

Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy

Executive Summary:

This recruitment and selection policy has been produced in accordance with the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#). This policy aims to ensure that safer and fair recruitment and selection is conducted at all times at Eastbourne College Inc. (the 'Charity'). Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection at the Charity and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people.

The Charity is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and agency workers to share in this commitment.

The Charity 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 our performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.

1. Purpose

To ensure the recruitment all staff, contractors, volunteers and agency workers is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner.

To achieve this, those who 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.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Charity employees responsible for and involved in the recruitment and selection of all staff, contractors, volunteers and agency workers.

The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the governing body. The governing body has delegated the responsibility to the Headmaster and Chief Operating Officer for appointing staff. The Charity's HR department will support, be involved in and agree the recruitment process and will provide professional advice and guidance in accordance with legal requirements and monitor compliance.

It is the responsibility of the Headmaster, Chief Operating Officer, HR department and others involved in recruitment to ensure that the school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, contractors who work at the school, agency workers and volunteers before the work or volunteering commences. Responsibilities also include monitoring contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document and promoting the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

All line managers should be aware that satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosures must be received for all new staff. The Headmaster, Chief Operating Officer, or DSL may authorise a new member of staff to start work prior to receipt of a satisfactory DBS disclosure providing that:

- the enhanced DBS disclosure has been applied for before the start date
- a satisfactory separate barred list check has been completed
- all other checks (including references) have been completed
- and a written risk assessment has been conducted, with satisfactory measures put in place to supervise the new member of staff. This risk assessment must be reviewed fortnightly until the satisfactory DBS disclosure is received.

3. Principles

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment and a high-quality service for all employment whether temporary, part-time or full-time, paid or unpaid.
- The job description, and in particular the section entitled 'Key skills and experience', are essential tools and will be used throughout the process.
- 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 and successfully completed appropriate accredited training on the recruitment and selection process as recommended by the DfE.
- Selection will be based on a minimum of completed application form, shortlisting, interview and reference.
- Monitoring and evaluation are essential for assessing the effectiveness of the process.

4. Equal Opportunities

- The Charity 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 unlawfully discriminated against because of the [Equality Act 2010](#) protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation. . The Charity acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy is the foundation for all its activities.
- The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if an applicant make the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

5. Advertising and the initial process of recruiting

5.1. Overview

When there is a perceived need to recruit a post, the Headmaster in relation to teaching staff, and the Chief Operating Officer in relation to support staff roles will decide whether it is essential to fill the post. If the post is to be filled, the Headmaster or Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the HR department, will review the job requirement and ensure that they are not unlawfully discriminatory, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of race, sex, age, disability, religious belief or sexuality, nationality, gender, marital status and sexual orientation.

5.2. Objective

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 Charity. The first experience of the Charity an individual has is important, so 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
- Strive to reduce the risk of a bad selection decision that can be expensive and may cause line management problems in the future or may not meet the Charity's commitment to safeguard children and young people.

Advertising

All posts will normally be advertised. The following will be carried out in connection with the advertising of all vacancies:

- a) All vacancies for permanent posts will normally be advertised to internal staff. Roles will usually be advertised externally, although recruitment may be undertaken through an agency where this is the most appropriate route. In circumstances such as restructures of departments, application for roles may be reserved to affected staff. The Charity reserves the right to appoint directly without advertising where this is the best approach, for example where succession planning has been in place or where skills are highly specialised.
- b) All senior academic posts must be advertised internally and externally.
- c) Advertisements will not be confined unjustifiably to those geographical areas or publication that would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants from a particular racial group.
- d) Advertisements shall not state a specific length of residence or experience in the United Kingdom as a requirement for a vacancy.
- e) Advertisements shall not differentiate between qualifications obtained in the UK and those that are fully comparable but obtained outside the UK
- f) Where an advertisement contains an informal contact point, this shall be for the purpose of expanding on the job details and requirements and not as an informal selection procedure.

All adverts must carry the following information:

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

Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The safeguarding responsibilities of the post include:

[• *list the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and person specification*].

The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the School is therefore permitted to ask job applicants to declare all convictions and cautions (including those which are "spent" unless they are "protected" under the DBS filtering rules) in order to assess their suitability to work with children.

5.3. Application form

The Charity uses a standard application form to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants.

All applicants for employment are required to complete this form before their application can be considered, including in circumstances when a CV and / or other written information has been submitted. This form contains questions about their academic achievements and full employment history. All applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history and provide reasons for moving between posts. CVs without an application form will not be accepted.

The application form includes the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), and the School is therefore permitted to ask job applicants to declare all convictions and cautions (including those which are "spent" unless they are "protected" under the DBS filtering rules) in order to assess their suitability to work with children

Applicants will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for.

- [• Application forms, job descriptions, person specifications, this policy, the Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy and the School's child protection policy are available to download from the School's website]
- [• and can be printed and forwarded to applicants on request].

All applicants will be made aware that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children and 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.

5.4. Job description and person specification

An accurate job description is required for all posts, using the Charity's job description format. The job description outlines the general nature of the post including the main duties and responsibilities and it will identify the line manager for the post. Additionally, it will include the safeguarding responsibilities of the role i.e. Provide details of the extent to which the role will involve contact with children, the degree of responsibility for children and whether the post involves regulated activity with children. Nearly all work in a school will involve some degree of responsibility for children and the majority of roles will amount to regulated activity. It also incorporates a section outlining the key skills and experience of the post (a 'person specification') and it is these criteria that are used as short-listing criteria by those scrutinising the applications.

Received applications and short-listing

Handling applications

- All applications submitted will receive an acknowledgement email from the HR team.
- All applications should be initially scrutinised by a member of staff who has completed safer recruitment training. Any applicant who has not completed the school's application form in full may be asked to do so if they wish to have their application considered further.
- It is not the school's usual policy to allow individual visits from prospective applicants prior to short-listing or interview. In some instances, all candidates may be offered the opportunity to visit as part of the short-listing process.
- All those involved in the short-listing process have a responsibility to scrutinise the application forms and letters of application carefully. In addition to judging the application against the criteria for the post, anyone noticing an anomaly should make a written note to that effect.

- The HR department will be responsible for collating a list of all applications as they arrive.
- The HR department will have specific responsibility for ensuring that a thorough scrutiny of the application has taken place, as per safer recruitment guidelines, prior to the interview. This should include a month-by-month record of employment since leaving school to the present date. Any gaps should be noted and followed up either immediately before or at interview. This scrutiny will form part of the specific questions regarding safeguarding during the formal interview process.

5.5. References

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be sought and obtained in writing directly from the referee, who must have the appropriate authority to give a reference on behalf of their organisation. (if school/college, the reference should be confirmed by the Headteacher/principle as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations).

Referees must include the most recent employer as well as the most recent employer who has known the candidate working with children if relevant. References must establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post.

Open references or references that are solely character references from close family members or friends are not acceptable.

Where an applicant has not been in employment during this period, then independent personal referees will be contacted.

In the case of teaching roles and those roles with significant unsupervised contact with pupils written references will be sought on all shortlisted candidates, including internal ones, and, will be obtained before interview where practicable so that any issues of concern that they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview. In addition, for successful candidates and as part of our conditional offer of employment stage (8 below refers), direct contact will be made by the Charity with each referee to verify the reference and a file note of each conversation retained on the employee's personnel file.

6. Interviews

6.1 Objective

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work directly with or in a working environment 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. In exceptional circumstances, eg in the case of overseas GAP students, the interview may take place via digital means over the Internet.

6.2. Interview panel

A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel.

The members of the panel will:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments
- Be appropriately trained (see section 4)
- Meet before the interviews to:

- Reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing
- Agree core questions to be asked of all candidates, as well as any specific questions relating to an individual's application and who on the panel will ask about each of those
- Agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification
- Independently make appropriate notes during and immediately after the interview on each candidate, the originals of which will be sent promptly to the Charity's HR Department at the conclusion of the recruitment process.

6.3. Long listing and Shortlisting

If a large number of applicants are received for a post it may be necessary to both long and subsequently shortlist applications. Both processes must be carried out by the interview panel, who will meet to discuss the applications in accordance with the pre-agreed selection criteria and a written record of the long and shortlisting processes kept. The interview panel will consist of a minimum of two members of staff. At least one of the persons who conducts an interview must have completed safer recruitment training

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel, it will 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.

All short-listed candidates are contacted by telephone or email to invite them to attend an interview and to ensure their availability. This will be completed by the HR team.

All shortlisted applicants will be required to complete a self-declaration form prior to interview in which they will be asked to provide information about their criminal records history and other factors relevant to their suitability to work with children. This information will be considered and discussed with applicants at interview.

The interview pack should contain:

- the interview programme of the day, including lesson background information sheet for teaching positions and a test maybe required related to role for any support staff
- school map
- interview email or letter, detailing identification paperwork required, qualification certificates that should be provided on the day of interview.

Tour guides are usually senior students who study the relevant subject or may be a member of staff.

Teaching a lesson is an essential aspect of the process for making a teaching appointment. Information will be supplied to the teaching candidate ahead of the interview day providing the context and content of the lesson to be taught. Candidates are given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have about this aspect of the interview process.

6.4. Scope of the interview

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

- The candidate's attitude towards children and young people (using a 'values based assessment' approach, as designed and supported by the NSPCC in their Safer Recruitment in Education Training work)
- His / her ability to support the Charity's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

- Gaps in the candidate's employment history
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and / or a referee
- Whether the candidate wishes to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS check.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate will 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 his / her referees. (It is vital that the references are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed and before they start work).

Candidates are required to physically sign a hard copy of their self-declaration form at point of interview.

7. Candidate selection

Final selection meeting

This is held as soon as possible after the interview candidates have departed. This meeting involves all those involved in the selection / interview process. A record of decision making to appoint an individual ahead of others must be noted, to ensure that there is a record to provide clear honest feedback to the unsuccessful candidate/s if required.

Interviewers bring any notes they have made with them (including lesson observations if applicable); these are collected and put with the application file at the end of the process. All notes are stored for a minimum of 6 months. Notes regarding the successful candidate are transferred to their personnel file.

Contacting referees by telephone

If there are any queries around information provided on a reference a verbal contact must be gained from the referee, ensuring that we are speaking directly with the referee, question the areas on the reference that require further clarification and evaluate the response.

Accurate notes of the telephone call should be made (the written references should be annotated, dated and initialled).

Communicating the outcome

The Headteacher, Chief Operating Officer or HR department telephones the successful candidate ASAP.

If verbal acceptance is received, the letter of appointment is drafted by the HR department for the Headteacher or Chief Operating Officer to approve and sign.

The verbal and written offer must state that it is a conditional offer, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references (if references not received prior to interview), and checks including a DBS enhanced disclosure, verification of identity, proof of right to work in the UK, original copies of any qualifications having been seen and confirmation of medical fitness for the post. When the written acceptance letter is received, regrets to non-shortlisted applicants will be sent by the HR department.

If the successful candidate declines the offer of the post, the selection committee reconvenes.

8. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-appointment Checks

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional on:

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references
- The receipt of a fully completed and signed Application Form
- Verification of the candidate's identity (*applicants must always provide their birth certificate as one form of identity unless there is good reason why this cannot be provided).
- Verification of eligibility to work in the UK
- Where a person has lived or worked outside the UK in the past ten years make further checks the Charity considers appropriate. Individuals who have lived or worked outside of the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in the Charity.
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness (through Occupational Health providers)
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional status, where required, for example, GTC registration, QTS status (unless properly exempted), NPQH
- (For teaching posts) verification of successful completion of the statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
- (For teaching posts) a clear check against the list of Prohibition Orders (the Charity will use the TRS's Employer Access service to make prohibition, direction, restriction, and children/s barred list checks.)
- (For management posts) a check that the person is not subject to a Section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State
- A check of the Children's Barred List, if appropriate, and a satisfactory DBS enhanced disclosure.

All checks are carried out by the Charity's HR Department. If a disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed in the course of the selection process, the HR Department will follow relevant DBS guidance in such circumstances, informing the Headmaster and Chief Operating Officer as appropriate.

All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention and location of information imposed by DBS and GDP regulations)
- Recorded on the Charity's single control register
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

The facts must be reported to the police and / or the Local Safeguarding Partnerships (LSPs) where:

- The candidate is found to be on the Children's Barred List, or the DBS disclosure shows they have been disqualified from working with children by a court
- An applicant has provided false information that affects their suitability to work with children in, or in support of his / her application
- There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

The Charity will liaise with the LSP if this should be the case.

9. Post-appointment Induction

There will be an induction programme for all staff, governors and other volunteers newly appointed to the Charity regardless of previous experience. This induction will, in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, take place within five days of commencement and will include:

- induction meeting and briefing with their line manager and / or HR team
- safeguarding training with the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer, or their Deputy
- provision of key safeguarding policies: KCSIE; the safeguarding policy; the staff code of conduct; equal opportunities policy; and the whistleblowing policy
- health and safety training
- completion of a written induction checklist(s) for each role they take at school.

Record retention / data protection

All interview notes on all applicants will be retained for a period of 6 months after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The six-month retention period is in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and will also allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an employment tribunal.

Data protection

The organisation processes information about an individual's criminal convictions in accordance with its data protection policy / policy on processing special categories of personal data. Data collected during recruitment is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the recruitment process. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under this disciplinary procedure.

Once an individual is recruited, information about his / her criminal record gathered during the vetting process will not be transferred to his / her personnel file.

The organisation is also committed to going through the proper DBS channels to establish whether an individual has a criminal record. The organisation will not require job applicants or existing employees to use their subject access rights under data protection provisions to provide criminal record details.

Ongoing employment

It is recognised 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 ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the annual review / appraisal procedure.

Monitoring

The Chief Operating Officer and Head of HR are responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the school. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly safer recruitment evaluation audit which will be presented to the headteacher to report to the governing body. The Chief Operating Officer and the Head of HR have the responsibility for monitoring this policy and the single central register.

Existing staff

There are limited circumstances where schools and colleges will need to carry out new checks on existing staff. These are when:

- an individual working at the school or college moves from a post that was not regulated activity with children into work which is considered to be regulated activity with children. In such circumstances, the relevant checks for that regulated activity must be carried out;
- there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more; or
- there are concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children.

Duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service

There is a legal requirement for the Charity to make a referral to the DBS where they remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left), and they believe the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults,
- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults; or
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

Referrals will be made as soon as possible, when an individual is removed from regulated activity. This could include when an individual is suspended, redeployed to work that is not regulated activity, dismissed or when they have resigned.

Duty to consider referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency

Where the Charity dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or ceased to use their services had they not left first, they must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State, as required by sections 141D and 141E of the Education Act 2002. 334.

The Secretary of State may investigate the case, and if s/he finds there is a case to answer, must then decide whether to make a prohibition order in respect of the person.

Leaving employment

All staff leaving employment will be invited to attend an exit interview at which time an exit questionnaire will be completed by the employee and line manager. This will be forwarded to the Head of HR for retention monitoring purposes and be included in the individual's personnel file.

Use of contractors

Contractors that are used within the schools should comply with the schools safeguarding and safer recruitment regulations. The identity of contractors will be checked on arrival by the head of department that they will be working in, they will also require a risk assessment. Employees of contractors who work at school on a long-term basis will be subject to the same checks as school employees.

Supply staff / agency workers

Written confirmation is requested from supply agencies that it has satisfactorily completed all relevant checks for that post, including an enhanced DBS disclosure, and confirming whether the DBS discloses any information and that it is not more than three months old (or three years old if they have been in continuous employment with that same agency).

The agency and worker must provide to the school the following documents ahead of commencement:

- supply agency letter confirming that all relevant recruitment paperwork is in place
- copy of the DBS certificate
- photographic identification.

A record of the checks for supply staff will be included in the single central register. Access to the check is only required where there is information contained in the enhanced DBS Disclosure. Any such information would be treated as confidential and a documented risk assessment conducted.

Identity checks will be carried out to confirm that an individual arriving at the school is the individual whom the agency has referred and that any notes provided on the DBS of previous cautions or convictions noted are acceptable for the individual to be working within the school. This decision will be taken by the headteacher or Chief Operating Officer.

Volunteers

Volunteers who are working within the school must gain the authorisation of the headteacher or Chief Operating Officer. Volunteers are supervised and assessed to see whether they will be in regulated activity; if they are they will be asked to complete identity checks, an application form, and an enhanced disclosure from the DBS will be applied for. They will also be asked for references and will require an informal interview. Where checks are carried out these will be recorded on the single central register.

One off volunteers for day outings, school concerts etc. do not require vetting checks but must never be left unsupervised or undertake personal care and must be risk assessed.

Regular volunteers receive a letter of agreement confirming that they will not be asked to take sole responsibility for any individual pupils or groups and that they should always expect to have the support of a member of staff and work under their supervision, support and guidance. This member of staff is identified in this letter.

All volunteers are asked to read the staff code of conduct and the safeguarding policy to acknowledge in writing that they have understood these and have no further questions.

Visiting speakers

As visiting speakers are not left alone with pupils they are not subject to safe recruitment vetting checks. However, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that visiting speakers are suitable and that they are appropriately supervised. Invitations to guest speakers must be agreed with a member of SLT before the invitation is confirmed.

Visiting professionals

The identity of visiting professionals should be checked on arrival. These include healthcare professionals, sports instructors, referees, consultants, trainee teachers etc. Appropriate checks should have been carried out by their employing organisation and confirmed to the school in letter form.

Governors

Will be subject to the following checks: an enhanced DBS check, barred list (only if engaging in regulated activity), ID checks, overseas checks (if applicable) and right to work. Disqualification checks would also be undertaken if they volunteer to work in relevant childcare on a regular basis or if they were to be directly involved in the day-to-day management of such provision.

10. Complaints Procedure

If a member of the general public or an employee has a complaint concerning unlawful discrimination in respect of the recruitment, selection, appointment or promotion process, then they have the right of reference to the civil courts and employment tribunals. This does not preclude them raising the matter with their county councillor or Member of Parliament.

The Charity has formal grievance procedures and such complaints by employees should be referred in the first instance. The Charity also has formal disciplinary procedures.

Date of this policy:	September 2021
Policy drawn up by:	LEPS
Date of next policy review:	August 2022
Date for publication of revised policy:	September 2022

References:

External

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1014057/KCSIE_2021_September.pdf
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings –
<https://c-cluster-110.uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/13ecce28-e8f2-49e9-83c6-c29337cd8071~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital>
- Making barring referrals to the DBS
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#who-has-a-legal-duty-to-refer>

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping children safe in education (1 September 2021) (KCSIE), Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DUCA), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)