

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & EMPLOYMENT POLICY

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Contents

Contents.....	2
Aims	3
Training	3
Recruitment Systems	3
Responsibility.....	4
The Recruitment Process	4
Advertising	4
Pre-Application Information	5
The School Safeguarding Policy	5
Scrutinising and Short-Listing.....	5
Online Recruitment Checks.....	5
References	6
Invitation to Interview	6
Interview Panel	7
Offer of Appointment	8
Risk Assessments	9
Overseas Police Check	9
Internal Moves.....	9
Agency staff, contractors, and volunteers.....	10
Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation.....	11

Aims

- To ensure the safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children and young people. Guildhouse School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- To ensure that we select the best possible person-to-job fit, therefore contributing significantly towards the organisation's effectiveness.
- To ensure Guildhouse School meets all statutory requirements when it comes to Recruitment & Employment. To that end, this policy should ensure that all laws and regulations are met.
- To ensure that our staff work in accordance with British Values and the values of the school. This is not only restricted to those who present as 'a risk of harm' to children. Applying safer recruitment principles, practice and checks, including our Countering Extremism & Terrorism ('Prevent') procedures based on UK Government guidance, will help deter and/or identify people who are possibly unsuitable for appointment for a wide variety of reasons.
- To be non-discriminatory on the grounds of race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex, maternity and/or pregnancy, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, disability, or age. These are known as "protected characteristics" under the Equality Act 2010.

This policy is a combination of elements that are statutory, recommended by the UK Department for Education, or considered as good practice.

Relationship to other policies: This policy is in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, September 2023), National Minimum Boarding Standards, the Safeguarding Policy, Teacher Misconduct: the Prohibition of Teachers, and the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Staff involved in recruitment must follow the rules of this policy. Failure to do so will lead to investigation, potential disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal.

Training

It is a requirement that all appointing/hiring managers receive training in effective recruitment and selection before leading on any hiring need and refresher training at least once per year.

The aim of the training is to ensure you are equipped to recruit on behalf of CATS Global Schools and that you do not put yourself, the students and/or the group at risk of inappropriate hiring.

The Central Talent Team will schedule and arrange Jobtrain Training and Safer Recruitment Training. This is complemented with online third-party training.

Recruitment Systems

Jobtrain is the current Applicant Tracking System (ATS) Implemented in October 2021. All recruitment internal and external must be processed through Jobtrain. The system has an embedded approval

process, an automated new starter form and online candidate portal for contracts and onboarding documents.

Responsibility

The ultimate responsibility for this policy and procedure lies with the Headteacher.

All staff responsible for the selection and recruitment of staff into the organisation will be responsible for adhering to this policy

The Recruitment Process

Due to the fact that all employees will have the potential for significant access to young people and children, Guildhouse School will adopt the procedures set out below. This will apply regardless of the employment status of the post, i.e., permanent, volunteer or casual.

It will be the responsibility of all staff involved in the recruitment and selection of individuals who will work in any capacity for Guildhouse School to ensure that they have familiarised themselves with the document Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

In addition, the immediate line manager who is responsible for recruitment and selection will be leading on the following:

- Advertising
- Pre-application information
- Pre-Interview Online Checks
- The School/School Safeguarding Policy
- Scrutinising and Shortlisting
- References
- Invitation to Interview
- Interviewing/Panel
- Offers and Appointment

Advertising

Any form of advertising used to recruit staff to a role with access to young people or children will include or reflect:

- A statement about the employer's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake an Enhanced DBS check via the Disclosure and Barring Service. This is built into the job template in Jobtrain and is regularly reviewed by the Talent Team.
- The advert should also contain the School/School's commitment to our policy on equal opportunities.

Pre-Application Information

Pre-application information (that meets the Department for Education KCSIE) available to potential applicants will contain:

- A job description and person specification that states the level of checks that are required for a role that meets the Department for Education statutory regulations. (Reference to Department for Education KCSIE). Job Descriptions must be attached to the vacancy when created in Jobtrain. Vacancy requests will not be approved without.

The School Safeguarding Policy

An application form must be completed for all vacancies. The application form must contain all relevant information, in accordance with KCSIE.

We will not accept curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants in place of an application form.

Scrutinising and Short-Listing

It is the expectation of the group that you complete the following checks

- Applicants must be chosen against the Person Specification.
- All application forms and accompanying documentation should be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed. Incomplete applications should not be accepted and should be returned for completion.
- Identify any gaps in employment in accordance with KCSIE.

Online Recruitment Checks

To comply with our legal obligations including those contained in the statutory guidance for schools, prior to interview all shortlisted candidates will be subject to an online check for publicly available information. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Bearing in mind this is part of a safeguarding check, the search is purely about whether the individual is suitable to work with children. Care must be taken to avoid unconscious bias and any risk of discrimination.

Online checks will be managed through the recruitment process in Jobtrain (ATS). They will be conducted by a designated staff member, who is independent from the interview panel and line manager. Full training on the parameters of the search process will be given to anyone involved, as well as guidance on the avoidance of discrimination and /or unconscious bias.

Conducting Online Checks

Applicants' full names will be entered into a recognised search engine. Google is the most used search engine in the UK, and we recommend the designated staff member search page 1 and 2 of the search results, followed by a search on Facebook and Twitter. The search is to identify any incidents or issues, related to the suitability to work with children that may need to be raised at interview. Any results

deemed to fall into this category will be escalated to the headteacher. The headteacher will decide if the information should be shared with the panel to address at interview.

Search Result Information

Search results will not be shared with anyone outside of the people responsible for carry out the check, unless an escalation takes place and at that point will only be shared with additional members of staff at the discretion of the headteacher.

References

References are to be obtained prior to interview for academic staff and in process for all. Open testimonials should never be accepted as references. If references are not provided by the Headteacher or equivalent of a school, they must be verified by the Headteacher.

At least two written references, including the current or most recent employer, with a reference request letter that specifically asks all referees to state any known reason why the person should not be employed to work with children and that there should be no material misstatement or omission relevant to the suitability of the applicant.

Suitability references should also be sought for internal candidates. Internal references are permissible where appropriate.

For internal or external appointments references should ideally be from a senior person with appropriate authority (in a position to be aware of issues), not usually just a colleague.

On receipt, references will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. The referee will be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate, for example if the answers are vague. References will also be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the candidate directly.

Electronic references should be verified as originating from a legitimate source.

Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings that relate to the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults will be considered and discussed with the candidate, with further clarification sought from the relevant employer as needed.

It is vital that the references are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed and before s/he starts work. Referees will always be asked specific questions regarding:

- The applicant's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if the answer is yes, what was the outcome of the enquiry.

Invitation to Interview

Wherever possible, the invitation to interview should contain time and place, directions to the venue and membership of the interview panel.

The invitation should also stress that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked thoroughly. All candidates should be instructed to bring with them relevant documentary evidence including qualifications and to satisfy DBS and UKVI requirements.

Invite to interview confirmations must include a criminal declaration form (KCSIE 2023) which must be returned to the Talent Team prior to the interview taking place. Declarations should be discussed during the interview process. Declaration Forms should have a wet signature, if any forms have been returned prior to interview with an electronic signature, they should be resigned at interview stage.

All interviews must be booked into JobTrain (ATS).

Interview Panel

Best practice suggests that it is better to have a minimum of two interviewers. Although it is possible for interviews to be conducted by a single person it is not recommended.

The members of the panel should:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointment
- Be appropriately trained, (one member of interview panel must hold a current Safer Recruitment certificate)
- Meet before the interviews to reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing
- Consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those; and agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification
- The panel should agree a set of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post, and the issues they will explore with each candidate, based on the information provided in the candidate's application and references (if available)

The interview panel should also explore:

- The candidate's attitude toward children and young people; and the candidate's ability to support the establishment's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Any gaps in the candidate's employment history that have not been explained to a satisfactory level and concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.
- Any concerns raised from the Online Recruitment Checks that have been carried out pre-interview.

The panel should also ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for an enhanced DBS Disclosure

If references are not obtained prior to interview, candidates should be given the opportunity to discuss anything they wish to declare in light of questions that have been (or will be) put to his or her referees.

Offer of Appointment

All offers of employment should be conditional based upon satisfactory checks including the receipt of at least two satisfactory references; verification of the candidate's identity including Birth Certificate (in the case of Schools under ISI regulations); a satisfactory enhanced DBS Disclosure; a barred list check; an overseas check; (if applicable), a prohibition from teaching check (if applicable); prohibition from management (s.128) (if applicable); verification of the candidate's medical fitness, verification of qualifications (all qualification relevant to the role and in addition any qualifications level 4 and above must be sighted)); verification of professional status where required and ensuring the candidate meets the relevant right to work criteria in line with UKVI legislation. Full checks are detailed below.

- Pre-Employment Checks
- Identification
- Right to Work
- Enhanced DBS
- Barred List
- Qualification Verification
- References x 2
- Prohibition from Teaching
- Prohibition from Management
- Medical Declaration
- Criminal Convictions Declaration
- Birth Certificate
- Online Name Check
- Overseas Police Check
- Overseas References

All checks should be confirmed in writing; documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to relevant advice contained in the DBS Disclosure Code of Practice and the School's data protection arrangements, this is located on The Den (intranet site)); and followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

Where a candidate is found to be on the Barred List, or the DBS Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his or her application; or there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, the facts will be reported to the police and/or the Disclosure & Barring Service and/or The Department for Education Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit (formerly the Teachers Misconduct Team).

Risk Assessments

Staff may, as an exception not a rule, commence employment in advance of receipt of their DBS certificate providing that a separate barred list check has been received, their DBS application has been submitted and all other checks are in place. A risk assessment will be undertaken and monitoring/supervision to be in place and reviewed every two weeks until all necessary checks are completed. Any risk assessment must be signed off by the Headteacher and Managing Director. The line manager and employee will also be asked to sign the Risk Assessment on the first day of employment. Risk Assessments must be renewed every two weeks until the DBS has been received. Guidance from the Department for Education and Disclosure and Barring Service to be followed at all times.

Boarding staff will not generally be allowed to start work until the original DBS is seen as the Headteacher will be unlikely to be able to sign off the risk assessment.

Guidance from the Department for Education, Disclosure & Barring Service, and National Minimum Boarding Standards is to be followed at all times.

Overseas Police Check

Where a member of staff has worked or lived overseas for a period of over three months in the past five years a police check or certificate of good conduct should be requested from the country concerned.

Where this is not possible, further checks should be carried out such as additional references, preferably from overseas employer (if not already provided). Approval in writing from the Headteacher must be in place to use references in place of an overseas police check or certificate of good conduct.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain the relevant Overseas Police Check. Where and when possible, the central Talent team can provide guidance.

Internal Moves

Members of staff transferring between Schools/Schools within the group will be subject to all of the same checks as those required for an external candidate. Where schools are part of the same proprietor group no additional checks are required but the school may choose to do so.

All internal appointments must be processed through Jobtrain (ATS) for the appropriate approvals and references checks to be carried out.

Staff promoted internally to a management position are subject to prohibition from management check (section 128).

Agency staff, contractors, and volunteers

Agency staff

When using an employment agency to recruit casual worker, we will complete all of the same checks as if we had recruited the individually directly.

When using an employment agency to provide staff on a supply basis, a signed 'Safer Recruitment in Education' letter must be received to ensure that the agency understands their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and recruitment.

For each member of staff, the agency must provide written confirmation that the following have been undertaken:

- Identity check
- A check to establish whether the individual is barred from regulated activity relating to young people; or is not subject to any disqualification, prohibition or restriction
- Qualification checks have been made
- Satisfactory references have been obtained
- An enhanced DBS disclosure was obtained
- Right to work in the UK check was made
- Overseas checks undertaken if appropriate
- Prohibition from Teaching Check if appropriate
- Management Prohibition Check if appropriate
- Medical fitness for post
- Application Form and Continuity Check (written explanation required for any gap in employment greater than one calendar month)

In addition to the above checks being undertaken the supply staff member must also provide original proof of identity on arrival at the school and the original DBS certificate.

Failure to follow the above will result in investigation and may lead to disciplinary action and potentially lead to dismissal.

Contractors

Any contractor, or any employee of a contractor, who is to work at the school must have had the appropriate suitability checks. These checks will be confirmed in writing by the employer and will include full names and details of checks undertaken:

- All contractors must appear on the central contractor Single Central Register (SCR).
- An enhanced DBS with barred list information and ID check for contractors engaging in regulated activity (directly or indirectly) kept on file.

CATS Global Schools (CGS) will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

Regular taxi drivers arranged by the school are considered to be contractors in regulated activity and will require an enhanced DBS check with Barred List (generally done by the taxi company and confirmed by letter).

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

The school will check the identity of all contractors and their staff against the central contractor SCR on arrival at the school.

Volunteers

We will never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.

We will obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with students on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers. We will obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who will be working in regulated activity unless they are able to present a valid enhanced DBS certificate.

We will carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

In line with DFE requirements, Guildhouse School will keep and maintain a Single Central Record (SCR). The SCR will list all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff, agency staff, volunteers

and proprietorial governors. The SCR will confirm that the required pre-employment checks have been completed, what documents have been checked, when and by whom.

Leavers will be removed at the end of each academic year and archived.

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy. This is achieved by monitoring the SCR and reviewing personnel files. The Safeguarding Governor will review the SCR on a monthly basis and raise any concerns with the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any reference about difficulties concerning an applicant will be made to the Disclosure & Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency (if applicable).

If a member of staff is dismissed the school is under a duty to consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency including if a member of staff resigns who may otherwise have been dismissed and a prohibition order may be appropriate.

This policy has regard to guidance from the Secretary of State and also:

- ISSRs Part 4, paragraphs 18-21
- Department for Education guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Teacher Misconduct: the prohibition of teachers February 2022
- Government Guidance on Countering Extremism/Terrorism



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