Recruitment and Selection and Safer Recruitment Policy for School-Based Staff

Adopted by Lawnswood School Governing Body on 3 October 2024

Last reviewed September 2026

Next review September 2027

THIS PAGE IS LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Discrimination

3.0 Safeguarding and the Recruitment Process

4.0 The Recruitment Process

5.0 Job Description and Person Specification

6.0 Deciding How to Fill the Vacancy

7.0 Application Pack

8.0 The Recruitment Panel

9.0 Shortlisting

10.0 References

11.0 Interview and Assessment Process

12.0 Interview Preparation

13.0 Interviewing

14.0 The Selection Decision

15.0 Offer of Appointment

16.0 Induction

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION FOR SCHOOL BASED STAFF POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the key points of the recruitment and selection policy. It sets out the requirements of current relevant legislation and provides a framework within which recruitment panels should operate to ensure that the best appointments are made within a professionally sound and legal system.

The most valuable resource of any organisation is its workforce; getting the right people into the right posts is crucial to the success of the business. One of the most important challenges faced by Headteachers and managers is to ensure they recruit the right employees. Although the recruitment process can take time and can incur additional cost, the price of making a wrong appointment can be more costly in the long term. Investing sufficient time and resources into the recruitment process will help the recruitment panel make the right decision, first time round. The same principles apply in the recruitment of leadership roles. See section 6.4 below.

1.1 SAFER RECRUITMENT

This policy is underpinned by the Department for Education (DfE) **'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2026)** document and the '**Leeds Schools Safer Recruitment Policy' (September 2022)** to support schools in promoting safer recruitment practices.

This school-based staff model recruitment and selection policy should be used in conjunction with Leeds City Council's (LCC) Safer Recruitment Policy and for this purpose has been attached as Appendix.

Appendix 1 will be highlighted throughout this policy where schools are required to follow LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy to ensure compliance with their obligations under the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The '**Leeds Schools Safer Recruitment Policy'** (Appendix 1) also contains a **Safer Recruitment Checklist** which should be followed by the Chair of the recruitment panel or the recruitment administrator to ensure the safer recruitment procedures are adhered to.

1.2 THE EQUALITY ACT

Fairness in how we recruit and select our employees plays a significant part in creating a fair environment in terms of equal opportunities. Therefore, every internal and external applicant for a job within the school should be considered against criteria which relate only to the requirements of the job.

The Equality Act (Oct 2010) replaces previous legislation (such as the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and the Race Relations Act 1976) to ensure the workplace is a fair environment and to comply with the law.

There remain a number of protected characteristics as outlined in the legislation.

These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

2.0 DISCRIMINATION

Unlike other employment legislation, an applicant can allege discrimination against an employer although there is no direct employment relationship. This is particularly pertinent in the recruitment process whereby a potential applicant, person applying, or selected candidate may claim discrimination on the grounds of one or more of the protected characteristics. All actions and documents involved in the process must be free of any criteria that could be interpreted as being discriminatory within the terms of legislation. For example, advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications must not include anything that could be construed as an intention to discriminate on an unlawful basis.

Unlawful discrimination could also be found in the offer of that employment; in the terms on which employment is offered; or by refusing, or deliberately omitting, to offer employment, for example, a deliberate omission from a shortlist on grounds of age, race, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.

ACAS defines the different forms of discrimination as follows:

Direct discrimination - Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perception discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see discrimination by association below).

Discrimination by association - Already applies to race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Now extended to cover age, disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination - Already applies to age, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Now extended to cover disability, gender reassignment and sex. This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination - Already applies to age, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership. Now extended to cover disability and gender reassignment. Can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your organisation that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted

reasonably in managing your organisation, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful.

Being proportionate means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you've looked at less discriminatory alternatives to any decision you make. All actions and documents involved in the process must be free of any criteria that could be interpreted as being discriminatory within the terms of the Equality Act 2010. For example, advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications must not include anything that could be construed as an intention to discriminate on an unlawful basis. Employers may also be unlawfully discriminating by failing to make reasonable adjustments that would allow a disabled person to take part in the recruitment process.

Unlawful discrimination could also be found in the terms on which employment is offered, or by refusing, or deliberately omitting to offer employment, or deliberately omitting a candidate from a shortlist on the grounds of a protected characteristic defined under the Equality Act.

Further advice for employers can be found on the ACAS website:
https://www.acas.org.uk/discrimination-and-the-law

2.1 Liability for Discrimination

Liability for unlawful discrimination rests with the employer and/or any workers who are found to have discriminated. For example, anyone participating in the recruitment process, including panel members, could be liable if an allegation of discrimination is proven.

NB: Applicants have up to 3 months, following the recruitment process, to make a complaint.

The fact that a person may not have intended to discriminate against someone is irrelevant and would not constitute a defence.

2.2 Dealing with Complaints

If a complaint is received by the school, it should be dealt with in line with the school's Complaints Procedure. Advice can be sought from your HR Adviser. It is important to bear in mind that a complaint of discrimination may lead to a claim against an individual or a claim to an employment tribunal and should the employment tribunal decide that the complaint is well founded; damages may be awarded against the employer. In cases of discrimination the amount awarded is unlimited.

2.3 Reasonable Adjustments for Interview and Assessment Purposes

It is permitted under the Equality Act to ask candidates when inviting them to interview and assessment to notify you of any reasonable adjustments they may need to be made to allow them to take part.

Candidates should be asked to notify an administrative contact or the chair of the recruitment panel of any reasonable adjustment required. This contact person should then ensure reasonable adjustments are made. It may become apparent to the interview panel that an

adjustment has been made, however the recruiting manager should ensure as far as possible that adjustments are shared on a need-to-know basis only.

In all cases if the panel become aware of an adjustment, they should ensure this has no discriminatory effect on any part of the recruitment process.

2.4 References & Health Checks

Under the Equality Act 2010, you are not permitted to ask about an individual's absence record or health **before** they are offered a job (subject to a few very limited exceptions). You should not collect information or enquire into an individual's absence record, health or disability in the application or interview stage prior to a candidate being offered a position. You may complete supplementary checks after making an offer of employment with a view to making reasonable adjustments or ensuring the individual is capable of doing the job. If a concern with previous sickness absence arises through supplementary checks, please contact your HR service provider for further advice.

2.5 Employment Legislation

There is a significant body of employment legislation and guidance which has an impact on the Recruitment and Selection process. This includes:

- School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2022)
- Equality Act 2010
- Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order 1975) Amended in 2013 and 2020
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools (DfE January 2021)

Reference to the relevant legislation will be made throughout the policy and within the guidance and supporting documents.

3.0 SAFEGUARDING AND THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 1.1 (Appendix 1)

In line with DfE guidance the paragraph below must be included in all publicity materials, entries on recruitment websites, advertisements, candidate information packs, person specifications, job descriptions, competency frameworks and induction training materials:

'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.'

3.1 DBS

Schools will comply with the current legal requirements laid out in DBS Disclosure and Barring Service. Schools can seek further guidance on their legal requirements from DBS code of practice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

3.2 Safer Recruitment Training

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 8.1 (Appendix 1) for recruitment panel training requirements

Please contact the Education Safeguarding Team through the Leeds for Learning website www.leedsforlearning.co.uk/training for further information about forthcoming dates for safer recruitment training.

4.0 THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

4.1 The Objective

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 9.1.(Appendix 1)

4.2 Evaluating the vacancy

Each school will either have a staffing structure in place or will be moving towards a planned structure.

When a vacancy arises, the governing body and/or the Headteacher may need to review the school's staffing needs and determine whether it is appropriate for the post to continue in its current form or whether changes should be made. Changes to the staffing structure should be made following appropriate staff and union consultation and therefore advice should be sought from the Schools HR Provider if significant changes are planned.

5.0 JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

5.1 Job Description

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 9.3.1 (Appendix 1) for additional requirements for volunteer roles in schools.

A job description is a vital tool in making the recruitment and selection process fairer and more effective. Job descriptions must be used for all posts. A clear and precise job description will make it much easier to identify the skills, experience and knowledge needed to do the job.

Before any post is advertised, an up-to-date job description should be prepared. It should describe fully and in plain language, the responsibilities, and duties of the post, as follows.

- The job title
- The job purpose – why the job exists
- The reporting structure – to show where the job is placed within the school
- Main duties
- Salary band
- Grade
- A statement about commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children must be incorporated in all job descriptions.

If a nationally or locally-agreed job description exists, this should be used. The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) contains details of the professional duties and salary scales. School teachers' pay and conditions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

When a new post is created, or when a vacancy arises and there is a need to modify the existing job description, advice should be sought from the HR Team to ensure that conditions of service are not breached and that the equal pay provisions of the Equality Act are observed.

5.2 Person Specification

An up-to-date person specification is an essential feature of the recruitment process and should be used for all roles. It is essential in enabling a shortlist of applicants to be drawn up and a final selection to be made, based on fair, equitable and consistently applied criteria. It will ensure, as far as possible, that the right person is appointed to the position.

The Person Specification should include:

- The knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people
- The competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate
- Detail the method of assessment, for example, application form, test, or interview

Care should be taken to ensure that the person specification is free of any criteria that could be interpreted as being discriminatory such as age limit or physical requirements.

6.0 DECIDING HOW TO FILL THE VACANCY

In most cases when a vacancy arises it will need to be filled on a like for like basis. In some circumstances, a permanent role may need to be filled on a temporary or fixed term basis. Under The Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable) Treatment Regulations 2002, there are a limited number of circumstances which provide a fair reason to create a temporary or fixed term contract. These are:

- To cover a period of long-term absence
- To cover a period of maternity, paternity, adoption, or parental leave
- To cover absence due to a secondment
- To carry out a short-term project
- Where a role is attached to specific funding

Fixed term or temporary employment contracts should not be created or offered to any applicant, including Early Career Teachers (ECT's), as a way of imposing a probationary period.

6.1 Internal recruitment

When a vacancy arises and often before it arises (e.g. upon receipt of a resignation), the Headteacher should identify opportunities for appropriate existing staff to apply for the vacancy or additional hours first.

Whilst reviewing the school's current internal capacity, consideration should be given to:

- The potential for temporary or fixed term acting up opportunities
- Ensuring internal opportunities are shared with all appropriate staff including colleagues on leave
- The potential need to fill further vacant posts or hours if the appointment were made internally
- If an internal employee's role is at risk, or if a temporary or fixed term contract is coming to an end, whether the employee will have an automatic right to be offered / or to apply for the post

In this case, consideration must be given to the employment rights of the employee. In these circumstances advice should be sought from the schools HR service provider.

Secondments/Acting Up/Temporary Appointments

Where a post is time limited for up to one year e.g. due to maternity leave, long term absence, funding of the post or project length, acting up or secondment of existing staff may be a more effective way of filling the job. When deciding whether the post is suitable the following should be considered:

Could the job be used for employee development by opening it up as a secondment or acting up opportunity?

Are there suitable internal candidates available?

All appropriate staff should be invited to apply, demonstrating how they meet the person specification for the position. The usual selection process should then take place.

6.2 Redeployment

In order to mitigate redundancies within school communities Leeds City Council is committed to supporting 'employees at risk' with further employment opportunities.

For further information please contact Leeds City Council Schools HR Team on 0113 3788525 or email: HRSchools@leeds.gov.uk

6.3 Advertising

The purpose of the advert is to attract suitably qualified and experienced applicants to apply for the role.

An internal advert should highlight the key duties of the role and experience required and should include the job description and person specification. The advert must be circulated to all appropriate staff including those absent at the time of the advertisement i.e. staff on maternity and other types of leave.

Headteachers may ask for initial expressions of interest to gauge the size and quality of the internal field before deciding whether to continue with the internal or external recruitment process, or both.

The internal recruitment process must include an interview and the applicant/s should complete an application form to support their application.

The school should also consider whether it is necessary to advertise externally and in which publication, being mindful of advertising timescales, deadlines and costs when using services such as Eteach, TES and Leeds City Council. External adverts should be live for at least two weeks to allow the advert to be seen by potential applicants and to give individuals a reasonable amount of time to apply.

Existing employees applying for a role which is being advertised externally should apply through the external process, so they are treated in the same way as all other applicants.

In some cases of external recruitment, the school will need to use a supply agency, in which case the school should ensure the agency satisfies the required safeguarding requirements and necessary pre-employment checks as outlined in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

For safer recruitment purposes all advertisements must include the following statement:

'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointments will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure. If shortlisted, you will be required to disclose relevant information regarding criminal history and an on-line search will be conducted. This includes only information publicly available on-line'

Advertisements must not include discriminatory statements which contravene legislation and should include the following statement:

'We promote diversity and want a workforce which reflects the population of Leeds'

In addition, all new appointments of support staff to the Local Authority are made subject to the satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period. Please refer to the school's probationary policy for support staff for further guidance.

6.4 Leadership recruitment

The principles of fair, legal and safe recruitment should be applied throughout the process. The key features of leadership recruitment are as follows:

- The responsibility for recruiting to a Headteacher post lies with the Governing Body.
- Deputy and Assistant Headteacher recruitment may be led by the Headteacher, supported by a panel of Governors.
- Permanent Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher posts will be advertised nationally unless in specific circumstances relating to Managing Staff Reductions.
- Leadership job descriptions and person specifications which are based on the National Standards for Headteachers should be used. (They are non-statutory and intended as guidance to be interpreted in the context of each individual headteacher and school. They are designed to be relevant to all headteachers.)
- Resignation dates should be taken into account when planning the recruitment timeline.
- Internal and external candidates should be treated consistently. Care should be taken to ensure that no part of the recruitment process favours, or could be seen to favour, an internal candidate
- A range of assessment activities which reflect the duties of the post and the person specification should be used.
- The current post holder should not be involved in the recruitment process as this may lead to allegations of impropriety.

A HR Leadership Recruitment service is available to all schools in Leeds. For further information contact the LCC School HR Team.

7.0 APPLICATION PACK

The information made available to applicants following advertisement is very important. They should have access to:

- The application form
- Guidance for completing the application form
- The job description and person specification
- Any relevant information about the school
- LCC Schools Policy statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders is available on Leeds for Learning. (insert link when it goes on L4L)

For safer recruitment purposes all supporting information must also include the following statement:

'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to have an up to date DBS disclosure. If shortlisted you will be required to disclose relevant information regarding criminal history and an on-line search will be conducted. This includes only information publicly available on-line'

All information sent to candidates by the school must, if requested, be provided in other formats.

7.1 Application form

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 9.2 (Appendix 1) for standard application form requirements

Schools should not accept curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants or recruitment agencies in place of an application form as they do not meet safer recruitment requirements unless it is submitted alongside a fully completed application form.

The application form should obtain the following information:

- Full identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, date of birth, current address and National Insurance number
- A full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment education or training and reasons for leaving employment
- A statement of any academic and/or vocational qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant to the position for which he/she is applying with details of the awarding body and date of award
- A declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees or employers (including councillors and governors)
- Details of referees should be the applicant's current or most recent employer and normally two referees. In some cases, three references may be required (e.g., faith school leadership appointments)
- The form should make it clear that references will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends; and
- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post.
- Disabled candidates should be allowed to submit applications in other formats than the standard application form. However, CVs or tapes etc. should follow the same format as the Application Form and answer the same questions

8.0 THE RECRUITMENT PANEL

Please also refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 10.2 (Appendix 1)

The membership of the recruitment panel may vary according to the nature of the appointment, but in all cases, there are important factors which should be considered:

- The shortlisting/interview panel should appoint a Chair whose role is to ensure that the recruitment process complies with policies and procedures
- The size of the panel should not be so large as to intimidate candidates and should comprise an odd number of people to ensure that a decision can be made. It is recommended that a minimum of three people form the selection panel
- Where practicable, the panel should be as diverse as possible in terms of gender and ethnicity and if possible, should reflect the demographic profile of the school
- Other than in the most exceptional circumstances the same panel should be responsible for both short listing and interview. Members of the panel need to be familiar with the job description and person specification

9.0 SHORTLISTING

9.1 All applications should be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies and to identify any gaps in employment.

Incomplete application forms should not be accepted and should be returned to the applicant for completion with a clear timescale for re-submission.

In line with safer recruitment guidance, any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified should be noted so that they can be discussed with the applicant if they are shortlisted. As well as reasons for obvious gaps in employment, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work will also need to be noted. These points should be verified at interview.

9.2 Objectivity

All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

New criteria must not be introduced at this stage.

Care must be taken to avoid negative assumptions, for example, about a person's ability to work in the light of home circumstances. If they have submitted an application, it must be assumed that they have made adequate arrangements. If an applicant lacks work experience it cannot be assumed that they lack relevant skills. Consideration should also be given to skills acquired in outside activities, which would be relevant to the post.
The standard of completion of the application form should not be used as a test of literacy or other suitability for the job, since it could be discriminatory to assume all candidates have the ability to complete the form to a certain standard

9.3 Equal Opportunities

In relation to the guidance on making reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates at interview / assessment outlined in 2.3 note the following. If the workplace in question is not accessible for people with impaired mobility, funds may be available, through Access to Work, to adapt the workplace or provide any special equipment needed.

9.4 Recording the process

It is important that clear records are kept as schools may be required to justify their decision if challenged, or they may be required to give feedback to applicants at a later stage.

The panel needs to agree a consistent and systematic method of scoring the applications, for example, each application could be scored with numerical grades to weight the criteria outlined in the person specification.

The short-listing form should be completed to record where the applicants meet the requirements of the person specification. If an applicant does not satisfy the specification, then make a note as to why.

No matter how many applications are received, all application forms should be read and recorded as explained.

9.5 Filtering large numbers of applications

To be eligible for interview an applicant must demonstrate that they meet all the essential criteria on the person specification, which can be assessed from the application form. If a large number of applicants meet all the essential criteria, you can then look at the applications again to determine those who meet the desirable elements of the person specification. This should narrow the field. A fair and consistent method of scoring must be followed to ensure the decision is clear and justifiable.

Where a large number of applicants meet all the essential and desirable criteria the panel may create a long list for the post. This may involve the use of pre-selection techniques, for example, a test, presentation, or interview from which you could reduce the field further before carrying out the final shortlist interviews. It is important, however, that any supplementary method used must be valid, reliable, quantifiable, and non-discriminatory.

9.6 Criminal Self-Disclosure

Please refer to 9.4 of LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy (Appendix 1) for applicant criminal self-disclosure requirements for short listed applicants

10.0 REFERENCES

Please also refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 9.6 (Appendix 1)

Do not rely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern" or verbal references.

As outlined in paragraph 2.4, it is not permitted to ask about an individual's absence record or any health related questions prior to making an offer to a candidate. Therefore, you should ensure that there are no questions about absence or health in the reference request form and that no questions about absence health are asked at interview.

One reference must be the applicant's current or most recent employer and normally two referees are sufficient. Where an applicant is not currently working with children but has done in the past it is important that a reference is also obtained from the employer by whom the person was most recently employed to work with children. References should not be accepted from relatives or friends.

In exceptional circumstances it might not be possible to obtain both references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because a candidate objects to their current employer being approached at that stage.

In any case where a reference or references have not been obtained before interview, the school must ensure that two references have been received and scrutinised and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before a start date is agreed and the preferred candidate's appointment is formally confirmed in writing and the contract issued.

On receipt references should be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee should be contacted and asked to provide further information in writing.

The information given should also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and their previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form. Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant.

Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect of any disciplinary investigations).

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious and/or recent concerns or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated safeguarding concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern and needs to be checked thoroughly in accordance with KCSIE 2022. (Part 4)

Where applicants have previously been, but are not currently, employed in an educational setting, it is advisable to check with the school/education establishment or local authority at which they were most recently employed, to confirm details of their employment and that there no safeguarding concerns

Other checks before interview

If a shortlisted applicant claims to have some specific qualification or previous experience that is particularly relevant to the post for which they are applying that will not be verified by a reference, it is good practice to verify the facts before interview so that any discrepancy can be explored at interview. The qualification or experience can usually be verified quickly by telephoning the relevant previous employer and asking for written confirmation of the facts.

11.0 INTERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

11.1 The Interview

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 10.1 (Appendix 1)

The panel may ask if the candidate would require any support and/or adjustments to carry out the role.

11.2 Selection Assessments and Exercises

Validated assessment activities can assist in making shortlisting and selection decisions by assessing attributes which the interview alone cannot easily measure, for example computer software skills.

If a supplementary assessment or a full assessment day is to be used as part of the recruitment process, it must be established that it is a valid way of measuring the skills and aptitude required for the job. Tests should not contain any bias which may discriminate against applicants. For example, asking an external candidate to analyse internal school data when there is an internal candidate in the process.

When administering assessments, special arrangements may be required for people with disabilities e.g. a reader for dyslexic candidates or large print and/or improved lighting for partially sighted candidates.

The 'Conducting Interviews Guidance' document provides further advice on the selection process. This guidance can be found on Leeds for Learning. (Insert Link)

11.3 Involving young people

Children and young people can make a valuable contribution towards the assessment process. However, they should not be involved in the final decision making part of the process as they are not part of the recruitment panel.

It is essential that where children and young people are involved in any part of the process, that the principles of equality, fairness and transparency apply at all times. For example, particular care must be taken if the recruitment involves the teaching of a sample lesson. Each candidate must be subject to comparable experiences, which adhere to the principals outlined above, in order that objective assessments can be made.

Other examples of children being involved in the recruitment process include, contributing to the design of an advert or writing a pupil letter to be included in application pack.

Where a school council panel or pupil led tour of the school forms part of the assessment process, the children should be supported by a member of staff to ensure that the same rigour and objectivity is applied to these activities as with any other part of the process.

It is important to remind young people that their contribution, whilst valuable, forms part of a wider recruitment process.

12.0 INTERVIEW PREPARATION

12.1 Inviting candidates to the assessment process

When arranging interviews, five working days' notice should be given to the candidates.

Dates and times should be arranged with the whole of the interview panel and assessments and interview questions agreed. Timetables should be drawn up in advance and the times issued with the invite letter if possible.

Arrangements should also be made for the unexpected, i.e., replacements for the interview panel in the case of absence.

A Leeds City Council template 'Invite to Interview Letter' is available and can be found on Leeds for Learning.

The interview letter must provide or request the following information:

- The interview date and time; venue, directions to the venue and information about assessments, if relevant.

- That they must bring evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK by bringing appropriate documentation to the interview, including an original birth certificate, and/or passport or relevant Home Office documentation.

- That they must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g., the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body.

- A completed self-disclosure form regarding relevant criminal history

- That a photocopy of all candidates' identification and certificates will be made on the day of interview and retained in the successful candidate's personnel file.

- That the preferred candidate will be required to have a cleared enhanced DBS certificate.

12.2 Disabled Candidates

Disabled candidates who are shortlisted should be asked to contact the school to discuss any adjustments they need to be able to attend the selection process. This could involve providing assistance to those with hearing, sight or mobility difficulties or allowing them to bring a friend or colleague. Leeds Interpreting and Translation Team can provide sign interpreters and lip speakers on request.
Contact email address: interpreting@leeds.gov.uk
Telephone: 0113 3367800

Disabled candidates should also be given information about such matters as physical access to the premises and parking facilities.

13.0 INTERVIEWING

13.1 Scope of the Interview

Please refer to LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 10.3 (Appendix 1)

13.2 Conducting the interview

The Chair of the panel is responsible for ensuring that the interview is conducted in a fair and appropriate manner. So that all candidates are treated consistently and fairly, questions should be structured and based on the job description and person specification.

Candidates should be treated consistently and given a fair and consistent amount of time to answer questions.

In no circumstances should questions be asked relating to a candidate's age, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, race, or religion/belief. Fluency in the English language should not be used as a selection criterion unless it is a genuine requirement of the job.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the interview panel to ensure all questions are fair and lawful.

13.3 Recording the outcome

The Chair of the Panel is responsible for ensuring the completion of a joint interview scoring sheet for each candidate. A method of scoring should be agreed prior to the start of the interview and panel members asked to record notes to support their scores for the candidate's responses. The Chair should decide a method for agreeing a joint score for each candidate.

It is important that a copy of the joint interview scoring sheet, along with any other assessment records is retained in case any candidate asks to see written records of the selection process and decisions made. The Headteacher, chair of the panel or other suitable person should also refer to the records when providing feedback to candidates on their performance and so should retain the records until the feedback is complete.

All documentation as part of the recruitment process should be kept on a recruitment file as part of the process for a minimum of six months once the recruitment process has concluded.

14.0 THE SELECTION DECISION

The chair of the panel should ensure that no irrelevant information is introduced at this stage and that all decisions are based on how well the candidates meet the person specification.

14.1 Disabled Candidates

Disabled candidates should be measured against the person specification in the same way as other candidates, taking into account any reasonable adjustments.

14.2 Job Share Candidates

If a person applies for a full-time position and requests part time hours, it is unlawful to discriminate against them at any stage of the recruitment process including at the shortlisting and selection stage. Fair consideration must be given to accommodating part time hours as should the possibility of recruiting another person to fulfil the remaining hours on a job share basis.

15.0 OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

15.1 Conditional Offer of Employment – Pre appointment checks

A verbal offer to the successful candidate should be followed up in writing with an interim offer letter from the Chair of the panel and should include the agreed starting date and starting salary details (i.e., scale and starting point, pro rata details, UPS, TLR or SEN allowances)

It is the responsibility of the Chair of panel to ensure that **pre-appointment checks are undertaken as a requirement of LCC's Safer Recruitment Policy 11.1 – 11.5 (Appendix 1)**

In addition, schools should also seek:

- Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their role (pre-employment health questionnaire)

15.2 Disabled Candidates

When a job offer is made to a disabled candidate, every effort should be made to acquire equipment, make adaptations, arrange support, or adjust working practices. It is good practice to invite disabled persons to visit the workplace to discuss their requirements as soon as they have accepted a job offer.

15.3 Informing the Unsuccessful Candidates

Unsuccessful candidates should be informed either by phone or in writing. On no account should this message be left with partners, colleagues, or friends. Not only is this unprofessional practice but it also contravenes data protection policies.

Feedback should be offered to all candidates and provided promptly if requested. It is best practice to give constructive feedback and can make a significant difference to candidates' opinion about the organisation, especially where their application has been unsuccessful.

Feedback can be given in either verbal or written form and should include an overview of the results of tests and exercises as well as from the interview. The feedback should be accurate and factual, and the message should be delivered in a supportive manner. Raw scores should not be given; instead, the person providing feedback should provide a balance between those areas where the candidate did well or showed strength, and areas of development, where the candidate needs to improve in the future.

16.0 INDUCTION

There should be an induction programme for all newly appointed staff, governors, and volunteers, including teaching and support staff, regardless of previous experience.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the new member of staff, governor, or volunteer. A structured induction programme will give employees the opportunity to meet colleagues, attend meetings, meet staff from affiliated schools or organisations and familiarise themselves with computer systems and school protocols.

The induction programme should also indicate to new members of staff where to access the following information:

- Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding including the school's child protection, local child protection and safeguarding procedures, anti-bullying, physical intervention/restraint, intimate care, on-line, behaviour, KCSiE Part I Annex A & Annex B
- Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and pupils in the establishment i.e. the National Safer Recruitment Consortium 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice' (February 2022)
- How and with whom any concerns about the above issues should be raised
- Other relevant personnel procedures including managing attendance including children missing education procedures and special leave, staff appraisal, health, and safety, disciplinary, capability, grievance, allegations, and whistleblowing
- The induction programme should also include attendance at child protection training appropriate to the person's role at the earliest opportunity (including on-line safety training)

APPENDIX 1

Safer Recruitment Policy for Schools and Education Providers

1. Introduction

1.1. This Safer Recruitment Policy has been produced in line with the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 22). This policy aims to ensure a safe and fair recruitment and selection is conducted at all times. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people.

2. Recruitment and selection policy statement

2.1 Lawnswood School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

2.2 Lawnswood School is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to the school's performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high quality service.

3. Purpose

3.1 To ensure the recruitment of all staff is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner.

3.2 To achieve this purpose, those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

4. Scope

4.1 This policy applies to all the school employees and governors responsible for and involved in recruitment and selection of all staff.

4.2 The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the Governing Body. The Governing Body has delegated the responsibility to the Headteacher for appointing all staff.

5. Aims and Objectives

5.1 To ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people takes place at each stage of the process

5.2 To ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all school staff.

5.3 To ensure all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation.

5.4 To ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

6 Principles

6.1 The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment
- All applicant packs will include a job description detailing the post holders responsibilities for safeguarding.
- Employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job
- Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members. At least one panel member will have received appropriate Safer Recruitment Training as recommended by the LSCP.
- Selection will be based on a minimum of fully completed application form, shortlisting and interview, but, whenever possible, involve other assessments.
- Posts will normally be advertised on our school website and the advert will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people.
- The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

7. Equal Opportunities

7.1 Lawnswood School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation.

8. Safer Recruitment Training

8.1 It is a statutory requirement that at least one member of the interview panel has completed LSCP approved Safer Recruitment Training prior to the start of the recruitment process. The following staff have received Safer Recruitment Training: Jo Bell, Katie Nicholson, Martin Truscott, Fiona Gilbank, Nicola Goodwill, Michelle Harris, Jennie Hill.

The following Governors have completed Safer Recruitment Training: Lucy Omidiran, Jacob Pyrah.

9. Pre-recruitment Process

9.1 Objective

9.1.1 The objective of the recruitment process is to attract, select and retain staff who will successfully and positively contribute to the future development of the school. The first experience an individual has is important; therefore the experience should be positive and all those responsible for recruiting will:

- Leave a positive image with unsuccessful applicants
- Give successful applicants a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them
- Take reasonable actions to reduce the risk of an unsafe appointment recognising the potential cost and the school's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

9.2 Application Form

9.2.1 A standard application form will be used to obtain a common set of data from all applicants. The application form will be adapted for different posts but will always include key information on safeguarding. As such, candidates must provide information on employment history and if appropriate adequately explain the reasons for any gaps. The candidates must complete, sign and date the declaration and follow instructions regarding the appropriate disclosure of relevant criminal convictions if shortlisted.

9.3 Job Description and Person Specification

9.3.1 A job description and where applicable a person specification will be issued for all posts. In the case of volunteers this will include a volunteer role profile. The job description/volunteer role profile will have a clear reference to an individual's responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

9.4 Criminal Self-Disclosure

All short-listed candidates will be asked to complete a self-disclosure form with their invitation to interview,

9.5 On-Line Searches

An online search will be conducted on all shortlisted candidates. This involves searching for information publicly available on-line.

9.6 References

9.6.1 The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be requested directly from the referee using the standardised school form.

9.6.2 References will be sought on all short listed candidates and will be obtained, where possible, before interview so that any issues or concerns they raise can be explored further with the referee, and/or taken up with the candidate at interview.

9.6.3 The school will take reasonable steps to verify references received electronically.

10. Interviews

10.1 The interview will assess the merits of each candidate for the post, including at least one question exploring their suitability to work with children and young people. The selection process for people who will work with children and young people will always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

10.2 Interview Panel

10.2.1 A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel.

10.2.2 The members of the panel will:

- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments;
- be appropriately trained, (at least one member of interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training).
- meet before the interviews to:
    - reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing;
    - consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those.

10.2.3 Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel this will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to consider changing the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

10.3 Scope of the Interview

10.3.1 In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also explore:

- the candidate's values and attitudes toward children and young people;
- his/her ability to support the school's ethos for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- any gaps in the candidate's employment history;
- any concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.

11. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks

11.1. An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- verification of the candidate's identity
- verification of eligibility to work in the UK

- appropriate overseas check, and references from any overseas education employer after this date.
- verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their role
- the receipt of at least two satisfactory and verified references
- verification of qualifications
- verification of professional status where required e.g QTS status (unless properly exempted)
- a check of the appropriate Barred List
- a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure, with the certificate seen and verified by the school. (for Volunteers a written risk assessment in relation to the undertaking of a Barred List Check should be completed. An enhanced DBS Disclosure should be undertaken for volunteers)
- a check using the Employer Access Online Service to see if a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State for Education or GTCE sanction exists against the individual (for posts carrying out 'teaching work')
- verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999) unless the successful candidate is an ECT undertaking their statutory induction (for teaching posts).
- Any additional checks as deemed appropriate

11.2 All checks will be appropriately documented and retained on the individuals personnel file with information recorded on the school's single central record in line with the statutory requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022). Where information is unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided this will be followed up.

11.3 Where:

- the candidate is found to be on the relevant barred List, or the DBS Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or,
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or,
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

The facts will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

11.4 If an individual's Enhanced DBS check is not completed a member of staff would only be able to commence work if the school is satisfied that:

- appropriate supervision is in place
- other checks (references etc) have are completed satisfactorily
- the DBS barred list check has been completed

11.5 The following personnel should have their details entered on the School Single Central Record

- Staff in regulated activity
- Regular and/or unsupervised Volunteers, including Governors
- Supply Staff
- Regular visiting professionals in regular contact with children – e.g Coaches
- Contract staff in regular contact with children
  All leavers will be deleted off the school single central record immediately

12. Post Appointment Induction

12.1 There will be an induction programme for all staff which includes the arrangements for Child Protection and Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 (or Annex A as appropriate) and Annexe B) and Safer Working Practice Guidance.

13. Supply Staff

13.1 When the school needs to use the services of a supply agency we will ensure the agency operates a safer recruitment process and provides written confirmation that the following have been checked and judged as satisfactory:

- Identity
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure
- Right to work in the UK
- The DBS Barred List
- Any Prohibition Order, Interim Prohibition Order or GTCE sanction for those undertaking 'teaching work'
- Qualifications (where applicable)
- Overseas Checks, including and EEA check where applicable (see Appendix 1)

When the supply member of staff arrives at the school, their identity will be checked and it will be confirmed that they are the same person on the documentation from the agency. The supply staff's details will be entered on the Single Central Record (SCR).

A copy of the Safer Recruitment Checklist (Appendix 1) will be completed with supporting evidence and placed in the file of successful candidates.

Appendix 1 Safer Recruitment Checklist

Post _____

Date_____

Recruitment and selection checklist	**Initials**	**Date**
Pre-interview:		
Planning - Timetable decided: job specification and description and other documents to be provided to applicants, reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc		
Vacancy advertised (where appropriate) Advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy, that is, statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and need for successful applicant to be DBS checked		
Applications on receipt - Scrutinised – any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for short-listing		
Short-list prepared		
References – seeking Sought directly from referee on short-listed candidates; ask recommended specific questions; include statement about liability for accuracy		
References – on receipt Checked against information on application; scrutinised; any discrepancy/issue of concern noted to take up with referee and/or applicant (at interview if possible) (**If received by email – accompanying email to verify authenticity. If not from professional email address, follow up to ensure authenticity)**		
Invitation to interview - Includes all relevant information and instructions and the **self-disclosure form.**		
Interview arrangements - At least two interviewers; panel members have authority to appoint; have met and agreed issues and questions/assessment criteria/standards		
Online checks – Exploring any content publicly available online that might compromise their		

professional role so this can be discussed with candidates at interview		
Self-Disclosure – Completed self-disclosure is submitted and seen by the member of the panel who is safer recruitment trained.		
Interview - Explores applicants' suitability for work with children as well as for the post		
Note: identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents; copies of documents taken and placed on file; where appropriate applicant completed application for DBS disclosure		
Conditional offer of appointment: pre appointment checks. Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of the following pre- appointment checks and, for non-teaching posts, a probationary period		
References before confirmation of appointment: (if not obtained and scrutinised previously) (**If received by email – accompanying email to verify authenticity. If not from professional email address, follow up to ensure authenticity)**		
Identity (if that could not be verified at interview)		
Qualifications (if not verified on the day of interview)		
Permission to work in UK, if required		
School record sight of DBS certificate - where appropriate satisfactory DBS certificate.		
DBS Barred list check – applicant is not barred from working with Children **(this must be completed before the applicant commences work)**		
Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 Letter – for any staff who work in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision as defined in the statutory guidance.		
Health – the candidate is medically fit Medical Pre Employment Questionnaire		

Prohibition from Teaching Work Check – For those carrying out teaching work **(see below)** the teacher has not been included in the prohibition list or interim prohibition list or has a GTCE sanction.		
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) Check – (for teaching posts in maintained schools) the teacher has obtained QTS or is exempt from the requirement to hold QTS (for teaching posts in FE colleges) the teacher has obtained a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) or Certificate of Education (Cert. Ed) awarded by a higher education institution, or the FE Teaching Certificate conferred by an awarding body		
Overseas Checks – for individuals who have lived or worked abroad in the last 5 years. **(For those carrying out teaching work within the EEA area this will include an EEA prohibition order check through Employer Access until Jan 21, after this date it will include a reference from any education employer overseas in the same period)**		
Statutory Induction Completed (for teachers who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999 and are not employed as NQTs)		
Risk Assessment – for Volunteers a written Risk assessment in relation to undertaking an Enhanced DBS		
Child Protection & Online safety training and other induction such as H&S, Safe Working Practice / code of staff behaviour, etc Including: **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy** **Safer Working Practice Guidance** **Whistleblowing procedures** **KCSiE Part 1 or Annex A & Annex B** **ICT Acceptable Use Policy** **Online Safety Policy & Guidance** Children Missing Education Policy Behaviour Policy		