



Langdon
Park
School

Professionalism - Inclusion - Pedagogy - Curriculum

Safer Recruitment Procedure

Langdon Park School

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SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE – based on LA RECOMMENDED FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction/Scope

This framework sets out an agreed set of recruitment and selection standards, which all schools within the LA, regardless of their status are strongly recommended to adopt.

These minimum standards take into account relevant legislation, including equalities legislation, and have been revised in light of the amended DfES guidance entitled 'Safeguarding Children: Recruitment & Selection in Education, which came into force in January 2007. Tower Hamlets LA is totally committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its children, and views these recruitment & selection standards as an essential tool in this process. All LA staff and volunteers are expected to share in this commitment, and to make every reasonable endeavour to ensure that such recruitment and selection standards are met.

These standards, which should be adhered to by schools at all times when recruiting and selecting staff, are also strongly recommended for use by external agencies/contractors appointing workers who will have access to the schools' premises as part of their role. It is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that relevant agencies are made aware of these minimum standards.

2. Aims- at Langdon Park School we will ensure the standards are adopted in full.

Adoption of recruitment and selection standards will:

- Ensure schools meet their statutory obligations;
- Help promote equality of opportunity, and assist schools to attract and retain a workforce that reflects the community they serve;
- Ensure that schools employ the best candidate for the job, regardless of race, gender, marital status, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age, etc.
- Help schools recruiting and selecting staff to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or who are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

3. Specific Equalities Considerations

Equalities implications will inevitably be involved whenever an employment procedure is applied. Application of these recruitment & selection standards will have particular implications for the workforce and the community we serve. In order to monitor the impact of these standards on minority groups, recruitment & selection within schools will continue to be monitored and analysed by race, gender, disability, and age.

Whilst it is not currently possible to monitor by sexual orientation and religion/belief, the LA reserves the right to request such information from applicants/new recruits (to be provided on a voluntary basis only) to assist in their analysis of the impact of these standards.

The LA commits to offer appropriate training to headteachers, governors and external personnel providers on an on-going basis, in order to avoid any disproportionate impact as a result of implementation of these standards,

4. General Principles

When recruiting and selecting workers and staff, schools will:

- Ensure its practices and systems are transparent, objective, consistent and thorough;
- Ensure those involved in the recruitment & selection process have received appropriate training;
- Include safeguarding children issues at every stage of the procedure;

- Constantly endeavour to raise awareness of child protection issues, and create an open and supportive climate in which such issues and concerns can be appropriately discussed and acted upon.

5. Recruitment & Selection Standards

5.1 Stage One: Recruitment Planning

As soon as a vacancy arises, the following will be reviewed by the headteacher:

- Whether the post needs to be filled and/or whether the nature of the job has changed significantly;
- **The job description.** This should clearly state the post title, grade, school, reporting lines, resources (including staff) for which the postholder is responsible. It should also include the purpose of the post, main duties and activities, as well as making it clear that the postholder will have responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children within the school.

A review of the grade/salary will need to be carried out if the job description has been revised (other than in the case of minor amendments)

- **The person specification.** This should set out the essential requirements for the post in terms of qualifications, skills, knowledge, experience, aptitudes, and other competences or qualities that candidates will need to demonstrate. The person specification should make it clear that candidates will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children, and that this will be tested at interview.
- **The information pack for applicants.** This should include the application form and explanatory notes (including information relating to the rehabilitation of offenders); job description; person specification; other essential information about the school/local authority; relevant policies including equality and diversity, and child protection; and details of the terms & conditions relating to the post

5.2 Stage Two: Recruitment

Particular care needs to be taken when drawing up the recruitment advert to ensure it is attractive, clear, and communicates the right messages. Specifically, the advert will include:

- Post title, and a brief description of the associated duties – including the extent of contact with, and degree of responsibility for children;
- Remuneration;
- Hours/times of work, and other key working conditions;
- A description of the key characteristics/qualifications/skills/ experience necessary for the job;
- Details of the school, and who to contact for further information;
- A statement illustrating the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake a DBS check.

The majority of schools will choose to use the LA's standard job application form. Where this is not the case, the headteacher will ensure that the following minimum information is obtained from candidates prior to the shortlisting stage:

- Full identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, current address and contact details, date of birth¹, and National Insurance number;
- Details of academic/professional qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant to the post applied for, with details of the awarding body together with dates;

¹ To ask for date of birth is not discriminatory. This information is required to ensure correct identification of the candidate.

- Teachers are required to provide their DfES reference number, evidence of QTS status, and details of their registration with the General Teaching Council;
- Confirmation that the applicant is free to take up employment within the UK with no immigration restrictions;
- A full chronological history since leaving secondary education, including periods of training, working (including voluntary work), together with dates and an explanation for any periods not in employment, education or training, and reasons for leaving employment. Start and end dates should be provided in all instances;
- A declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees, councillors or school governors;
- Contact details for two referees (one of whom should be the applicant's current or most recent employer). Where the applicant's current job does not involve working with children, a reference should be sought from their most recent employer where it did;
- A statement of the knowledge/skills/experience/personal qualities that the applicant is able to bring to the job, and how they feel they meet the person specification;
- A signed, dated statement from the applicant that they are not on List 99, disqualified from working with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body (e.g. the General Teaching Council).

Additionally:

- As curriculum vitae are not acceptable, job applicants must always complete a standard application form (whether this be the LA's or the school's), This will have been clearly stated on the application form;
- Applicants must be provided with an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means that all convictions, cautions and bind-overs (including those regarded as 'spent' for other purposes) must be declared. Applicants must provide a signed statement declaring that they either have no convictions, cautions or bind-overs, or attaching details of their record (in an enclosed sealed envelope, marked confidential);
- Applicants must be informed that, where their current employment involves working with children, their employer will be asked about any disciplinary offences relating to children (including those that are 'time expired'), and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection concerns. Where the current employment does not involve working with children, but a previous position has, then that employer will be approached for such information.
- The prospective employer will seek reference on shortlisted candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications before interview.
- Applicants must also be informed that providing false information is an offence, which could result in their application being rejected, or summary dismissal from employment with a possible referral to the police.

5.3 Stage Three: Selection

Shortlisting is the first stage of the selection process. Headteachers will ensure that the following standards are met:

- The shortlisting panel will be comprised of a minimum of two senior employees of the school, or governors. Those responsible for shortlisting will (except in the rarest of circumstances) also take part in the interview process. Where it is not possible for the shortlisting panel to meet together, the shortlisting will be conducted by one member of the panel and checked by the absent member prior to inviting candidates for interview
- A standard shortlisting matrix will be used for recording job applicants and whether they met the short-listing criteria

- All applications will be scrutinised as part of the short-listing process for consistency of information, gaps in employment, anomalies and discrepancies. Incomplete applications and curriculum vitae will not be accepted
- All candidates will be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

Prior to inviting shortlisted candidates for interview/testing, the headteacher will ensure that the following are sought for each candidate:

- References (for detailed guidance on what information referees should be asked to provide, please refer to the DfES guidance 'Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education (2007)').
- DfES number/GTC registration (teachers)
- Whether s/he has Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (teachers)
- Verification of qualifications and/or professional status
- Evidence of identity and address

Where it is not possible to obtain the above checks prior to, or during interview, the recruitment panel may agree for them to be provided after the interviews have been conducted but before the successful candidate starts work.

Important Note: It is essential that references, qualification details, and other documents provided by the applicant are cross-checked against details on the application form, in order to rule out possible anomalies. Where anomalies are found, or where references are vague, or unspecific, follow-up action will be taken by the headteacher to establish the candidate's suitability for the post.

The next stage of the selection process will normally be to conduct interviews. In this respect the headteacher will ensure that:

- No offer of appointment is made without the candidate having attended a face-to-face interview
- Interviews are conducted by a minimum of two interviewers at all times
- Interviewers have received appropriate training i.e. online training provided via the National College for School Leadership.
- A core set of questions to be asked of all candidates is drawn up prior to interview, based on the person specification (these will normally be competence based)
- The interview panel reaches a consensus as to the required standards before the interviews take place and how those standards will be measured
- The interview panel agrees beforehand what additional issues specific to each candidate need to be explored at interview (these will be based on the candidate's application and references)
- resilience in working with challenging behaviours; and
- attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline;
- Candidates are asked at interview whether they wish to declare candidates' attitude towards children is explored at interview, as well as whether they are able to support the school's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children including:
 - motivation to work with children and young people;
 - ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
- anything else in light of the fact that they will be subject to a DBS check and have applied for a post that involves working with children
- Candidates being invited for interview are reminded that their identity will need to be checked, and that they will be subject to a DBS check, and asked to bring relevant documentary evidence with them to the interview.

5.4 Stage Four: Pre-Appointment Checks

The headteacher will ensure that all appointments are offered on a conditional basis and that (other than in the most exceptional of circumstances) new recruits do not commence work without the following checks having been satisfied:

- Those already listed in section 5.3 above
- List 99 check, and enhanced DBS disclosure
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to teachers who obtained QTS after 7/5/99)

In addition, non-teaching staff new to the Local Authority² will be required to satisfactorily complete a six-month probation period.

The headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that all of the above checks are confirmed in writing; that the checks are followed up if they are unsatisfactory or where there are discrepancies; and finally retained on the individual's personnel file³.

5.5 Stage Five: Post Appointment: Induction

There should be an induction programme for all staff and volunteers newly appointed in an establishment, including teaching staff, regardless of previous experience. The purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about the establishment's policies and procedures;
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged;
- confirm the conduct expected of teachers and support staff within the school;
- provide opportunities for a new staff member or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities; and
- enable the headteacher or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the new staff member or volunteer, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme should include information about, and written statements of:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, antiracism, physical intervention or restraint, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection and safeguarding procedures;
- safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and pupils in the school;
- how and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised; and
- other relevant personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, capability and whistle blowing.

The programme should also include attendance at child protection training appropriate to the person's role.

² This includes those who have previously worked for the Authority but whose continuity of employment has been broken

³ Subject to certain restrictions in relation to DBS checks