



'Where Children Come First'

Recruitment and Vetting Policy

Recruitment and Vetting Policy

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children. Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School & Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This is to be achieved through effective recruitment and retention of competent, motivated staff members who are suited to, and competent in their roles. The School recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce comprising different backgrounds, skills and abilities. As such it is committed to a recruitment and selection process which is systematic, efficient, effective and equal. In doing so, it upholds its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants on grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that safe and fair recruitment practices are rigorously enforced and that the school adopts a coherent and consistent approach to recruiting and retaining staff of the highest calibre, who will help achieve the school's vision. We believe that staff are our most important resource and that our pupil's learning should be managed by highly motivated and capable staff with relevant skills. It also sets out the minimum requirements to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants unsuitable for work with children;
- identify and reject applicants unsuitable for work with children.

2. Relationship to other policies

This policy relates to:

- the child protection and safeguarding policy
- equality and diversity policy
- whole school pay policy
- appraisal/performance management policy

3. Guidelines for implementation

3.1. Identification of the need for an appointment

The staffing structure and need for certain posts will be assessed when a member of staff leaves, when the budget is under review or at other appropriate times.

3.2. Documentation

Before advertising, the Headteacher will ensure appropriate documentation is available for prospective applicants including an up-to-date job description and person specification.

Once the need for an appointment has been identified, the school will proceed to advertise internally, locally and nationally as appropriate. Advertisements will carry information about the school and post and reference to the school's policy on safeguarding children.

Potential candidates will be sent an information pack containing the following:

- An up-to-date Job description and person specification
- Details of how to apply and the closing dates
- Information about the school and whether it will be possible to make an exploratory visit prior to applying
- An application form
- A statement of commitment to safeguarding children and young people - see below.

The following statement: *"this school and the local authority are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS Certificate is required for this post prior to commencement"* should appear in:

- Advertisements
- Publicity materials
- School website
- Candidate information pack
- Job description and person specification
- Invitation to interview

3.3. Applications and shortlisting

An appointment team will be established at this stage which will usually consist of:

- The Headteacher or other senior member of staff
- Other relevant staff eg. SENCO, the line manager where this is not either of the above
- One or more governors where practical
- Local authority guidance sets out in more detail how the selection process applies to Deputy and Headteachers

Once the closing date has passed, the appointment team will shortlist the candidates using criteria established within the person specification. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited for interview explaining that referees will be contacted and given further information about what they need to do in preparation. This will include bringing appropriate documentation so that a DBS check can be initiated for the successful candidate.

3.4. Selection Procedures

Interview will normally take place over the course of a day – more if it is a senior post. The day will normally start with a welcome and introduction by the Headteacher and at some stage a tour of the school - with pupils, where practicable. Time will be set aside to provide candidates with information about the post and the team they will be working with.

A variety of selection procedures will be used, relating to essential and desirable characteristics including competencies identified within the person specification for example:

Competency based questioning – candidates are asked a series of probing questions around past activities to establish what experience they have of typical situations (e.g. running a project, leading a team, communicating with angry parents), what they did, what happened as a result, what they learnt about such situations, what they might do differently, what feedback they have received.

Critical Incident interviewing – candidates are asked to talk about particular events or

development in their career. This can provide insights into motives and ways of working.

Teaching a lesson - this provides very important information especially about how well the candidates plan lessons, how they interact with pupils and how well they teach. This does need careful planning and pupils need to be told in advance what they are doing and why. Where it is not practical for a lesson to take place, something as simple as a discussion between the candidate and pupils can provide useful insights.

Student Interview Panel - candidates are quizzed by pupils. This allows pupils to provide feedback to the final panel and often provides a fascinating and very useful insight into how candidates communicate with pupils. Pupils very often provide interesting and useful feedback which adds much to the selection procedure.

In-tray / e-mail response exercises - these show how effectively candidates can organise their work, prioritise, interpret and respond to messages. Candidates may be asked to communicate their initial thoughts in writing if written communication is key or orally to a panel where their underlying assumptions and beliefs may be explored further.

Presentation - useful for Headteacher appointments or other senior posts where the ability to present information and ideas to parents and other stakeholders is important.

Group exercise - a structured discussion with other candidates to assess team working and negotiation skills.

The final interview will involve key members of the appointment team. The panel will receive feedback from each of the various selection activities that have taken place and then proceed to agree questions for the final interview. Some candidates may already have been eliminated by this stage.

Questions and tasks for all the above activities need to be planned in advance. All candidates must be given the same opportunity to provide evidence of competency against the chosen selection criteria. The agreed questioning framework should be followed for all candidates but panellists may exercise discretion as to which supplementary questions they ask. If they feel there is a need to probe further, they should do so. However, If they believe they have sufficient evidence to make a judgment about an area of competency there is no need to ask further questions.

It is entirely appropriate to ask candidates about issues arising from their initial application and from other selection methods used on the day.

3.5. References

References will be requested, prior to interview, from both of the referees nominated by the candidate, one of which should be an up-to-date employer referee i.e. current or the most recent employer where the candidate had experience of working with children or young people. The school will request a written reference – and, in appropriate cases - for the referee to complete a simple tick sheet. The school will request information about:

- dates of employment and job role
- The candidate's suitability for the post
- Sickness / absence record
- Disciplinary record

- Whether there are any concerns about the candidate's suitability to work with children or young people
- Whether the referee would re-employ were there a suitable post.

References will be read before the interview so that the panel chair may decide whether any issues arising can be investigated during the interview.

3.6. The appointment

Taking all the evidence gathered, the panel makes its choice. The successful candidate is made a verbal offer of the post. If they accept, then they are sent a formal offer which states that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks including health and DBS checks.

The unsuccessful candidates are informed and offered a debrief on their performance.

3.7. Safeguarding procedures on the interview day

During the day, the following checks will be made:

- Proof of identity
- Academic qualifications
- A DBS check will be initiated for the successful candidate – all candidates will be asked to bring appropriate documentation for this.
- Candidates will be observed at all times when there may be contact with children and any concerns raised will be passed to the panel.
- The candidate will be asked in the interview to explain any gaps in time on the application form

3.8. After the Appointment

The successful candidate will be sent a formal offer of the post which they must respond to in writing. A contract of employment will be issued in due course.

An induction programme will be compiled by the relevant member of staff which will include ensuring the appointee understands the school's safeguarding procedures. Training will be provided where gaps have been identified.

4. Monitoring, evaluation & review

The school will evaluate its appointment procedures each year and make appropriate revisions. This will include asking people involved in selection procedures – staff, pupils, governors and candidates how they can be improved.

5. DBS and vetting

- All staff and volunteers will, as appropriate, be checked with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- All staff and volunteers will, as appropriate, be checked against the prohibition lists if appointed after September 2014.
- Candidates must confirm their identity by supplying official documents and must show their passport to prove their right to work in the UK.

- When employing supply teachers or teachers from abroad, the school will carry out appropriate checks.
- Teachers GTC numbers will be kept and recorded.
- NI numbers will be obtained and recorded.
- We will record the date, timing or reference of the check in an orderly and accessible way.
- At interview panels, at least 2 members of the panel will have passed the 'Safer recruitment' training.
- The school will carry out disqualification by association vetting (see appendix 2 – letter if association is found to be harmful to children).
- **The school will abide by all the DBS regulations, including making a referral to the DBS of any member of staff who has been dismissed or removed due to safe-guarding concerns or would have been if they had not resigned (see appendix 1).**

Once staff have been employed we will keep a live central record that:

- Gives the name of each staff member and confirmation of their identity has been verified.
- Confirm the authenticity of their qualifications.
- Show whether they have a criminal record, indicating when these details were last checked and by whom; and
- Confirm that the local authority has carried out those checks and record the date, timing or reference of the check in an orderly and accessible way.
- Using our vetting procedure to ascertain whether there is disqualification by association – this will be carried out on volunteers and agency workers too.
- Volunteers will have a DBS, show identification, and sign our volunteer agreement.
- Other agency workers will be checked by the agencies, but we will hold their DBS numbers and ask for identification to be shown to us.
- The school will keep agency workers, particularly longer fixed term contracts, accountable regarding disqualification by association, level 1 safe-guarding training and health and safety training.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure

All posts within Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School & Nursery are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent and have an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure.

Policy date updated September 2023

Chair of Governors date.

Headteacher date

Appendix 1

Letter to DBS following a member of staff dismissed or removed due to safe-guarding concerns, or if this was due to happen and they handed in their notice first.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to inform you that the named member of staff at Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School & Nursery, _____, of the following address _____, NI number _____, GTC number (if a teacher) _____ and DBS number _____ dated _____ has been dismissed, or would have been dismissed from this school if they hadn't handed their notice in, due to safe-guarding concerns.

It is, therefore, my duty as the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher, to inform you of this matter, so that you can amend your records accordingly with the utmost urgency, so that if the named above person seeks employment with children elsewhere, you have been made aware of the safe-guarding concern.

If you need to know any further detail on this matter, please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours faithfully,

Appendix 2

Letter following disqualification by association vetting to member of family

Dear Sir/Madam,

At Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School & Nursery, the governors and I set up a system which has adheres to the DFE 2015 guidelines, of vetting associates of our employees and volunteers, i.e. those who they live with, in order to ascertain that close family and friends that our employees are associated with, do not pose any threat to the children in our school.

In carrying out our vetting process, it has come to light that you, as a close associate of _____, employed here at Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School & Nursery, have been involved in criminal activity in the past, which involved harming children. It is my duty, therefore, to make you and the DFE aware that we hold this information about you and this letter is informing you of this fact.

Yours faithfully,

Appendix 3

Letter to member of staff who has disclosed an association

Dear _____,

Following our annual vetting of disqualification by association, it has come to light that you are living with a person who causes serious safe-guarding concerns regarding children, as you have disclosed that they have harmed children in the past. This information had not been previously disclosed to us.

It is our duty to inform you that the Local Authority and relevant bodies have been informed and that the governors and I are suspending you on full pay, as we need to investigate the matter further. In the meantime, the named person within your household has been informed that we are aware of this information, in order that we are fulfilling our obligations as set out by the DFE and Ofsted.

If you have any further questions or queries on this matter, please contact the Headteacher.

Yours sincerely,