RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & DISCLOSURES POLICY & PROCEDURE

1 Introduction

Padworth College is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its students and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The College is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The College recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The aims of the College's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partner status, disability or age
- to ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- to ensure that the College meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

2 Recruitment & selection procedure

All posts in the College will be advertised internally and externally apart from in exceptional circumstances such as internal re-organisation.

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment historyand their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form. Any gaps in employment will need to be explained in full.

Applicants will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for.

Applicants will be short-listed according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attribites and personal qualities to the role. Short-listed applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least three people chaired by the Principal or another designated senior member of staff. The Chair of Trustees should chair the panel for the Principal's appointment. The

interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Chair as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the College's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- the receipt of two satisfactory references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the College considers to be satisfactory;
- the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the College considers to be satisfactory and, where appropriate, a satisfactory check of the barred lists; and
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role via a medical questionnaire;

It is the College's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the College in strictest confidence. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed timetable, extra-curricular activities, layout of the College.

The College is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence, considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS certificate the Principal has discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the DBS Disclosure but appropriate supervision will be put in place and this will only be allowed if all other checks have been completed.

If the offer is accepted an the above conditions are satisfied, the applicant will be issued with a written statement of particulars as confirmation of employment.

3 Pre-employment checks

In accordance with the recommendations of the DfE in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* the College carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

3.1 Verification of identity and address

All applicants who are invited to an Interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications:

- passport; driving licence; and two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address; and
- documentation confirming their National Insurance Number (P45, P60 or National Insurance Card); and
- original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

The College asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with the DfE's guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education.* Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the College may verify the identity of, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history of all applicants. The College does not discriminate against applicants on the grounds of age.

3.2 References

References will 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 professional references which are considered satisfactory by the College. One of the references 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 (this applies for the recruitment of teaching posts only). 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 which 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, sickness 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
- details of any capability procedures that the applicant has been subject to

The College 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 College 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 and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools require that direct contact be made with the referees of any person applying for a position working with boarders. The College goes beyond those standards by making direct inquiries with referees of applicants for all positions.

3.3 DBS check

Due to the nature of the work, the College applies for criminal record certificates from the DBS in respect of all prospective staff members, trustees and volunteers.

For all positions, the College requests an enhanced disclosure from the DBS. An enhanced disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. Where an individual is carrying out regulated activity, an enhanced disclosure will also reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DBS. An enhanced disclosure may also contain non-conviction information from

local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

DBS or appropriate Police checks will be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

Should there be a delay in receiving a DBS certificate the Principal has discretion to allow any individual to begin work pending receipt of the DBS disclosure provided that appropriate supervision is put into place. However, new appointed staff in the Boarding Houses may not begin work (or residence) prior to completion of all relevant DBS checks.

4 Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders

4.1 Background

The College will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The College makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the College. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in paragraph 4.2 below.

As the majority of the positions within the College involve substantial opportunity for access to children, it is important that applicants provide legally accurate answers.

Upfront disclosure of a criminal record may not debar an applicant from appointment as we shall consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age it was committed and any other relevant factors as detailed at 4.2 below. The applicant should submit information in confidence enclosing details in a separate sealed envelope which will be seen and then destroyed by the Bursar. If you would like to discuss this beforehand, please telephone in confidence to the Bursar for advice.

The applicant will be required to disclose any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings. Please note that the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website. www.gov.uk/dbs

You should be aware that the College will institute its own checks on successful applicants for short listing with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify the applicant for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the College to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the College to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the College. If:

- the College receives an application from a disqualified person;

- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- the College has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, it will report the matter to the Police and/or the DBS.

4.2 Assessment criteria

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the College will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the College's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence
- serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the College's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the College's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

4.3 Assessment procedure

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the College will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Principal before a position is offered.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/she can do so by contacting the DBS directly. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the College will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

4.4 Retention and security of disclosure information

The College's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information.

In particular, the College will:

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in a locked, filing cabinet in the PA's Office.

- The College will not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. Generally this will be for a maximum of six months. The College will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken

- ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding

- prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information

The College complies with the provisions of the DBS code of practice.

5 Retention of records

If an applicant is appointed, the College will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.

6 Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter they should contact the Principal's PA.

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