

# **Hardwick Primary School**

## **Safer Recruitment Policy Statement**

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education. Hardwick Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency cooperation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

This school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce, which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. The school is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. The school will uphold its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in the school's Single Equality Scheme.

All posts within school are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all 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.

The school is committed to ensuring people who have been convicted are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.

### **Safer Recruitment Training**

The school will:

- ensure that appropriate staff who undertake recruitment have received safe recruitment training and successfully completed the Suffolk Schools Choice Safer Recruitment practice for schools training.
- work towards every appointment panel to include one member who has received safe recruitment training
- implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role
- ensure that the Prevent Strategy is taken into due consideration and staff all have an understanding of the implications involved
- keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with DfE requirements
- ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. The school will monitor the compliance with these measures
- require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any criminal offence during their employment with the school to notify the school, in writing of the offence and the penalty.

## **The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken:**

- Verification of the candidate's identity and address, in line with the requirements of The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 – Right to work in the UK
- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer
- A Barred List check
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check
- Overseas Police Check/Certificate of Good Conduct/DBS Overseas Check (if applicable)
- Childcare Disqualification Act 2006 check
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness (clearance from Occupational Health where applicable)
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers and a Teacher Prohibition Check
- Verification of qualifications where relevant to the role
- Verification of successful completion of induction period (for those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **It is the responsibility of the governing body to:**

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them

### **It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other managers involved in recruitment to:**

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure

**It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document.**

**It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.**

### **It is the responsibility of the school's HR provider (School's Choice HR) to:**

Deal with the administration of the disclosure system for the school. In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations, the governing body has delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to lead in all appointments and is responsible for the decision to appoint. **School governors may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the Headteacher. The Headteacher may not delegate the selection process of staff to other managers in the school.**

## **The Procedure**

**Hardwick Primary School uses and refers to Suffolk Schools Choice - Recruitment and Selection Toolkit when making appointments.**

### **Advertising**

To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible, normally this will entail an external advertisement.

However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

### **Applications**

The form – The school uses a standard Local Authority school's application form. This must be signed by the candidate. CVs will not be accepted.

The school requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on this application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be 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.

### **References**

References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after shortlisting and BEFORE interview, using the Suffolk County Council standard reference request form. The only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. One reference will always be sought prior to interview wherever possible.

References must be in writing (handwritten or word processed) and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied - open references or testimonials are not acceptable. The school will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend. Only references from a trusted authoritative source will be acceptable.

### **Reference requests will specifically ask:**

- About the referee's relationship with the candidate
- Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes that the person might be unsuitable.

Referees will also be asked to confirm details of:

- The applicant's current post, salary and attendance record (where appropriate)
- Performance history and conduct (if known)
- Any disciplinary procedures in which the sanction is current

- Any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children, including any in which the sanction has expired and the outcome of those
- Details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of these concerns
- Hardwick Primary School uses the Suffolk County Council reference request form to ensure the details outline above are included. References will be compared to the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant at interview
- Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or e-mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

### **Self-declaration of convictions by job applicants**

The school's policy requires shortlisted applicants for all posts (including volunteers) to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and include any cautions and pending prosecution.

Such declarations will be made on an appropriate form and should be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked strictly private and confidential to the chair of the selection panel (usually the Headteacher), prior to the interview. The chair of the panel/Headteacher will discuss relevant, positive declarations confidentially with the applicant at interview.

The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment but will be considered in the same way as positive DBS disclosures.

### **Interviews**

The selection process will include the following:

- Face to face professional interview, including questions related to safeguarding children (in line with Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership Safer Recruitment Training).
- Young people panel and/or activity with children where appropriate to the post applied for.

### **Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK. Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status**

Shortlisted applicants for all posts will be required to provide proof of identity and current address by producing documents on the day of interview in line with those set out in The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Similar information is also required to undertake an enhanced Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) check on the preferred candidate.

Short-listed candidates will also be required to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation on the day of interview. The school will verify that candidates have actually obtained any qualifications legally required or deemed essential for the job and claimed in their application by asking to see the relevant certificate, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body/institution. If the original documents are not available, the school will require sight of a properly certified copy. Where candidates have obtained qualifications abroad, a certified

comparability check by NARIC will also be required. Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the chair of the panel/Headteacher.

### **Commencement of Employment prior to an enhanced DBS check being received**

In unusual circumstances, it is permitted to commence employment prior to receiving an enhanced DBS check and a risk assessment will be undertaken. However, a Barred List check and risk assessment must be completed.

### **Employment Offer**

It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred candidate, however, with the exception of DBS disclosures, the checks detailed above must all be completed BEFORE a person's appointment is confirmed. In the case of DBS disclosures, the certificate must be obtained before or as soon as practicable after appointment.

Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed/received, an offer of employment will be made and the contract of employment issued. The contract will be issued as soon as possible but in all circumstances within 8 weeks of employment commencing.

The school reserves the right not to proceed with or to terminate employment with immediate effect if the DBS checks reveals convictions which have not been declared on the application form or if any of the documents required have been falsified in any way.

### **Record Retention / Data Protection**

The school will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a 6 month period in line with GDPR, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The 6 month retention period will allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to the Employment Tribunal.

Under the Data Protection Act, applicants have a right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. Applicants who wish to access their interview notes must make a subject access request in writing to the chair of the panel/Headteacher within 6 months of the interview date.

### **Personal File Records**

The school will retain the following information which will make up part of the personal file, for the successful candidate:

- Application form
- References
- Proof of identification and address
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Proof of registration with General Teaching Council (for teaching staff if applicable)
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable)
- Evidence of medical clearance from Occupational Health
- Evidence of the DBS clearance (i.e. the notification form from Suffolk School's Choice HR or the DBS certificate reference number, NOT the actual DBS form or certificate)

- Evidence of Teacher Prohibition Check from the NCTL Teacher Services (also known as employer access online) to check for restrictions/sanctions that have been imposed by regulators of the teaching profession in other EEA member states.

### **Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks**

In line with DfE requirements, the school will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks (SCR). The central list will record the following:

- **Staff** - all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff
- **Supply staff** - whether employed directly or through an agency
- **Volunteers** - including governors who also work as volunteers
- **Contractors** - e.g. specialist sports coaches or artist and agency
- **Agency and Suffolk County Council Central Staff** – e.g. who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils, but who are not staff members

### **The Single Central Record will indicate whether or not the following have been completed:**

- Verification of the candidate's identity and address, in line with the requirements of The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 – Right to work in the UK
- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer
- A Barred List check
- A satisfactory DBS clearance
- Overseas Police Check/Certificate of Good Conduct/DBS Overseas Check (if applicable)
- Childcare Disqualification Act 2006 check
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness (clearance from Occupational Health where applicable)
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers and a Teacher Prohibition Check
- Verification of qualifications where relevant to the role
- Verification of successful completion of induction period (for those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)

In order to record supply staff provided through an agency, contractors, agency and Suffolk County Council Central Staff on the record, the school will require written confirmation from the agency/contractor that it has satisfactorily completed the checks described above. The school does not need to carry out checks itself except where there is information contained within the disclosure. However identity checks must be carried out by the school to check the person arriving is the person the agency intends to refer to them. Reference will be made to the Prevent Strategy.

### **Probation Periods**

Newly appointed teachers who are new to the employment of the governing body will be subject to the Suffolk School's Choice probationary period. Suffolk School's Choice will notify the school of any other probation period for newly appointed staff as necessary. All Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) will undergo a year's induction which must be passed to continue teaching at the school. Failure to do so will be passed to the Local Authorities NQT designated person.

## **Safeguarding Induction and Training, including Prevent duty Training**

On starting employment school staff will receive an induction which includes safeguarding and Prevent duty training. All staff will be given a copy of the school's Safeguarding Policy, Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Sept 2020), the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, School Code of Conduct and asked to sign a declaration that they have received, read and understood the documents and will follow the guidelines required to carry out their safeguarding duties and maintain professional boundaries at all time. A copy of the DfE 'Guidance for safe working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' is made available for all staff to read. All staff are expected to undertake online Prevent duty training issued by the Home Office and produce a certificate of completion for the school records. Training can be access via the link below:

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

All staff will receive Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership, safeguarding training provided from a trained safeguarding trainer (currently every 2 years) and at least annual updates.

The school adopts a culture of vigilance where all concerns are listened to and taken seriously. The school has a specific safeguarding related Whistle Blowing policy which has been disseminated to all staff and volunteers. It is also accessible on the staffroom notice board.

The school will follow DfE and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership allegations procedures and refer any allegation for initial consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Further advice can be sought via the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership website: <https://suffolksp.org.uk/>

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis or sooner if updates are required.

**This policy was reviewed and updated: Autumn 2020**

**This policy is due for review: Autumn 2021**