



MANCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Part I: External Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the School expects all staff to share this commitment.

1.1 The aims of the School's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and statutory guidance including the most recently published versions of the following:
 - a) DfE's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) [at the time of writing the most recent version is dated September 2023]
 - b) Home Office's 'Disclosure and Barring Service's Revised Code of Practice for Registered Persons' (November 2015)
 - c) Disclosure and Barring Service's 'Guidance on the handling of DBS Certificate Information' (July 2018)
 - d) ISI Inspection Framework

2. RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURE

- The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the School based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.
- The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.
- Those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff must have received appropriate training and at least one member of every interview panel should be accredited in Safer Recruitment Training.
- If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
- The School will follow this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at the School.

2.1 Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible. Normally this entails an external advertisement. Any advertisement will make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The School will not normally follow an external recruitment process in the case of redeployment, where employees are under notice of redundancy and the vacancy is suitable alternative work, the employee is disabled or for health reasons requires alternative employment. Employees on temporary contracts can be made permanent without their job being advertised. The Head may designate some posts as suitable development opportunities for existing employees. These posts will not be advertised externally.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with data protection legislation.

2.2 Application Forms and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended)

The School uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

Shortlisted candidates are asked to declare any convictions and working with children. Posts are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended) since it involves working with, or having access to children, and so such candidates are required to declare:

- All unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- All spent adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not 'protected' as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended)

The amendments to the Exceptions Order provide that certain 'spent' convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account.

CV's will not be accepted.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (e.g. the Teaching Regulation Authority).

2.3 Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description will be drawn up for the role and finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

The person specification informs the selection decision and will set out the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

2.4 Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be undertaken by at least two people from the recruitment panel. Candidates will be assessed against the person specification. Short-listing of applicants will be completed 'blind' so that our approach is inclusive.

As part of the shortlisting process, the School will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates. This online search will not be carried out by members of staff from the recruitment panel and the results will be presented to the panel members with names or other identifying details removed.

2.5 References

References will only be sought for short listed applicants and will be sent for immediately after short listing and prior to interview. Any reference not obtained prior to interview will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made and a note placed on the Single Central Record stating that references could not be obtained prior to interview. Any concerns relating to those references, if applicable, will be followed up after the interview. Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone or face-to-face will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

2.6 Interviews

Assessment will be by face-to-face interview, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with the Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address, right to work in the UK and qualifications. Original document will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed at the end of the recruitment programme.

2.7 Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks, copies of qualification and proof of identity. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

2.8 DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate

All staff at the School require an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

It is the School's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates every 3 years.

Copies of DBS Checks

The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers; therefore employees/applicants should bring their Certificate to the HR Assistant or Head's PA within 7 days of issue or before they commence work.

Dealing with convictions

The School operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions.

Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended) and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Head. A decision will be made following this meeting.

2.9 Proof of professional status

Candidates must provide proof of their qualifications by production of original documentation.

2.10 Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

3. INDUCTION PROGRAMME

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the School's policies and procedures, and make clear the expectation and Code of Conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

4. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD OF EMPLOYMENT (SCR)

The PA to the Head Mistress and the HR Assistant maintain a single central register of the checks made in respect of all staff who work at the School, all members of the Governing body and all others who work in regulated activity with pupils in the School (including contractors, supply teachers, agency staff, self-employed coaches and volunteers). The register includes the following details:

- Identity
- Post and start date
- Barred List/List 99
- Prohibition order check / Prohibition from Management (section 128 direction)
- Disqualification from Childcare
- Qualifications
- Enhanced Disclosure / Date / Date certificate is seen
- Overseas / EEA check, where applicable
- Right to work in the UK
- References received
- Application form; name of checker and date
- Medical fitness; name of checker and date
- Online search in accordance with KCSIE

5. PERSONNEL RECORDS

All information retained on employees is kept in each School in a locked and secure cabinet. Information will be processed, handled and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

6. ON-GOING EMPLOYMENT

The School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The School will therefore provide on-going training and support for all staff, as identified through the annual review/PRD process

7. LEAVING EMPLOYMENT AT THE SCHOOL

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional and neglect) the School's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, the School will inform the Department of Education, and the Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances why the employee is leaving the School's employment. A referral may also be made to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

8. 'CONFIRMATION OF CHECKS FORM' FOR AGENCY AND CATERING STAFF

The School obtains a 'confirmation of checks form' from the catering company used by the School and from any employment business supplying an agency or contract member of staff. This form indicates that the relevant employment checks have been completed for any member of staff working at the School. The member of staff is required to present photographic ID and their enhanced DBS certificate to the School before they can start work in the School and these are checked against the 'confirmation of checks form' and image already provided by the company.

Updated by the Head Mistress April 2024.

Reviewed and Approved by Governors Personnel Committee May 2024.