



Recruitment Policy and Procedures

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the school's approach to good practice in recruitment in line with nationally recommended approaches to safeguarding children, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is integral to effective management at Thorngrove. The school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, where appropriate, along with other relevant employment checks.

The School is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The School 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.

Aims

The aims of the School'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 religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability or age (known as 'protected characteristics')

- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016) and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- to ensure that the School 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.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and 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.

Applicants will receive a job description and person specification relating to the role for which they are applying.

Where possible, references will be taken up before the interview stage.

References will be sought directly from the referee; references or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies.

The applicant may then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. Subject to the availability of training, at least one interviewer will have received accredited training in safe recruitment procedures (currently CW, AK, NW and MW have safer recruitment training)

Candidates will be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters
- to declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure
- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people

At the interview, a written record will be made of issues covered and the assessment of the interviewers (usually notes will be recorded on the Application Form). For teachers, the Headmaster, Head of Department and at least one other member of the Senior Leadership Team will meet the candidate. For support staff, the Principal and one other member of staff will meet the candidate. All academic staff will be observed teaching a lesson.

Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children;
- the candidate's suitability for this post.

There are two reference request forms to send out to named referees.

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

1. the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract (statement of particulars) incorporating the School's standard terms and conditions of employment; together with the ICT Policy and Code of Conduct
2. the receipt of two references directly to the School (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers satisfactory
3. the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the School considers to be satisfactory
4. the confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Barred List

5. together with the right to work in UK check; qualifications certified; overseas check and EEA check, if required
6. the confirmation that the applicant (if to be employed as a teacher or coach) is not subject to a prohibition order
7. completion of a pre-employment health questionnaire and verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role from the School's medical adviser, if required
8. If the offer is accepted and the above conditions are satisfied, the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of employment

Pre-employment Checks

In accordance with the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations, the School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees. These checks are carried out by the Assistant Bursar who is responsible to the Headmaster

Verification of identity and address

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of identity. 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 School asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with the guidance. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the School may verify the identity of, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in, the employment and education history of all applicants. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Verification of qualifications

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

Right to work in the United Kingdom

The Home Office requires the School to verify the applicant's right to work in the United Kingdom. This is derived from the applicant's passport (or birth certificate). EU and UK citizens have an automatic right to work in the UK; others need to show a visa giving the right.

References

References will be sought on shortlisted candidates and will be taken direct from the referee. 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 for which the applicant has applied. 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

The reference request will specifically ask all referees to state any known reason why the person should not be employed to work with children and that there should be no material incorrect statement or omission relevant to the suitability of the applicant.

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 make direct contact with each referee, to verify the reference. 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.

Employment history

Applicants will be required to supply a full employment history and explain any gaps in their application form since leaving full time education.

Criminal records check

Due to the nature of the work, the School applies for an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members and volunteers who are in 'regulated activity'.

An enhanced disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record (including those which are defined as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer.

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.

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.

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS disclosure the Headmaster has discretion to allow an individual to begin work, pending receipt of the disclosure. This will only be allowed if all other checks, including a check of the Barred List, have been completed and once appropriate supervision has been put in place (note to be made on SCR).

DBS 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 other checks, including obtaining certificates of good conduct from relevant embassies or police forces, as appropriate, which must be completed prior to the individual starting work.

The School's policy is to insist upon an enhanced DBS disclosure for all staff.

Policy on Recruitment of Ex-offenders

Background

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed.

The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record, this will not automatically debar him/her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

All positions within the School are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must, therefore, declare all previous convictions, including those which would normally be considered "spent", when applying for a position at the School.

A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS and the Department of Health of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School 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 unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position at the School. The School will make a report to the police and/or the DfE

- it receives an application from a barred person;
- it is provided with false information in, or in support of, an applicant's application; or
- it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

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 School 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 School'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 School'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 School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

The Headmaster will have the final decision on a candidate's suitability to be employed at Thorngrove.

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 School will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Headmaster of the School before a position is offered.

Retention and security of disclosure information

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

In particular, the School will:

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the School's senior management team.
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. In most cases, the School will not retain such information for longer than 6 months, although the School 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 School complies with the provisions of the DBS code of practice, a copy of which is available on request.

Retention of Records

If an applicant is appointed, the School 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 unless the applicant specifically requests the School to keep their details on file.

Single Central Record

A single central record of all pre-employment checks will be maintained, and will be available for inspection by ISI. This includes;

- all staff who are employed to work at the school;
- all staff who are employed as supply staff to the school, whether employed directly by the school or through an agency;

- all others who have been chosen by the school to work in 'regulated activity' and contact with children. This will cover volunteers 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 artists).

Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter, they should contact the Headmaster or the Assistant Bursar.

Induction

All staff who are new to the school will receive induction training by the Senior Master that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices.

DBS Check Process

1. The Assistant Bursar will give the successful applicant the DBS forms to complete. The applicant fills out the form, selects the ID items they are able to provide and completes the details requested.
2. The applicant must come to the school Office with the original ID documents which will be photocopied for their personnel file
3. United Medicare Ltd will then process the form and initiate the checking process.
4. Once all checks are completed a disclosure certificate will be issued to the applicant, by post, and this must be taken to the school Office for verification by the School.

Reviewed by Adam King (Headmaster) July 2016

Next Review July 2017 (or earlier if necessary)