



Phoenix House
International School

Safe Recruitment Policy

Introduction

Phoenix House International School is committed to safeguarding children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people

The appointment of all employees at PHIS will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Japanese Employment Law - (Labor Standards Act and the Labor Contract Act).

Safeguarding

We are committed to using disciplinary procedures that deal effectively with adults who fail to comply with PHIS's safeguarding practices, including referring any allegation of abuse against an adult working with children to relevant local child protection agencies.

A referral will be made if an adult has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

Advertising

All vacant posts will be advertised on the Phoenix House and TES (Times Educational Supplement) websites.

PHIS Process

The safe recruitment process at PHIS involves the following elements:

1. Application form and letter
2. Longlist informal interview
3. Calling of references
4. Lesson observation, planning review, class data analysis
5. Shortlist formal interview
6. Background check
7. Offer of contract

Information for Applicants

All applicants will be provided with:

- A job description and person specification
- Online application form
- Reference to this 'Phoenix House Safe Recruitment Policy'

Prospective applicants must complete the application form in full, submit a letter of application and their CV. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Long and Short Listing

PHIS will conduct short, informal longlist interviews with candidates to ascertain that they are a suitable match for the school's values and ethos. This may be face-to-face or through video conference.

Applicants will be long and shortlisted against the Person Specification for the post. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants.

Interviews

Shortlist interviews will be face-to-face, but may in some unusual circumstances (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) be via video conference.

Candidates invited to interview will receive:

- Details of the interview date, time and location
- Details of any videos, work scans or tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process

The questions asked will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirements of the Job Description and the Person Specification and each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post.

Candidates will always be required:

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

Recruitment documentation will only be retained for successful candidates.

Reference Requests

Two references, one of which must be from the candidate's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the shortlist interview stage. Referees may be contacted directly to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may also be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies.

If a candidate is not currently employed in a post working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment in which the candidate has worked with children to confirm details of the candidate's employment.

Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm, in writing:

- The referee's relationship to the candidate
- Details of the candidate's current post and salary
- The candidate's performance history and conduct
- Whether the candidate has been subject to capability or disciplinary action relating to the safety and welfare of children and the outcome of this
- Whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people (if so, PHIS will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children)
- The candidate's suitability for the post

Open testimonials i.e. those provided by the candidate and/or marked 'to whom it may concern' will not be accepted. PHIS will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend or colleague of the candidate, for any post.

Background checks

PHIS will execute a candidate background check through 'First Advantage' (at PHIS expense). All appointments are subject to satisfactory background check.

Pre-appointment checks

When appointing new staff, PHIS will:

- Verify a candidate's identity from current photo ID (originals) and proof of address (originals)
- Verify professional qualifications (original certificates)
- Execute a candidate background check
- Verify the candidate's eligibility to work in Japan

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

All checks will be:

- Documented and retained on the personnel file
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received

Offer of Employment

The offer of employment and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties in line with PHIS Rules of Employment, subject to satisfactory completion of the pre-employment checks and satisfactory references.

Personnel files and central records

Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidates will be retained securely in a personnel file within the school's central records, confidentially for the duration of his/her employment including:

- Application form
- References – minimum of two
- Proof of identity
- Proof of right to work in Japan
- Proof of relevant academic qualifications
- First Advantage check
- Offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment

Start of Employment and Induction

The pre-employment checks listed above must be completed before the employee starts work.

All new employees will be provided with an induction program which will cover all onboarding processes as well as relevant matters of PHIS policy and expectations, including safeguarding, child protection procedures and emergency procedures.