



SHERBORNE SCHOOLS GROUP

1. Application Process

Applications will be accepted only from candidates who complete an application form in full through the appropriate application route. Curriculum Vitae alone will not be accepted.

All posts within the Sherborne Schools Group involve responsibility for safeguarding children, although the level of responsibility will vary according to the role (see individual job descriptions).

Applicants are therefore required to disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not protected, as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended). Further information is available in the relevant School's Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders.

2. Online Searches (Safer Recruitment)

In line with safer recruitment guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), the Group may carry out online searches as part of its due diligence on shortlisted candidates. These searches are intended to identify any publicly available information that may be relevant to an applicant's suitability to work with children or that may contradict fundamental British values.

To minimise bias, searches will be conducted by a member of the HR Department not involved in shortlisting or interviewing. Only relevant findings will be shared with the appropriate safer recruitment panel member and explored with the applicant at interview.

All information obtained will be treated confidentially and used solely for recruitment and selection purposes. Applicants are required to give consent for these searches as part of the application process. Existing employees are encouraged to ensure appropriate privacy settings are applied to personal social media accounts.

3. Disclosure and References

The successful applicant will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS check (Child Workforce), including a check of the Children's Barred List.

Employment will only be able to commence once the Group has received:

- a satisfactory DBS disclosure, and

- **two satisfactory written references.**

In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may start work before DBS clearance is received. Where this occurs, additional safeguarding procedures will apply, including a Children's Barred List check.

References will normally be sought from the shortlisted candidate's current or most recent employer prior to interview (unless the candidate has requested otherwise); this applies to both internal and external candidates. Any such reference should be written by a senior person with appropriate authority. For teaching posts, a reference must be provided by the current or most recent Head of School.

References will be verified, and referees may be contacted directly as part of the recruitment process. The Group will check that references received electronically have originated from a legitimate source and will, wherever practicable, contact the referee to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of the information provided. The Group reserves the right to seek clarification or further information from referees where necessary.

4. Suitability to Work with Children

Where candidates are currently working with children, referees will be asked to confirm:

- any disciplinary action relating to children or young people (including time-expired matters), and
- any safeguarding allegations or concerns and their outcomes.

Where candidates have previously worked with children, but not currently, similar enquiries will be made of previous employers. Where a role has not involved work with children, referees will be asked to comment on suitability where possible.

Providing false information is a serious matter and may result in withdrawal of an offer, dismissal, and referral to the appropriate authorities.

5. Invitation to Interview

Interviews will normally be conducted in person (or exceptionally online) and will include questions relating to safeguarding and suitability to work with children.

Shortlisted candidates will be required to bring original documentation (photocopies are not sufficient) to interview for identity, qualification and right-to-work checks. Full details of required documents are set out in the ID and Right to Work Checklist, which will be issued separately. Copies taken will be destroyed for unsuccessful candidates and retained on file for appointments.

6. Conditional Offer and Pre-Appointment Checks

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon the satisfactory completion of all relevant pre-appointment checks, including:

- verification of identity and right to work in the UK,
- verification of qualifications and professional status where required,
- receipt of two written satisfactory references,
- a self-declaration of physical and mental fitness,
- receipt of a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check (including the Children's Barred List).
You are required to bring in your Disclosure certificate to the HR Department as soon as you receive it from the DBS.

For teaching posts (including sports coaching), additional checks will include:

- verification of QTS/PGCE (where applicable),
- successful completion of a statutory induction completion,
- a prohibition from teaching check via the Teaching Regulation Agency.

For management roles in independent schools (including Heads, Deputy Heads of academic departments, Housemasters, SLT, Professional Services Team, Governors and anyone promoted internally to any such management post), a Section 128 prohibition check (Prohibition from Management in Independent Schools) will be carried out.

Where the successful candidate is a foreign national or has lived or worked overseas for a period of 3 months or more in the previous five years - or longer, if deemed necessary by the Group - the candidate will be required to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct from the relevant country/countries.

For teaching posts, where a teacher has worked outside the UK, they will be asked to obtain a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country/countries in which they has worked. Advice about which regulatory or professional body applicants should contact is available from the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (UK NARIC).

For staff working with children under the age of eight, checks will be made under the Childcare Act 2006.

The Group has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment

Satisfactory completion of the required Probationary Period (as outlined in the Offer of Appointment letter).

7. Record Retention

Application forms will be retained in hard copy for 12 months following the recruitment process and then securely destroyed. Electronic versions will be retained only for the duration of the recruitment process and deleted once an appointment has been made. References and identity documentation will be reviewed at

interview., any copies retained for recruitment purposes will be securely shredded if an application is unsuccessful or held on the individual's personnel file if an appointment is made.

Safeguarding Concerns

If a candidate is:

- found to be barred from working with children,
- found to have provided false information, or
- the subject of serious safeguarding concerns,

the matter will be referred to the appropriate authorities, including the Police and/or the Dorset Children's Safeguarding Board.

If you have any queries regarding this Application and Recruitment Process, please do not hesitate to contact hr@sherborne.org.

HR Department
April 2026