

# ORLEY FARM SCHOOL



## Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure

(Whole School Including EYFS)

<b>First Issued:</b>	October 2009	<b>Next Review:</b>	Summer Term 2027
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	Summer Term 2025	<b>Version:</b>	8.0
<b>Responsible:</b>	Director of Operations and HR Manager		

## 1. **General**

Orley Farm School ("the School") is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority.

The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

All queries on the School's Application Form and recruitment process must be directed in the first instance to the HR Manager.

An entry will be made on the Single Central Register for all current members of staff at the School, the proprietorial body and all individuals who work in regular contact with children, including volunteers, supply staff and those employed as third parties.

All checks will be made in advance of appointment or as soon as practicable after appointment.

## 2. **Scope of this Policy**

This policy refers and applies to staff directly recruited and employed by the School. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, staff are defined as:

*Any person working at the school whether under a contract of employment, under a contract for services or otherwise than under a contract, but does not include supply staff or a volunteer.*

In the case of agency or contract workers, the School should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the School must obtain written confirmation from the agency or company that it has carried out the same checks as we would otherwise perform on any individual working at the school or college (or who will be providing education on the school or college's behalf, including through online delivery). The school conducts identity checks on agency and contract workers on arrival in school and, in the case of agency workers which includes supply staff, the school must be provided with a copy of the appropriate level of DBS check.

The School will check with the relevant supply agency that the required checks have been carried out (identity, enhanced disclosure – renewed every 3 years, right to work in the UK, barred list, prohibition, qualifications, overseas checks plus those checks set out in KCSIE as 'pre-employment' checks. The Single Central Register shows these checks have been made and the School carries out its own identity check and has seen a copy of the disclosure (whether or not it discloses any information).

Certain individuals are automatically disqualified from acting in senior management positions within a charity. Whether an individual falls into the category of a senior management position is judged using the following criteria:

- A person who is accountable only to the Governors, and who carries overall responsibility for the day-to-day management and control of the charity. At Orley Farm School this would be the Headmaster.

- A person who is accountable only to the Headmaster or the Governors, and who is responsible for the overall management and control of the charity's finances. At Orley Farm School this would be the Director of Finance.

Being disqualified means that a person cannot take on, or stay in, a senior manager position – even on an interim basis, unless the Charity Commission has removed (or 'waived') the disqualification.

In respect of contractors, unchecked contractors will under no circumstances be allowed to work unsupervised in School. The School will determine the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

Any staff who TUPE transfer into the School's staff, will be required to undertake the statutory requirements with regard to safer recruitment checks.

If staff are transferred under TUPE (gap of three months or less and information complete) information will be passed to the new employer and a note made on the Single Central Register that details have been accepted under TUPE.

### **3. Application Form**

The School will only accept applications from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms, but are permitted to be submitted alongside an Application Form.

The School will make candidates aware that all posts in the School involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Candidates for employed posts will receive a Job Description and Person Specification for the role applied for.

Checks will be made of previous employment history to ascertain satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment which may also include checks conducted by a third-party company, Know Your People. These checks will then be checked against references and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate.

All new recruits will undergo an online check (including social media) for the purpose of ensuring Teachers Standards and the school's values are protected. Online vetting will be carried out in accordance with the KCSIE guidelines set out by the Department of Education. Checks will be carried out by a third-party professional screening company who will also be a member of the Professional Background Screening Association (PBSA). The company will analyse up to date social and behavioural online data.

The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") for the position and, where appropriate, a check of the Barred List will be undertaken. Any offer of employment will be conditional on obtaining such satisfactory checks. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if they are any reasons why they should not be working with children. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration.

The statutory guidance “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006” applies to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 AND to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

The school takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect his/her suitability to work with children must notify the Headmaster or the Director of Operations immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings he/she may receive.

Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the Director of Operations for more details.

If the candidate is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, the School will ask their current employer about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the candidate has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. Any information about past disciplinary action or substantiated allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

If the candidate is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, the School will ask the previous employer about those issues. Where neither the current nor previous employment has involved working with children, the School will still ask the current employer about the candidate’s suitability to work with children. Where the candidate has no previous employment history, the School may request character references which may include references from the candidate's school or university.

All candidates should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal by the School if they have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

In accordance with this policy and KCSIE guidelines set out by the Department for Education, a background check will be carried out on your online digital presence. This forms part of our due diligence to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online, which we may wish to explore with the applicant at interview. For this we use a third-party professional screening partner, SP Index ([www.sp-index.com](http://www.sp-index.com)), experienced in processing personal data for the purpose of such checks.

The scope of such checks will include all online open-source information, but specifically:

- Up to 10 years online history
- Social and professional networking and media
- Blogs & vlogs
- News and media reports
- Information displayed publicly online by 3rd parties
- Any other relevant open-source information available

You can find out more about how these checks are carried out and how your personal data will be used at <https://sp-index.com/privacy-policy/>

#### **4. Invitation to Interview**

The School will short list applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. At least two people will carry out the shortlisting exercise, consider any inconsistencies, look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them and explore all potential concerns.

As part of the shortlisting process, the School will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the School may want to explore with an applicant at interview. This forms part of the School's wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working in a school environment. Checks by a third-party professional screening company will be carried out once an offer has been made to the successful candidate.

Short-listed applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed and or tested in more detail.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration form in relation to their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

The School will, where possible obtain references prior to interview unless stated otherwise on the application form. This allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and can be taken up with the shortlisted candidate at interview.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by the Headmaster, Director of Operations or another designated senior member of staff. It is recommended best practice that at least one person on the appointment panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training. The Chair of Governors should chair the panel for the appointments of the Headmaster and Directors of Finance and Operations.

The interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Chair as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel. Should the Chair have a conflict of interest, the Vice Chair shall decide whether the Chair should withdraw from the panel.

The interview will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children including where appropriate, any discussion of information shared by a candidate in their self-declaration form.

All candidates invited to interview must bring the original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified

copy of certificates, diplomas, etc.) Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by the candidate from the awarding body or a copy of the qualifications should be obtained.

The School requests that all candidates invited to interview also bring with them:

1. A Passport or current driving licence including a photograph;
2. A full birth certificate;
3. A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;
4. Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name; and
5. Where applicable, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

**Please note that originals of the above are necessary. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.**

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

## **5. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks**

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- a. Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received), including for internal appointments. All references should be provided by a senior person with appropriate authority, subject to the satisfaction of the School;
- b. Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK;
- c. A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;
- d. Online check by a third-party professional screening company;
- e. For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the historic General Teaching Council for England before its abolition in March 2012;
- f. Verification of professional qualifications, including, where applicable, any award of Qualified Teacher Status;
- g. Verification of successful completion of a statutory induction period (for teaching posts – applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999), where relevant;
- h. Assessment of teaching ability to encompass:
  - Planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
  - Delivering and preparing lessons to pupils;
  - Assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
  - Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.
- i. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas in the past 5 years will be required to provide a Police Check from their country of residence and such checks and confirmations as the School may consider appropriate. This shall include the candidate providing the School with proof of his/her past conduct as a teacher in the form of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which s/he has worked;

- j. Satisfactory medical fitness;
- k. Receipt of a signed Staff Suitability Declaration form showing that the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)”;
- l. For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position as set out within the School’s Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure, receipt of a signed “senior charity manager positions: automatic disqualification declaration” confirming that the candidate is not disqualified from acting in a senior management position for a charity in accordance with the automatic disqualification rules for charities; and
- m. Where the successful candidate will be taking part in the management of the School, a check will be carried out under section 128 of the Independent Educational Provision in England (Prohibition on Participation in Management) Regulations 2014. This applies to all Governors, Senior Leadership Team and teaching Heads of Department.

It is the School's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the School in strictest confidence and processed in accordance with the Recruitment Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role (i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School).

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

## **6. References**

The School will seek the references referred to in section 5 above for shortlisted candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. One reference must be from the applicant’s current or most recent employer. References must be received by a senior person with appropriate authority.

If the candidate does not wish the School to take up references in advance of the interview, they should notify the School at the time of applying.

The School will ask all referees if the candidate is suitable to work with children and to provide facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold set out in Part 4 of the statutory guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’. Substantiated allegations that meet the harm threshold should be included in references. Any repeated concerns or allegations which do not meet the harm threshold which have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated, or malicious should not be included in any reference.

The School will only accept references directly 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 verify all references. Where references are received electronically, the School will ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

The School will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the Application Form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

## **7. Additional Overseas Checks**

Orley Farm School recognises that potential employees may have gained valuable experience from living and maybe working outside of the UK. Giving regard to DfE regulations and KCSIE, a DBS check is not considered sufficient to establish suitability to work in a school because of a person 'living or having lived' outside of the UK as a UK check would not cover offences committed abroad.

No period is prescribed to differentiate between 'living' in a country and an extended holiday. Orley Farm School considers the duration of a tourist visa shall act as a useful rule of thumb, often around three months or more in the last five years as the basis for the need to conduct overseas checks. Time spent overseas under the age of 16 is of less significance as, even in England, it is not possible to obtain checks for those aged under 16.

Orley Farm School will carry out such further checks as the Board of Governors considers appropriate. These checks must be completed before the person starts work and applies, where relevant, to both foreign nationals and UK nationals returning from overseas. The Governors for Orley Farm School have permitted the Headmaster to use his professional discretion within the parameters of this policy to employ such a person.

In using his discretion, the Headmaster should have regard to government's guidance as to the nature of the 'further checks' necessary. The Home Office has published guides on what checks are available from different countries and foreign embassies, available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

A person may start work at Orley Farm School, whether or not any response is received, providing the School or the applicant, if it must come from them direct, have made the relevant request, and it can be evidenced. In the absence of a response from official sources overseas; before the person starts work, providing all other checks are complete and correct, the School will obtain as an alternative the further checks below before the person starts work:

- a. Additional references (beyond the two normally expected);
- b. Criminal record checks for overseas applicants
- c. In accordance with KCSIE, for teachers the 'further checks' will include obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority (this is often the Department/Ministry of Education but varies across the world) in the country or countries in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the regulatory Professions database.
- d. Has the person worked in a school in the UK since moving from overseas?

In all circumstances, a Risk Assessment must be in place and reviewed at no more than two weekly periods.

## **8. Criminal Records Policy**

The School will refer to the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks.

The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request, or accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>.

There are limited circumstances where the school will accept a check from another educational institution which are as follows:

This is where the new member of staff ("M") has worked in: –

- (a) A school or a maintained school in England in a position which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons;
- (b) A maintained school in England in a position to which M was appointed on or after May 2006 and which did not bring M regularly into contact with children or young persons; or
- (c) An institution within the further education sector in England or in a 16 to 19 Academy in a position which involved the provision of education or which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons,

during a period which ended not more than three months before M's appointment.

In these circumstances the school may apply for a disclosure but is not required to do so. A new, separate barred list check will be obtained.

### **DBS Update Service**

Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must give consent to the school to check there have not been changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. A barred list check may still be required.

### **If disclosure is delayed**

A short period of work is allowed under controlled conditions, at the Head's discretion. However, if an 'enhanced disclosure' is delayed, a Head may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- Without confirming the appointment;
- After a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person will be engaging in regulated activity and all other relevant checks (including any appropriate prohibition checks) having been completed satisfactorily;
- Provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;
- With appropriate safeguards taken (for example, loose supervision);
- Safeguards reviewed at least every two weeks by the Head/Bursar and member of staff;
- The person in question is informed what these safeguards are; and
- It is recommended, but is not a requirement, that a note is added to the single central register and evidence kept of the measures put in place.

## **9. Retention and Security of Records and Data Protection Obligations**

The School will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy.

The School will comply with its data protection obligations in respect of the processing of criminal records information. More information on this is included in the Recruitment Privacy Notice and the Data Retention Policy.

## **9. Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any candidate 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 individual has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the School. Each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

All candidates should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if they have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and or DBS.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS 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 also unlawful for the School to knowingly employ someone who works in the relevant settings and is disqualified from providing childcare under the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006".

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. The School will report the matter to the Police and or the DBS if:

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

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 DBS 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;
- whether the conviction or caution is 'protected' as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offender Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020 (if yes, it will not be taken into account);
- 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;
- in the case of disqualification from providing childcare, whether the applicant has or is able to obtain an Ofsted waiver from disqualification; 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.