

Safer Recruitment Policy

For the purposes of this policy, **'the Trust'** refers to **The Trust and all schools within the Trust**

Monitoring and review	
Author	Helen Reeves
Approver	Trustees
Owner	Helen Reeves, Director of Human Resources
Most recent review date:	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2026
Review frequency:	Annual
Category of policy	Statutory
Who has been consulted	
Adapt or Adopt	Adopt

Document version control

Version	Changes made	Amended By	Date
1	Initial Issue		September 2025
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of reference to sponsorship licence Guidance on references for dismissed employees or for employees for whom there were substantiated safeguarding concerns. 	Helen Reeves	January 2026

1. Context	3
2. Legal and Advisory Framework	3
3. Aims/ Scope	3
4. Administration of the Safer Recruitment Policy	4
5. Staffing Structure	5
6. Safer Recruitment Training for Panel Members	6
7. Advertising	6
8. Applications	7
9. Shortlisting and References	8
10. Interview & Selection Day(s)	9
11. Conditional Job Offer	10
12. Pre-employment Checks for Successful Applicants	10
13. Internal Applicants	12
14. Employment of Overseas Nationals	12
15. Induction Period	13
16. Probationary Period	13
17. Single Central Record (SCR)	13
18. Reference Requests for Leavers	15
19. GDPR and Records Retention	17
20. Equalities Statement	17
<i>Appendix A: Recruitment Proposal form – Additional or New Posts</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Appendix B: Job advert template (amend logo and contact details for each school)</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Appendix C: Self-declaration disclosure form for shortlisted applicants</i>	<i>25</i>

1. Context

This Safer Recruitment Policy is for schools to adopt. This policy also applies to the recruitment of colleagues employed in the Central Team of the Trust, who are not assigned to a particular school.

Any deviations from the content of this policy by schools should be discussed with the Director of HR for the Trust prior to making any changes.

2. Legal and Advisory Framework

This policy is to ensure that the individuals responsible for recruitment and selection always hire and promote the most appropriate applicant or employee in a safe, fair and consistent manner, free from discrimination and to ensure that relevant processes are followed to protect children and young people. The Trust 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.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which is reflected within our recruitment and selection activities. We will ensure that the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children is carried out in line with relevant statutory guidance on safer recruitment for schools (Keeping Children Safe in Education) and make sure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff receive appropriate safer recruitment training.

Anyone working for our schools, or the central Trust must be committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people.

3. Aims/ Scope

Purpose of this policy:

- prioritises the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people in our recruitment practice
- aims to deter unsuitable prospective applicants and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- applies to all recruitment activity for both external and internal applicants
- sets out the requirements for safer recruitment and pre-employment checks
- including DBS checks
- sets out the requirements for the safe engagement of other workers such as agency staff, contractors and volunteers
- outlines the requirements and responsibilities of giving and receiving references
- details the requirements for the Single Central Record (SCR)
- requires that any person involved in the selection and interview processes who has a conflict of interest should declare it immediately (e.g. prior knowledge of the applicant in the case of external applicants)
- aims to recruit and retain the best quality applicants with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job, as well as sharing our values

- aims to achieve a consistent, fair and legally compliant recruitment and selection process across the Trust
- aims to provide a positive recruitment experience for applicants
- promotes the Trust as a Disability Confident Employer
- sets out the GDPR and record retention requirements relating to applications received and reference requests
- aims to ensure the cost-effective use of resources in the recruitment and selection process
- ensures that the requirements of the Equality Act are met so that discrimination is avoided. This includes making reasonable adjustments to the entire recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability.

4. Administration of the Safer Recruitment Policy

The **Board of Trustees** will establish a Nomination Committee to lead the process for the appointment of co-opted Trustees, support members in identifying potential candidates to appoint as Trustees and ensure plans are in place for orderly succession to the Trust Board. The Committee is composed of a Member, three Trustees and a member from the Local Governing Board of one of the schools in the Trust.

The **Chair of Trustees** is responsible for the safer recruitment of the Trust CEO and may be supported by other Trustees, Company Secretary & Governance Professional and external advisers as appropriate.

The **Board of Trustees** is responsible for approving school and Trust budgets which include staffing and recruitment costs.

The **CEO** is responsible for the safer recruitment of school Headteachers and will be supported by the Chair of Trustees, Trust Executive Leadership Team, Company Secretary and Governance Professional and external advisors as appropriate. The Chair of the school **Governing Board** will usually be invited to participate in the recruitment and selection of the school's Headteacher. The Trust CEO and CFO are responsible for ensuring affordability of recruitment to posts in the Trust Central Team.

Headteachers are responsible for safer recruitment and selection of staff within their school. For leadership posts this may include support from the school's senior leadership team (SLT), Trust Executive Leadership Team (ELT), school Governors and the HR lead for the school. Headteachers may delegate authority for recruitment and selection of non-leadership posts to colleagues who are suitably trained and knowledgeable in the subject area of the vacant post. The HR lead for the school will usually be present on recruitment panels. Headteachers, supported by the senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring affordability of recruitment to posts in their school within the approved annual school budget.

Headteachers, supported by the school's finance lead must present their proposed budget (including staffing and recruitment costs) for the following academic year to the Trust CFO (see section 5 below).

School **Governing Boards** are responsible for approving staffing structures and the addition of new job roles for schools within the approved annual budget (subject to prior Headteacher consultation with the Trust Executive Leadership team).

HR professionals are responsible for managing recruitment campaigns on behalf of the Trust or school and ensuring that safer recruitment practices as set out in this policy are followed. HR professionals are responsible for maintaining their Single Central Record in their school, and making it available for inspection by Ofsted, safeguarding professionals, the safeguarding Governor, or Trustee in the case of the Trust.

The **Safeguarding Governor or Trustee** should inspect their SCR at least three times a year and a record should be kept of the inspection, any issues and remedial actions required.

We wish to work with School (student) Councils and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Student in that students should be encouraged to form and to express their views. Members of the School Council may therefore participate in the recruitment and selection days of school senior leadership posts.

All staff must be made aware of and comply with this policy.

5. Staffing Structure

In terms five and six of each academic year, the school's SLT should plan the staffing structure for the following academic year taking account of student leavers and admissions, changing student needs, business needs and affordability. The finance lead and Headteacher of each school are required to liaise with the Trust CFO and present their budget for the following academic year including details of any increase in staffing costs. Once the school's budget has been agreed with the CFO, it will go to the Trust Board of Trustees for final approval.

Once approved by the Trustees the school's budget including staffing costs is set for the academic year. The school Governing Board may approve proposals for the creation of new posts if the school is able to remain within the approved budget and such posts have been job evaluated and agreed in principle by the Trust ELT (see below). This may be achieved by making efficiencies elsewhere. Any restructuring plans should be discussed with the appropriate member of the Trust Executive Leadership Team in advance.

When a post becomes vacant or is created then the following procedure takes place:

Existing posts:

When an existing post becomes vacant, SLT (ELT in the case of the Trust) will consider the ongoing need for that post or any revisions to the post, at their next meeting. If there is no proposed increase in grade or salary, no further authorisation is needed to recruit to an existing vacant post.

If there are significant changes to the job description and skills required, the revised job description and person specification should be forwarded to the Trust Director of HR for job evaluation (grading). If this results in an increase in grade and salary, affordability within existing budget, must be discussed with the school's Finance lead and the Trust CFO before recruitment can commence.

New or additional posts:

Within the academic year, if a job type already exists within the staffing structure e.g. Teaching Assistant, but it is necessary to recruit more of that job type, the relevant manager must complete the Recruitment Proposal Form (Appendix 1) identifying the need for the additional post and setting out the business case as to why it is business critical. The form should be approved by the relevant senior leader before being forwarded to the HR lead for completion of the costing section. The school's SLT (or ELT in the case of the Trust) will consider all Recruitment Proposal Forms at their next meeting and recruitment may not commence without approval.

If a new job type is proposed (doesn't currently exist within the school structure), the draft job description and person specification must be sent to the Trust Director of HR for job evaluation and a discussion at ELT about the creation of a new job role (to ensure consistency across the schools and affordability within the school's budget).

The proposed new role should then be presented to the school's Governing Board for final approval.

All posts are required to have an evaluated job description and person specification.

6. Safer Recruitment Training for Panel Members

Interview panels should comprise of at least two people, one of whom must have undertaken safer recruitment training within the last three years. Safer recruitment training may be an online course that covers the content of Keeping Children Safe in Education in relation to safer recruitment practice. The safer recruitment training must be repeated every three years.

7. Advertising

Recruitment advertising for permanent SLT posts in schools, requires the approval of the Governing Board. Others will be decided by the Headteacher. If a Headteacher post becomes vacant, advertising approval must be sought from the Trust CEO. The Trust CEO is responsible for the recruitment of Headteachers as described in section 4 above.

All posts, apart from those created for already contracted in-house trainee Teachers where only one possible applicant exists, will be advertised either internally or externally: locally, nationally or internationally, as appropriate. School website advertising is treated as external advertising open to all internal and external - local, national and international applicants.

Unless it is agreed that a post will be advertised internally only (for example to encourage internal development and promotion) all posts will usually be advertised internally and externally.

The advertisement will be based on the Trust's job advertisement template (Appendix 2) and will include the safer recruitment statement to deter applicants potentially unsuitable to work with children. The Trust/schools may use the services of an external advertising agency to place adverts in specialist publications as necessary and budget allowing.

Where an applicant does not meet the criteria for the level of post advertised within the pay structure, but the post would otherwise prove difficult to fill, the Headteacher may appoint at a lower level, but also consider a recruitment payment in accordance with the APT Pay Policy. This does not apply to the appointment of Headteachers or SLT members.

Where the post is on a temporary basis, the advertisement will specify the estimated duration of the post.

The Trust has a “no agency” policy in relation to recruitment and schools may only consider use of recruitment agencies as a last resort and taking account of affordability.

Staff on maternity/paternity/adoption/parental leave and long-term absence must be made aware of all suitable vacancies. This is a legal requirement for staff on statutory family leave and good practice for staff on other types of long-term leave of absence. However, a staff member on long-term leave of absence (e.g. sickness absence) may request not to receive such updates.

Occasionally the decision may be taken not to advertise a post if a similar post has recently been advertised and an appointment can be made from the subsequent interviewees, or on rare occasions because a temporary appointment needs to be made as soon as possible to ensure continuity within a post.

8. Applications

For all posts, information packs will be sent or made available electronically. The information pack will include:

- A job description and person specification
- An application form
- An equal opportunity monitoring form as a separate document so that it can be separated from the application form before shortlisting
- A statement of terms and conditions relating to the post (location, hours, grade) or a copy of the advert containing this information
- Information about the recruitment process (interview format and dates) if known
- Any other relevant information regarding the post and the school
- A safer recruitment statement to deter potential applicants unsuitable to work with children

Applications received after the closing date will not be considered unless by prior agreement with the selection panel.

Curriculum Vitae submitted by applicants in place of an application form must not be accepted. Applicants applying via online job boards such as Indeed must complete an application form by the advert closing date in order to be considered.

All applicants who consider themselves to have a disability on their application and who

meet the minimum requirements of the job as set out in the job description and employee specification will be offered an interview.

Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability. These may include a work trial in place of an interview, additional time to complete any tests or tasks, or the support of an external job coach during the recruitment process for example.

9. Shortlisting and References

The equal opportunities statement should be separated from the application form before applications are shared for shortlisting. If an applicant has sent one PDF document including the application form and equal opportunities form, they should be contacted prior to shortlisting and asked to resubmit as two separate documents.

Short-listing will be undertaken independently by two members of the interview panel. Applicants will be short-listed for the post if they meet the person specification. Where an applicant is known personally to a member of the selection panel it should be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

Immediately after short-listing references will be sought by the HR team, covering at least the last 5 years. One reference must be from the applicant's most recent employer. The HR team will check the application form and references for any differences in dates or gaps in employment and an explanation will be sought from the applicant. The DfE template should be used for staff working in Early Years: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-employment-reference-template>. References for Teachers should request details of teaching ability, together with classroom and behaviour management proficiency.

Open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern" will not be accepted. Agreed references which have resulted from a settlement agreement will be carefully scrutinised.

If an applicant is not currently employed in a role working with children, but has done so in the past, it is strongly advised that a reference is requested from the school/education establishment they were last employed in and reasons for leaving.

In exceptional circumstances it might not be possible to obtain references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because an applicant strongly objects to their current employer being approached at that stage, but that should be the aim in all cases. Two references must be obtained before the start date of the successful applicant.

The HR team will telephone the person who has provided the reference to verify it.

Applicants' online digital footprint will be checked. It is recommended that the school should use a professional social media checking service e.g. Security Watchdog.

Any areas of concern shown in references or the social media check must be discussed with the Headteacher (CEO in the case of the Trust Central Team) before a decision is made to proceed.

Shortlisted applicants must be asked to complete the Self Declaration Disclosure Form for Shortlisted Applicants and return this before the interview (Appendix 4). Where shortlisted applicants have declared that they have unspent cautions, convictions, warnings or bind overs, or have proceedings pending, and/or have any sanctions imposed by the Teaching Agency then this will be followed up at interview as necessary. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to have a discussion with the applicant prior to the interview.

Where the existence of a criminal conviction is disclosed, and the Headteacher/Trust is satisfied this would be a relevant factor that would make the applicant unsuitable for employment, the school/Trust can decide to reject the applicant. However, care should be taken not to adopt a blanket approach to rejecting ex-offenders or take account of a conviction that would have no relevance in the context of a particular job. Having a conviction will not necessarily mean an applicant is unsuitable for employment, depending on the nature of the conviction. If in doubt, the Trust CEO & Director of HR should be consulted.

Short-listed applicants will be asked if they have a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and if they require any particular adjustments to accommodate their particular needs. If an applicant has requested any reasonable adjustments this will be notified to the chair of the selection panel.

The Trust/School will decline unsuccessful applicants (at shortlisting stage) if capacity allows.

10. Interview & Selection Day(s)

Interview questions and tasks must be agreed in advance and all interviewees must be asked the same questions. Model answers to interview questions should be decided by the interview panel in advance where possible. Further follow-up or clarification questions may be asked of the interviewee to expand on their answers given. Interview questions should include safeguarding questions in all cases.

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

- the applicant's attitude toward children and young people.
- their ability to support the Trust's/establishment's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- gaps in the applicant's employment history.
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the applicant and/or a referee; and,
- ask the applicant if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS check;
- appropriate selection activities such as classroom observation, group activities, written work as determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the applicant should also be asked at interview if there is anything they wish to declare/discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to their referees.

All copies of any notes relating to shortlisting and interview decisions must be retained for at least 6 months for all interviewees. For the successful applicant, their notes should be kept on their personnel file.

On the selection day all applicants will need to provide proof of identity, proof of their qualifications (if required) and proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK. A copy of the documents used to verify the successful applicant's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file, in accordance with data protection legislation. The photocopy of any original document must be signed and dated by the person (usually HR) viewing it noting that they certify this is a true copy of the original.

All applicants will be assessed for their suitability for the post and their capability to safeguard and protect the welfare of students and young people.

The interview panel or HR should ask the applicant to sign a copy of their application form if an electronic signature was used when the form was submitted.

In-person interviews are preferable. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. overseas applicants, pandemic) online interviews may be necessary and should follow the same format as in-person interviews.

Interviews for Teachers must always include a pre-planned lesson observation and feedback.

Unsuccessful interviewees will be notified of the outcome and offered feedback about their interview.

11. Conditional Job Offer

A conditional job offer to the successful applicant may be made by the Headteacher (CEO for the Trust) or HR lead and is subject to pre-employment checks. This will be confirmed in writing by the HR lead.

12. Pre-employment Checks for Successful Applicants

The following checks must be undertaken and documented for all successful applicants before a start date of employment is agreed. Checks will be carried out by the HR team:

- References (2) – in accordance with section 9 above
- Proof of identity (3) – official documents with photograph e.g. passport, driving license plus confirmation of current address e.g. utility bill. Where possible the birth certificate should be provided so that barred list checks can be made against previous names. Originals must be checked by the HR team.

- DBS Enhanced Disclosure for both child and adult workforce (for staff working directly with students, adult check not required for roles not working with students) which includes a List 99 check
- Disqualification Declaration
- Barred List check
- Medical fitness from Occupational Health
- Proof of qualifications (if required)
- Proof of QTS or post-16 qualification for teaching staff and Teacher Registration Number (TRN)
- For teaching posts, verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
- Proof of a right to work in the UK
- Receipt of a certificate of sponsorship issued by the Home Office (if applicable)
- Overseas check for applicants who have lived abroad within the last 5 years
- In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, an additional check will be carried out for applicants who are to be employed as teachers. This is to ensure that the applicant is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the DfE Employer Access Online service.
- Social media check
- Section 128 check for Trust Members or Trustees, school Governors or those in senior management positions
- Proof of car insurance for business use if this is a requirement of the job

For successful applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK within the last 5 years, all mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with any additional checks where necessary. These will include:

- Obtaining a reference or 'Certificate of Good Character'
- For Teachers, obtaining proof of their past conduct as a teacher, in the form of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which they worked.
- Where a professional letter of standing cannot be obtained, conducting a risk assessment or seeking alternative methods of checking suitability to support informed decision-making.

Any unsatisfactory pre-employment checks may lead to the consideration of withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment.

All checks should be documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information imposed by DBS Code of Practice. Schools do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates in order to fulfil the duty of maintaining the single central record) Copies of DBS certificates should be kept for no longer than 6 months after appointment without the employee's permission.

A copy of the documents used to check identity and/or the right to work must be signed and dated by the person who has seen the originals noting that they can certify that the originals were seen by X person on Y date.

Where:

- the applicant is found to be on the Children's Barred List, or,
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, their application; or,
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

the facts should be reported to the police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service, as appropriate.

13. Internal Applicants

Existing staff and volunteers who have been vetted when they joined the Trust/school do not need to complete another Application for Employment form to apply for a Trust/school vacancy. They will be required to write a statement setting out their interest in the job and detailing how they meet the job requirements. They will be interviewed/assessed in the same way as external applicants. This includes existing employees who are interested in vacancies in another Trust school or the Trust Central Team.

The Trust operates a 'next in line' policy where an offer may be made to a previously interviewed internal applicant without the requirement for the post to be re-advertised. This is only applicable where the new post requires the same skills and qualifications, and the applicant has been previously interviewed and met the minimum criteria. The new post must become available within 6 months of the original interview. This is to enable schools to build a talent pipeline for posts. Where a staff member moves from a post of unregulated activity (i.e. not working directly with students) to a post with regulated activity (working with students), a new DBS check should be undertaken covering both child and adult workforce.

14. Employment of Overseas Nationals

The Trust (and schools) will not employ any individual who cannot demonstrate that they have the right to work in the UK, regardless of the individual's colour or race, nationality or ethnic origins. Any employee who has a restricted right to work in the UK will be required to provide evidence of that right at least once in every 12-month period.

Any school that wishes to consider employing a migrant worker must seek HR advice from the Director of HR.

15. Induction Period

During the induction period all new staff will be required to undertake required reading of key policy documents and Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1, and undertake mandatory training including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Prevent Duty
- Sexual Harassment
- GDPR
- Cybersecurity
- Equality & Diversity
- Whistleblowing
- Fraud prevention

16. Probationary Period

All new non-Teaching employees will be subject to a probationary period of six months (pro-rata for fixed term contracts of less than one year), during which their progress will be monitored by their line manager.

Probation reviews will take place after three months and five months, after which a recommendation will be made to establish whether the employment should be confirmed or terminated, or whether the probation period should be extended. Probation reviews and records will be recorded in the Blue-Sky system. Management of probationary periods will be in accordance with the Trust's Probation Policy.

Internal applicants who are promoted to a role of a higher grade will also be subject to a probationary period of 6 months in the new role. If the probationary period is unsuccessful, the employee may revert to their previous role (if available), or the performance shortfall will be managed in accordance with the Capability Policy.

17. Single Central Record (SCR)

We believe the safety and welfare of students and young people is paramount and we are fully committed to the procedures and arrangements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and Independent Safeguarding Authority.

We understand that this policy complies with the DFE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', the School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2003, the GDPR and the DBS Revised Code of Practice.

We acknowledge the immense importance of the DBS in providing access to disclosure checks for school staff, volunteer helpers and for new appointments.

We will keep a single central record of recruitment and record checks of:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ all teaching staff ▪ support staff ▪ supply teachers ▪ volunteer parent helpers ▪ volunteer helpers who help on a regular basis ▪ interns and long-term work placements ▪ directly engaged contractors/freelancers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governors and Trustees who work as volunteers ▪ Local Authority and private tutors
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*Records may be kept in separate spreadsheet tab to main Single Central Record, but must be part of the **Single** Central Record

DBS disclosures will not be applied to the following as it is felt that they will have very little, if any, contact with students, they will be escorted whilst on the school premises or that they will work under the supervision of a teacher or manager:

- Secondary students on work experience
- Representatives from educational firms
- Contractors (the company responsible for contractors will be required to confirm that DBS checks have been carried out)
- Occasional volunteers e.g. for school events
- Contractors who are on site when students are not present

Volunteers are also seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults, and therefore the same recruitment measures should be adopted as for paid staff with the exception of occasional school event volunteers as identified above.

No new employee, or anyone working directly with students in a Regulated Activity as defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education, will commence their appointment without an enhanced DBS check.

We will consider any person with a criminal record equally with others applying for any vacant post unless their DBS disclosure check indicates that they present a risk to students or the Trust/school in general.

Employment agencies supplying agency workers to the Trust/school will be required to provide written evidence that the necessary safer recruitment checks have been carried out for their staff prior to any work at the school commencing.

Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that existing staff whose checks were under the old police check/list 99 system prior to the introduction of CRB (now DBS) disclosure remain current as long as:

- there are no concerns
- no change to existing role/responsibility from non-regulated activity to regulated activity
- no break of service of 3 months

By law, all staff newly employed since 12 May 2006 must have an Enhanced DBS check, unless they have continuous employment with less than three months break and no increase in their contact with children. There is no requirement to recheck staff once employed, unless the criteria above are met. Staff contracts of employment and the Staff Handbook require staff to disclose any new occurrences that may impact on their DBS status or suitability to work with children (the criminal justice system is likely to notify the Trust/school or the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer in such circumstances). All staff are required to read and confirm they have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education annually and attached to this confirmation is a declaration about any new offences, cautions etc.

The Director of HR maintains the Single Central Record for Trust Members, Trustees and Central Team staff and contractors. This will be shared with school HR leads to be included in the school's SCR as required by the DfE. The Trust SCR may be on a different spreadsheet tab but must be part of the school's **Single** Central Record.

18. Reference Requests for Leavers

A professional reference is understood to be one which is provided to comment on one's conduct in the workplace, whether positive, neutral or negative, and/or suitability for the role held, and/or applied for, and/or recommendation of the person for the post/role/project applied for and any opinion cast over the person as a member of the organisation.

Reference requests relate to the following:

- Staff member requesting a professional reference
- Staff member requesting a personal/character reference
- Staff member being asked to provide a professional reference
- Staff member being asked to provide a personal/character reference

This guidance applies to the following groups of people:

- All staff employed directly by the Trust/school as paid employees in the past, currently or in the future
- All staff employed directly by the Trust/school or associated with the school as unpaid (voluntary) employees in the past, currently or in the future (*with the exception of Governors* - see below*)
- All students - past, current and future
- All parents/carers/family members of family friends of the students (past, current, future)
- Any other person, in any way associated with the Trust/school, as an organisation

This guidance applies to:

- The Ascendancy Partnership Trust and its' schools (all departments and units) under past, current and any future registration or name (residential, day school, LA maintained or independent academy)

Any requests for professional references or testimonials must be directed to the Headteacher or HR lead at the school (CEO or Director of HR for the Trust), either in writing or by email. These people or another senior member of staff (with the CEO's/Headteacher's permission) may provide information for the reference. The Chair of Trustees may provide a reference for the CEO in consultation with the Director of HR.

No other person in the Trust/school may provide any reference or testimonial referring to the individual's professional conduct, qualities or potential. Any such reference will be treated as a professional reference, whether or not provided on Trust/school headed paper, or sent from the work email address. Staff, other than those above, providing any such reference will be seen as operating in breach of this policy and are likely to be subjected to a disciplinary action.

If there were substantiated safeguarding concerns relating to the individual or if the employee was dismissed, these matters must be included in the response to the reference request.

A personal/character reference is understood to be one, which is provided to comment on a person's personality, character and qualities.

A request for a personal/character reference to an alternative staff member is permitted, as long as:

- It does not refer to the person's conduct at work, professional qualities or potential
- It is not sought or issued with any reference to the Trust/school
- It is not issued on Trust/school headed paper, using the Trust/school address (postal or email) and/or referring to the job titles/roles held within the Trust/school (applicable equally to referee and applicant)
- It does not, knowingly, provide a personal reference for a person, who was disciplined and dismissed from their job with the Trust/school (past, current, future rule applies).**
(see explanation below)

*** Governors & Trustees** - reference requests from/for past Governors (pre joining APT) should be addressed to Governor Services at the Local Authority. Reference requests for current Trustees/Governors (post joining APT) must be addressed to the Trust's Governance Professional. Such references for Trustees or Governors will be provided by the Chair of Trustees or Governors in consultation with the CEO/Headteacher and HR lead.

Governors and Trustees must not provide professional or personal references for anyone without approval and oversight from the Headteacher or Trust CEO.

**** If a staff member is approached by a colleague who is known to have been dismissed from their job at the Trust/school (see section above regarding definition), any reference will be deemed as "of safeguarding concern", should it be provided without mention of the dismissal. Staff are advised to contact the CEO/Headteacher, who will advise regarding the potential**

personal risks and the legal implications of providing a personal reference for someone whose HR/other records may contain significant information which may not be fully known (i.e. DBS information, disciplinary, dismissal, etc). Whilst the CEO/Headteacher may only be able to share some, but not all details, their advice will be highlighting the risks which will need to be considered before providing a personal reference.

If a staff member chooses to provide a personal reference to a person they know was dismissed from their job at the Trust/school, the Trust/school will not be able to provide support in any legal proceedings taken by third parties.

19. GDPR and Records Retention

When a professional reference request is received, evidence of the employee's/leaver's consent to provide reference information should be sought from the person/company requesting the reference. This is necessary to comply with GDPR requirements.

Recruitment documentation for unsuccessful applicants must be confidentially destroyed after a period of 6 months from the closing date of the advertisement if not shortlisted for interview, or within 6 months of the interview date if unsuccessful at interview.

Recruitment information for successful applicants should form part of the new employee's personnel file upon commencing employment/promotion.

Copies of DBS certificates should only be retained on employee files with their consent.

Documents which evidence the right to work in the UK must be retained on the employee's file.

20. Equalities Statement

The Ascendancy Partnership Trust is an equal opportunities and inclusive employer which celebrates and values diversity. We are committed to a workplace that inspires and respects all individuals without discrimination, regardless of any protected characteristic. Employment-related matters such as recruitment, reward, progression and promotion will be based on individual merit.

Appendix A: Recruitment Proposal form – Additional or New Posts

Complete this form if you are proposing to recruit additional posts (of an existing job type) or create a new post (new job type).

If your proposed changes require job evaluation to determine the grade of a new post, please discuss this with your HR lead before completing this form.

Section A – proposal to recruit

Details of post

Job title(s) of post(s) to be added to the establishment	
Job title(s) of post(s) to be removed from the establishment (if applicable)	
Department/Class:	
Provide a brief description of the change you are proposing	
Full Time or Part Time? Specify hours if P/T	
Permanent or end date for fixed term appointment and reason	
Anticipated date of change:	

Why is this post necessary?

Please provide a brief description of why the post is critical to delivering the school's objectives.

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Does the post require job evaluation (JE)?	YES/NO
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Section B – for completion by HR

If JE is required, please contact the APT Director of HR. If JE is not required, please provide existing costs.

Establishment

Impact on establishment (include total establishment figures)

Redundancy

Redundancy cost (if applicable) e.g. a fixed term post of 2 + years duration

Post(s) to be added to the establishment

Job title	Hours per week	Budget required		Effective date of change
		Current year (£)*	Full year (£)**	

*Calculate the salary cost for the remainder of the current year, ** calculate the salary costs for a normal full year

Post(s) to be removed from the establishment (if applicable)

Job title	Hours per week	Anticipated saving		Effective date of change
		Current year (£)*	Full year (£)**	

*Calculate the salary saving for the remainder of the current year, ** calculate the salary saving for a normal full year

Total cost increase/saving from current arrangement

Description	Budget		Comments
	Current year (£)	Full year (£)	
This proposal incurs an overall increase/decrease* in salary costs of: *delete as applicable			
Other costs (e.g. relocation, redundancy):			
Total costs			

Funding for any additional costs

If this change results in an increase in costs, how will this be funded?	
1. Funding required for additional salary (and other costs)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify):	
Please specify any equipment costs e.g. new PC, laptop, workstation, mobile phone	

Authorisation

Name of recruiting manager	
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Head of Department comments

<p>You must be satisfied that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a clear business need for the post

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> alternatives (such as accommodating within existing resources; exploring with other departments/classes opportunities to re-allocate the work etc) have been considered you have considered the length of time for the post – if permanent, does it need to be? If fixed term – does the length of time match the work required? 	
Head of Department:	Date:

Please forward this signed form to the HR lead for consideration by the SLT.

Final sign off (after SLT discussion)

I confirm this request is approved and that funding is available	
Headteacher/Deputy:	Date:
Comments if any:	
Head of Finance/School Business Manager:	Date:
Comments if any:	

Please forward this signed form to the HR lead.

Appendix B: Job advert template (amend logo and contact details for each school)



Ascendancy Partnership Trust is a multi-academy trust with deep community roots across the Berkshire area, composed of a family of SEN schools all specialising in learning difficulties.



Elizabeth Hawkes Way,
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3EQ
Tel: 01628 513800
Fax: 01628 513808

JOB TITLE

SALARY & WORKING PATTERN

Job information & requirement summary

What we offer

Describe employment benefits and advantages of working at your school.

Who we are

Part of the Ascendancy Partnership Trust family of schools, X School is..... (describe your school)

Closing Date:

How to Apply: Location of job pack etc

We welcome applications from all sections of the community.

The Ascendancy Partnership Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening and safer recruitment checks appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the DBS. This position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Applicants must be eligible to work in the UK.

Stronger and **Better** Together



Appendix C: Self-declaration disclosure form for shortlisted applicants

Shortlisted candidates are to complete a self-declaration of 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, further information can be found on GOV.UK

Private and confidential

All information will be treated as confidential and managed in accordance with relevant data protection legislation and guidance. You have a right of access to information held on you under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Applicant Information	
Name	
Address	
Contact number(s)	
Date of birth	
<p>Note: As the position you have applied for involves work with children and young people it is not covered by the provisions in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. When answering questions, you must declare criminal convictions and/or cautions that are not 'protected' under the Exceptions Order (as amended). This includes UK, overseas and armed forces convictions, cautions and relevant service discipline convictions where it would be considered an equivalent offence in England and Wales.</p>	

Declaration of individual		
1. Do you have any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you been formally charged with any other offence in any country which has not yet been disposed of?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are you currently subject to any criminal investigations or pending prosecutions by the police in any country which may have a bearing on your suitability for this position?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you ever been known to any Children's Services departments or the police as being a risk or potential risk to children?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>

<p>6. Have you been the subject of any formal action, disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about your behaviour towards children?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>7. Have you ever been dismissed for misconduct from any employment, volunteering, or other position previously held by you, in circumstances which may have bearing on your suitability for this position?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>8. Are you currently subject to any fitness to practise investigations or proceedings by a regulatory, governing, or licensing body in any country, which may have bearing on your suitability for this position?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>9. If applying to work in a pre-school setting have you been disqualified from working in that setting?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>10. If you have lived overseas, do any of the above apply in relation to living or working outside of the UK?</p>	<p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>For Academies only</p>		
<p>11. If applying to work in an Academy /free school, are you prohibited from</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes – please provide further information</p>

taking part in the management of an Academy/free school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Confirmation of declaration	
Please tick the boxes below and then sign this form.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	I agree that the information provided here may be processed in connection with recruitment purposes and I understand that an offer of employment may be withdrawn, or dismissal may result if information is not disclosed by me and subsequently comes to the school's attention.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that if I am offered a role within the school any offer will be subject to an Enhanced DBS disclosure. I understand that the information contained on this form, the results of the DBS check and information supplied by third parties may be supplied by the organisation to other persons or organisations in circumstances where this is considered necessary to safeguard other children.
Signature	
Print name	
Date	