passed to another agency.

Regulations under 'The Police Act' also authorise passing disclosure information from Bishop Road School where the subject's suitability for work at the school is under consideration.

The disclosure information will be kept in secure conditions and will be destroyed by secure means, as soon as it is no longer needed. If the DBS disclosure refers to the existence of information additional to what is on the face of the disclosure, this cannot be passed on to another agency; however before the disclosure is destroyed, records need to be kept detailing the date the disclosure was obtained, who obtained it (i.e. Bishop Road Primary School), the level of the disclosure and the Unique Reference Number. The Headteacher will also consider maintaining a record of what other information was used to assess suitability.

In the event of disclosure of offences any written communication including emails should be destroyed once the details have been discussed between the person concerned and the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors. The person will be told of the decision whether they will be employed or not. Details are not to be recorded on personnel files or Single Central Record.

The central record will indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity checks
- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job e.g. those posts where a person must have QTS, NPQH, PGCE, Cert Ed. Additionally, for those applying for teaching posts, registration checks with the GTC where appropriate
- Checks of right to work in the United Kingdom
- DBS check
- Further overseas records, checks where appropriate.

A DBS check is a single certificate which an individual has a copy of. It is the responsibility of the employer to request this copy in order to check the status online within the Local Authority. A DBS certificate is portable between employers and the individual must present the certificate in order that the most recent status check can be carried out.

The records will also show the date on which each check was completed on the relevant certificate obtained and will show who carried out the check.

Members of Staff who have lived outside the United Kingdom

Newly appointed members of staff from outside the United Kingdom undergo the same checks as for all other members of staff at Bishop Road Primary School. This includes the check lists as well as DBS Disclosure.

In addition:

- Follow up references with telephone calls is good practice for all recruits
- Further checks can be made by Bishop Road Primary School as it considers appropriate, taking into account guidance provided in Safeguarding Children – Every Child Matters
- Information on how long the individual has been in the United Kingdom
- Obtaining certificates of good conduct from relevant embassies or police forces.

In addition, all members of staff who have lived outside the United Kingdom and were recruited since March 2002 should have DBS Disclosures undertaken.

Contractors and Vetting Procedures

Bishop Road Primary School should ensure that arrangements are in place where possible, to ensure that the regulations for contractors on an 'ad hoc' basis/irregular basis for short periods of time are followed:

- Sign in and out of the school
- Be escorted whilst on the school premises by a member of staff or appropriately vetted volunteer.

Those workers employed over a longer term that come into contact with children are required to undergo appropriate checks unless arrangements have been made with the contractor that they have undertaken all relevant safeguarding checks. DBS evidence and ID must be confirmed by the lead company prior to any contractor being allowed on site when children are still around school.

The contractor is also responsible for ensuring that the same procedures are followed by any subcontractors. The contractor must provide the school with a list of its direct employees and those of any sub-contractors, at least 20 days before they start work on site, unless in the event of emergency works.

Vetting Checks on Other Public Sector Staff

Individuals such as psychologists, nurses and other public sector staff will have been checked by their employing organisation. It is therefore not necessary for Bishop Road Primary School to see their DBS Disclosure. Bishop Road Primary School will, however, want to check identity when an individual arrives to ensure that imposters do not gain access to the children.

Fraudulent Applications

Serious, deliberate fraud or deception in connection with an application for employment may amount to a criminal offence (Obtaining Pecuniary Advantage by Deception). In such cases Bishop Road Primary School should, in addition to any planned disciplinary action, consider reporting the matter to the police. The case should also be reported to the Secretary of State and Local Authority.

Protection of Children Act and Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

There is a statutory requirement for the provision of the Protection of Children Act to be applied where employees work in the provision of care services to children. Employees at a school who are dismissed, who resign in circumstances which may have led to dismissal or where a disciplinary transfer has occurred on grounds of misconduct which harmed or placed a child at risk of harm will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.