



**Shaw
Education
Trust**

Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy

Document Owner:	Jo Collingwood/Natalie Turner
Approved By:	Trust Board
Queries to:	The People/HR Team
Review Period:	3 years or as appropriate
Date of last Review:	1 st June 2025

Contents

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Aim
3.0	Family & Friends
4.0	Equal Opportunities
5.0	Role & Responsibilities
6.0	Job Descriptions & Person Specifications
7.0	The Advert
8.0	Applications
9.0	Shortlisting
10.0	References
11.0	Interviews
12.0	Pre employment Checks
13.0	Enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Checks
14.0	Dealing with Convictions
15.0	The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
16.0	Prohibition & 128 Checks
17.0	Proof of Identification, Right to Work and Verifying of Qualifications
18.0	Overseas Checks
19.0	Contractors & Agency Staff
20.0	Medical Fitness
21.0	Monitoring & Evaluation
22.0	Links to Other Policies

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Shaw Education Trust are committed to the safe recruitment of all colleagues across the Trust. Safe recruitment is the first step to safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children and young people in our care.

1.2 The Trust is committed to maintaining a rigorous and dedicated approach to safer recruitment, recognising its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people. We take this duty of care seriously, ensuring that every recruitment process prioritizes their safety and well-being.

1.3 This policy and associated guidance are in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools and colleges 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' part 3 which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

A brief overview can be found in Annex 1.

2.0 Aim

2.1 The aim of this policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who may pose a risk to pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with children by having appropriate procedures for appointing colleagues.

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

2.3 The Trust aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for roles with Shaw Education Trust and its schools.

2.6 This policy extends to Senior Post Holders on leadership support terms and conditions, and where performance concerns arise, meetings that are held will include the involvement of a member of the Trust Board.

3.0 Friends and Family

3.1 Shaw Education Trust **strictly prohibits** the involvement of family members, close friends, or personal associates in the hiring, appointment, or salary determination of candidates to ensure, fairness, transparency and integrity in the recruitment and selection process.

3.2 Employees must not participate in any aspect of the selection process, including interviews, evaluations or decision making if they have a personal connection of any description with the candidate.

3.3 **Additional, employees must not be involved in decisions related to** discipline, complaints, promotions, appraisals, financial claims (such as travel, subsistence and overtime) or pay adjustments for relatives, partners or close friends.

3.4 The employment of near relatives within the **same department is strongly discouraged**, as this may create perceptions of favouritism, hinder objective management and can negatively impact on team morale. Furthermore, favouring individuals based on personal relationships rather than merit is strictly prohibited, as it undermines fairness and equal opportunities within the organisation.

4.0 Equal Opportunities

4.1 Shaw Education Trust is committed to ensuring that it provides equality of opportunity to all in employment. Through the SET recruitment and selection policy and procedures, it aims to eliminate barriers and encourage applicants from all communities by:

- Ensuring recruitment and selection procedures are fair and equitable
- Only considering applicants for positions on the basis of their relevant experience, skills and abilities unless a Genuine Occupational Qualification (GOQ) exists for specific posts, interviewing all applicants with disabilities who meet the essential criteria of the post in line with the organisation's accreditation of the Job Centre Plus Disability Confidence Scheme.
- Ensuring that all employees receive fair and equal treatment in relation to their employment regardless of whether they are part-time, fulltime or employed on a temporary basis.

5.0 Roles & Responsibilities

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Shaw Education Trust Board of Trustees to:

- Ensure the Academy Trust and its academies has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all employees and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor compliance with the approved policy.

5.2 It is the responsibility of the Trust, Principals and Academy Councils to:

- Ensure each academy operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all employees and volunteers who work at the Trust and its academies,
- To monitor contractors and agencies compliance with this document
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure

5.3 In accordance with the SET scheme of delegation, the Trustees have delegated responsibility to the SET Central Team Leadership team and Principals to lead in all appointments in their departments/academy. The exception is the appointment of the principal themselves. The responsibility to appoint the principal sits with the C-Suite of Shaw Education Trust.

6.0 Job Descriptions & Person Specifications

6.1 At the start of the recruitment process it is important to define what the post holders responsibilities are for children/vulnerable adults will be over and above the qualifications and experience needed to perform the role.

6.2 All job descriptions must be sourced from the **SET Recruitment Team** and must not be modified without prior approval from the **SET HR Team**.

6.3 Job descriptions undergo a thorough benchmarking and evaluation process to ensure they accurately define the role's duties and responsibilities. Each job description will also include a statement confirming the employee's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children they work with or come into contact with.

6.4 The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.

7.0 The Advert

7.1 To ensure equality of opportunity, the SET Recruitment team will advertise all vacant permanent posts. The minimum requirement is to advertise all vacant posts to employees of SET. In exceptional circumstances when a roll must be filled with immediate effect, the role must be identified as a business-critical role and approval sought from the Chief People Officer or CEO.

7.2 All adverts must be sent to the SET Recruitment team for final approval before roles are advertised.

7.3 Promoting commitment to safeguarding and child protection can act as a deterrent to would be abusers. Advertisements for all vacancies must demonstrate the Trusts commitment to safer recruitment and vetting procedures with the following wording:

(The Shaw Education Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment)

7.4 All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

8.0 Applications

8.1 All applicants for employment will be required to complete a digital Shaw Education Trust application form containing questions regarding their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role. In addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in their employment history.

8.2 If a candidate submits only a CV before the closing date of the post, they will be required to complete an application form with a request to return the completed application form before the closing date. If an applicant is unable to complete an application form due to a disability, consideration can be made for accepting CV's if alternative formats are not suitable/available.

9.0 Shortlisting

9.1 Safer Recruitment

9.1.1 At least two members of the agreed interview panel will be involved in the shortlisting process. This will usually involve the Hiring Manager and another nominated colleagues. At least one panel member must have completed safer recruitment training.

9.1.2 Applications will be objectively assessed against the job description and person specification. The application form will also be scrutinised sufficiently in order to ensure there are no gaps in the applicants' employment history and to ensure there are no other inconsistencies in their application evidence.

9.2 Criminal Convictions

9.2.1 Criminal convictions disclosed by applicants will be withheld from the initial short-listing process. Disclosure of a criminal background should not be used to exclude an applicant.

For further information on dealing with criminal convictions, please refer to the SET DBS policy.

9.3 Social Media Checks

9.3.1 In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, Shaw Education Trust commission an external organisation to carry out online searches/Social Media checks as part of our due diligence process on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the Academy or Trust might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

9.3.2 A Social Media Check report highlights material which may contain high risk behaviour of relevance to individual conduct and standards. The report will objectively assess all information against the following criteria:

- Swearing & profanity
- Extremist groups
- Negative sentiments
- Hate speech
- Violent images
- Potential nudity
- Toxic language.

9.3.3 The report will objectively assess all information against consistent criteria. The interpretation and action to be taken as a result of the findings is the responsibility of the report requestor.

9.3.4 Shaw Education Trust is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

10.0 References

10.1 No-one should be permitted to start work until two satisfactory professional references have been obtained. One of the referees must be the candidate's current or most recent employer. Open references must not be accepted under any circumstances.

10.2 In exceptional cases, a character reference may be accepted if the candidate has been self-employed, has no prior employment history, or if their previous employers are no longer in operation.

10.3 If obtaining two references is not feasible due to exceptional circumstances, a reference risk assessment may be implemented. This must be approved by the Head of HR or the Chief People Officer.

10.4 References must be signed by the Headteacher/Principal of the school giving the reference or if not a school, then the person who can answer the question about conduct/suitability to work with children and young people. In exceptional circumstances an alternative member of the Leadership team or the relevant HR department may provide a reference if there are difficulties in obtaining a reference from the Headteacher/Principal. Please seek further advice from your Regional People Advisor (People Team).

10.5 Wherever possible, references 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 interviewing panel. However, it is acknowledged that particularly with applicants not currently working in education, they may not wish their current employer to know that they are seeking alternative employment. In this case no contact with their referee(s) should be made 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.

10.6 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. Two professional references must be provided. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up at interview or prior to final appointment to the post, should the references not be available at the

time of interview. One of the references must be from the most recent/current employer.

10.7 Failure to fully disclose issues or forge references/qualifications will result in disciplinary action reporting to the relevant authorities.

10.8 All posts are offered conditionally subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

11.0 Interviews

11.1 The shortlisting panel would ordinarily be involved in the interview. The Hiring Manager will chair the process and will make the final decision to appoint after the panel have scored the evidence provided.

11.2 The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will also enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps in employment in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training). Interview panels will cover the same questions with all candidates but are encouraged to ask supplementary questions to gain a thorough understanding of the applicant's skills and knowledge to ensure comparability between interview responses

11.3 Any information in respect to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered where disclosed at the interview stage. At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable. SET encourages interview panels to have at least two safer recruitment trained colleagues on each panel.

11.4 Interview panels should use assessment and scoring procedures against which all applicants are scored fairly. If a high number of applicants is received for a single role, the "hiring manager" should seek to use a scoring process in which only the most suitable applicants are invited for interview. Hiring managers should seek advice from their Regional People Advisor if they are unsure on how to score interviews. Managers will refer to the requirement to interview candidates who meet the essential criteria of the post in line with the company's accreditation of the Job Centre Plus Disability Confident Scheme.

12.0 Pre-Employment Checks

12.1 No candidate will be offered a post with the Trust unconditionally. All offers are subject to the receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS Certificate, references, social media check and medical checks, copies of qualifications and proof of identity. These checks must be made clear to the candidates at interview then be externally verified by the appointing officer (or representative of the appointing officer). Only when all checks have been completed and returned will an offer of employment be confirmed.

13.0 Enhanced DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Certificate

13.1 All employees of Shaw Education Trust are required to have an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

13.2 It is the Trust's policy to ask employees to complete an annual declaration of disclosure, these documents will be stored in line with data protection. Employees with a break in service of more than 3 months or whose role and responsibilities change substantially e.g. TA to Teacher will be required to reapply

13.3 Employees must be made aware of their obligation to inform the Principal (or in the case of central team employees the Hiring Manager) of any cautions or convictions that arise at any point in time.

13.4 In exceptional circumstances the Trust may permit an adult to start work before a DBS has been completed, with an appropriate risk assessment completed. All risk assessments must be approved by the Trust Head of HR or Chief People Officer.

13.5 **Portability of DBS Certificate Checks:** Considering the above information, when considering the portability of DBS checks the Principal or Hiring Manager must take into account the latest guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any associated updates that are made.

14.0 Dealing with Convictions

14.1 The Trust operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence

- How long ago the offence occurred
- One-off or history of offences • Decriminalisation and remorse

14.2 The person concerned will be asked to write down the circumstances regarding the matter and provide supporting information for their continued employment.

14.3 A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Principal/ Hiring Manager. Following these discussions, the Principal/ Hiring Manager will complete a risk assessment of the situation and it is the decision of the Chief People Officer or Head of HR as to whether to allow the person to work in the Trust. The person will then be informed of the decision.

14.4 It is an offence to employ anyone on the barred list in schools. Where appropriate checks will be undertaken in line with the DfE guidance

'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 as amended'.

15.0 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

15.1 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered SPENT must be declared when applying for any position within the schools or central team

16.0 Prohibition Check and 128 Checks

16.1 All candidates should be checked against the prohibited list if they are being recruited to a post which includes teaching work.

16.2 "Teaching work" is defined as work not subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher (or other person nominated by the head teacher to provide such direction and supervision) which involves one or more of the following:

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
- delivering lessons to pupils
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

This may include Support staff who may not have QTS but take on teaching responsibilities e.g. HLTA's

16.3 All teachers must undergo a prohibition check to confirm they are not barred from teaching. This has been a statutory requirement since April 2014. However, there is no obligation to conduct retrospective checks on teachers who began their current employment before this date. Existing staff will have been verified in accordance with previous guidelines for confirming Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). For further details, refer to the TRA publication *Teacher Misconduct: The Prohibition of Teachers*.

16.4 A copy of the individual's teaching record must be printed and retained in their personnel file. Prohibition orders are issued by the Secretary of State following a review by a professional conduct panel convened by the Department for Education (DfE). In cases where it is deemed in the public interest, the Secretary of State may impose an interim prohibition order while the case is under consideration. These orders, whether time-bound or indefinite, can only be lifted through a formal reapplication for removal.

16.5 To conduct the necessary checks before appointing a teacher, academies must register with the Teacher Services system, a free service. Guidance on registration and access is available at <https://www.gov.uk/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers>.

This system replaces the database previously managed by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE), which recorded teachers subject to suspension or conditional orders and confirmed Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and induction completion.

16.6 You can check whether a teacher you are considering employing has:

- Qualified teacher status (QTS)
- Completed their induction
- A mandatory qualification for teachers of hearing impaired or visually impaired pupils
- An active teaching restriction
- Been the subject of a decision by the Secretary of State not to impose a prohibition order for unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the teaching profession into disrepute or conviction of a relevant offence been prohibited from teaching
- Been prohibited under section 128 from taking up a management position in an independent school (including an academy or free school). This check should also apply to members of the central/hub teams who are in leadership roles.
- A suspension or conditional order imposed by the GTCE or TRA for England that is still current
- Failed their induction or probation period

16.7 It is important that the checker also 'claims' the teacher on the Teachers Services website.

16.8 A Section 128 check is only undertaken on individuals who are involved in the management and governance of schools. If an individual has been issued with a 'Section 128' they cannot serve on the board or on the Senior Management team.

Please note: *The prohibition order check is different to the barred list check operated by the DBS (see 4.4.3). Some new appointments will require an enhanced check.*

17.0 Proof of Identify, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Statement.

17.1 All applicants will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate and driving licence with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

17.2 In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form. Failure to provide accurate documentation will lead to a retraction of an offer of employment

18.0 Overseas Checks

18.1 All new employees who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. The academy will take into account the latest guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

18.2 If a prospective employee has lived or worked outside the UK for any period of time, regardless of nationality, a UK DBS Disclosure alone may not provide a complete record of any criminal history. For the most up-to-date guidance, visit www.gov.uk/criminal-record-checks-apply-role.

18.3 As a good practice measure, interviewers should discuss the candidate's international experience during the interview process. In addition to the standard pre-employment checks outlined in this policy, academies must conduct any further checks they deem necessary to assess relevant events that may have occurred outside the UK. For example:

- An overseas criminal record check, where available. The overseas criminal record certificate may also be referred to as a certificate of good conduct or police character certificate (etc.) depending on the country in question.
- An employment reference from the overseas' employer, even if this is not the last two employers.
- Where the vetting documents are received in a language other than English, the translation must be completed by an accredited translator. Since 01 January 2021 the TRA Teacher Services system no longer maintains a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states and therefore this check is no longer required. This column on your SCR must remain as evidence that this was part of your checks from 18th Jan 2016 to 31st Dec 2020.

18.4 Under Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), there is no requirement to conduct checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, in the three months prior to their appointment, the applicant has worked in a school, further education setting, or 16-19 Academy in England in a role involving regular contact with children or young persons.

18.5 However, academies may choose to carry out additional checks if deemed appropriate based on the individual's circumstances. For visa applicants, additional statutory requirements apply, including the provision of criminal record certificates.

For further support please contact HR Shared Services.

18.6 You must ensure that the SCR includes a confirmation of whether an overseas criminal records certificate is required and, if so, the date this was seen /verified.

19.0 Contractors & Agency Staff

19.1 Contractors engaged by the Trust and its academies must complete the same checks for their employees that the Trust is required to complete for its staff. The Trust requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Contractor can commence work at the Trust and its academies.

19.2 Agencies who supply staff to the Trust must also complete pre-employment checks which the Trust would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, the Trust requires confirmation that these checks have been

completed before an individual can commence work at the Trust and its academies.

20.0 Medical Fitness

20.1 Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. Applicants are required to complete a brief pre-employment medical questionnaire if they have declared any medical conditions/disabilities and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

21.0 Monitoring & Evaluation

21.1 The Chief People Officer and Trust Leadership team will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the trust.

22.0 Links with other Policies & Procedures

DBS Policy – for more information on regulated activities and recruiting new people

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy – Information on the Single Central Record and keeping children and young children safe in our schools.

Social Media Policy & IT Acceptable Use Policy – For guidance and the acceptable use of Social Media in the Trust

Single Central Record Checklist – Ensuring the SCR is compliant following the recruitment process.



**Shaw
Education
Trust**

Shaw Education Trust Head Office,
Kidsgrove Secondary School,
Gloucester Road,
Kidsgrove,
ST7 4DL

Twitter
LinkedIn
Call
Email
Visit

@ShawEduTrust
@ShawEducationTrust
01782 948259
info@shaw-education.org.uk
shaw-education.org.uk

**Pupil &
people
centred**

**Act with
integrity**

**Be
innovative**

**Be best
in class**

**Be
accountable**