

WINSTON HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN RECRUITMENT POLICY

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - SAFE WORKING PRACTICES
RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND DISCLOSURE POLICY AND
PROCEDURE**

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - SAFE WORKING PRACTICES RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND DISCLOSURE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Winston House School (“the Setting”) fully recognises its responsibilities and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The setting is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils. The Setting is also committed to providing a supportive working environment to all its members of staff. The Setting recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

1. INTRODUCTION.

The aims of the Setting’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 that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds, including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DFE) (formerly the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), *Keeping Children Safe In Education* (the Guidance) and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- To ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved with the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

2. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for

completed application forms has not passed. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

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

The applicant may then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the Setting's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- The receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers satisfactory;
- The receipt of an enhanced disclosure (with list check if appropriate) from the DBS which the Setting considers to be satisfactory; and
- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role from the GP/medical adviser;
- All staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) receive a safeguarding document which they need to read and sign to say that they have read and understood before starting at the Setting.
- Attendance at a Safeguarding briefing within the first week of work at the School.

3. MEDICAL FITNESS

The Setting is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the Setting, after an offer of employment has been made.

It is the Setting's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete a Health Questionnaire. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed timetable, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School etc. If there are any doubts about an applicant's fitness the Setting will consider reasonable adjustments in consultation with the applicant. The School may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.

4. PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

In accordance with the recommendations set out in the Guidance, and the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 the Setting carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

4.1 Verification of Identity and Address

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications:

- passport
- two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address
- documentation confirming their National Insurance Number (P45, P60 or National Insurance Card)
- original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

The Setting asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with the Guidance. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the Setting may verify the identity of, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history of all applicants. The Setting does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

4.2 References

References will be taken up on short listed teaching staff candidates prior to interview. All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the Setting. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known solely as a friend.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role which the applicant has applied for. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- The applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness (only to be included in reference requests sent out after the offer of employment has been made) and disciplinary record;
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards young people.

The Setting will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials. The Setting will verify all references.

The Setting will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

4.3 Criminal Records Check

Due to the nature of the work, the Setting applies for an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members and volunteers. For those categories of staff who will carry out “regulated activity” for the purposes of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, an enhanced disclosure with list check will be required. For those categories of staff who will not carry out regulated activity, an enhanced disclosure only will be required.

An enhanced disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record (including those which are defined as “spent” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. An enhanced disclosure may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

In addition to the above information, an enhanced disclosure with list check will also reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

DBS checks will be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including the equivalent of a DBS disclosure, from the relevant jurisdiction.

5. CONTRACTORS AND AGENCY STAFF

Contractors engaged by the Setting who have access to pupils in term time must complete the same checks for their employees that the Setting is required to complete for its staff. The Setting requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Contractor can commence work at the Setting.

Agencies who supply staff to the Setting must also complete the pre-employment checks which the Setting would otherwise complete for its staff. Again the Setting requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work at the Setting.

Contractors attending the premises for emergency repairs will follow the procedures for visitors.

6. POLICY ON RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

6.1 Background

The Setting will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The Setting makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the Setting. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in paragraph 6.2 below.

All positions within the Setting are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must therefore declare all previous convictions, including those which would normally be considered “spent”, when applying for a position at the Setting. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

It is unlawful for the Setting to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position at the Setting. The Setting will make a report to the Police and/or DBS if:

- It receives an application from a barred person;
- It is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant’s application; or
- It has serious concerns about an applicant’s suitability to work with children.

6.2 Assessment Criteria

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Setting will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- Whether the conviction or other matter is revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- Whether the applicant’s circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the Setting's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any of the following offences:

- Murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence; or
- Serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the Setting's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the Setting's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

6.3 Assessment Procedure

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Setting will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Head of the Setting before a position is offered.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure he/she can do so by contacting the DBS direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the Setting will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

6.4 Retention and Security of Disclosure Information

The Setting's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information, but is under no obligation to do so.

In particular, the Setting will:

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the Setting's SLT.
- Not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary, and for a maximum of six months. The Setting will keep a record of the date of the disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken;
- Ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding;
- Prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information.

The Setting complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on the DBS website.

The setting will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The central list will record all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff, volunteers, supply agency staff whether employed directly or through an agency, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, eg: specialist sports coach or MFL specialist.

7. RETENTION OF RECORDS

If an applicant is appointed, the Setting will retain any relevant information provided on his/her application form (together with any attachments) on his/her personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.

8. QUERIES

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter they should contact Head Office.

9. DISMISSAL ON THE GROUNDS OF MISCONDUCT

The Setting will report the dismissal of any member of staff or volunteer following a substantial allegation to the DFE and the police, where appropriate. The DBS will also be notified of anyone whose services are no longer used by the Setting because they are considered unsuitable to work with children within one month of that person leaving the Setting. Where qualified teachers are registered with the GTC, any misconduct referrals will be reported to the GTC.