

# Weatherhead High School

A high performing academy providing excellence for all

## Recruitment & Selection Policy

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## Statement of intent

This policy is designed to assist with recruitment and selection at Weatherhead High School.

Through this policy Weatherhead High School aims to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures to ensure a robust safeguarding culture at our school.

Recruiting the best staff to our school is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education and support to our students. Not appointing the right people can have a negative impact on the performance of our school.

In carrying out our recruitment processes:

- we are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our students by operating safer recruitment practices in line with the statutory requirements and guidance.
- we will comply with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation (being the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018) and any implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time and our Data Protection Policy sets out how we will we will do this.
- we will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and are committed to ensuring that throughout our recruitment and selection processes no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

## **1. Roles and responsibilities:**

- 1.1. The Governing Body of the school is responsible for ensuring there are effective policies and procedures in place to ensure recruitment at Weatherhead High School is in-line with DfE, HM Government guidance and legal requirements which may be updated periodically.

At Weatherhead High School the Governing Body strives to ensure that staff recruitment is safe and fair, and the Governing Body continues to monitor this aspect of the school's Recruitment Policy alongside legal and statutory compliance.

- 1.2. The Headteacher will assist the Governing Body in ensuring that staff recruitment is safe, fair and compliant. The Headteacher will also ensure appropriate checks have been carried out on staff, volunteers, contractors and agencies working within the school.

The Headteacher is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate supervision of employees/volunteers is organised, where necessary, and for promoting the safety and wellbeing of pupils generally and throughout this process.

## **2. Inviting applications – advertisements**

- 2.1. Vacancies will be advertised via the most appropriate channels keeping in mind the school's Single Equality Policy and the need to reach disadvantaged groups. A commitment to equal rights will be stated in advertisements.
- 2.2. Advertisements will include a job description, outline the person specifications potential candidates should display, how to apply and detail the closing date.
- 2.3. The full requirements of the role will be clearly explained, including the schools commitment to safeguarding and detailing any employment vetting requirements e.g. DBS check.
- 2.4. All advertised vacancies will also include the following statement in the application pack for all posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020:

'The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website.' If successful, you will be required to apply for a Criminal Record Check from

the Disclosure and Barring Service. The level of check required for this job is Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List Check’.

- 2.5. Recruitment will not be through ‘word of mouth’.
- 2.6. The school may use social media for recruitment and, if doing so, will ensure that the advertisement is reaching the right people and is communicating the ethos of the school effectively and appropriately.
- 2.7. The contact point for telephone or email enquiries will be clearly outlined and application forms will be accessible both on the school’s website, as well as being sent out to applicants, upon request.

### **3. Information for candidates**

3.1. Information for candidates will generally be provided in the form of an information pack. This will include:

- A copy of the advertisement.
- A comprehensive job description which must be accurate and up to date.
- A comprehensive person specification, which outlines all of the necessary skills, abilities, experience, attitude, behaviours, qualifications and knowledge requirements for the post.
- Information regarding the required fluency of spoken English required for the post (if considered a customer facing role<sup>1</sup>).
- Equal rights and opportunities material.
- A brief outline of the school, its values and aims.
- An application form – to assist with fair comparisons between applicants. This will also include a section for references to be recorded, one of which must be the candidate’s most recent employer.
- The application form will also further inform applicants that, if successfully shortlisted, they will be asked to disclose information regarding any relevant cautions and convictions which are not ‘protected’. If candidates are unsure they can seek clarification from the Ministry of Justice website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>

### **4. Identification of the recruitment panel**

- 4.1. The recruitment panel will comprise of an ‘appointing officer’, responsible for the management of the entire recruitment process. Between two and four selectors is appropriate for most appointments.
- 4.2. For Leadership posts, teaching posts associated with a TLR of 1 or higher, and support staff posts higher than NJC points 19 and above, the recruitment panel will also include a member of the Governing Body.

- 4.3. For Headteacher recruitment, the Chair of the Trust will also be a member of the recruitment panel. The Governing Body will make a recommendation to the Trust and the Trust Board will be required to approve the appointment.
- 4.4. At least one member of the panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment.

## **5. Equal opportunities**

- 5.1. When recruiting, the school will adhere to its Single Equality Policy
- 5.2. The school will not discriminate against any protected characteristics, such as disability or gender, and will always promote difference and inclusion throughout the school.
- 5.3. The school will, where necessary, make reasonable adjustments to ensure the interview is accessible to all candidates. Candidates should inform the school of any reasonable adjustments that they need when they receive the invitation for an interview.
- 5.4. Candidates will not be asked about their health or any disabilities before a job offer is made, unless one of the following exemptions applies:
  - Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments)
  - Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment
  - Positive action to recruit people with disabilities
  - Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process)

## **6. Shortlisting**

- 6.1. All application forms (whether incomplete or completed) must be taken into account when shortlisting candidates for an interview.
- 6.2. Candidates who are shortlisted should meet all the essential aspects of the person specification requirements. This process will be as systematic as possible and all selectors will read through all applications, each creating their own shortlist. These will be collated and discussed between selectors before a final shortlist is decided on.

## **7. Pre-interview Checks**

- 7.1. Pre-interview checks will be undertaken for all shortlisted applications.
- 7.2. Pre-interview checks will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Checking all sections of the application form are complete, including Teacher reference number where appropriate
- Checking for any gaps in education or employment history
- Requesting two references from each shortlisted candidate directly from the referees – where possible, one reference will be obtained relating to the role in which the candidate worked with children
- Verifying that the candidate has qualifications or experience relevant to the post
- Checking references against application forms and noting down discrepancies or concerns, and following up these concerns with referees.

## **8. Interview invitations**

- 8.1. Once a shortlist has been decided, the successful applicants will be contacted and invited to interview.
- 8.2. The invitation will ensure all candidates receive information about the arrangements, how they will be conducted, any preparation needed and what areas will be explored.
- 8.3. Permission will be asked to contact the candidate's referees prior to interview via the completed application form.
- 8.4. Candidates will also be informed at this stage if they are being asked to participate in any other recruitment exercises whilst at interview e.g. lesson observation, presentation, in-tray exercise etc.

## **9. References**

- 9.1 Two referees, one of which must be the candidate's most recent employer, will be contacted, ideally before candidates are interviewed.
- 9.2 Structured questionnaires are a useful method of questioning referees.
- 9.3 Questions will include:
  - General information about the candidate's previous professional performance and suitability for the post.
  - The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people.
  - Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people.
  - The applicant's attendance record - this is often provided only upon offer of appointment in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010.
  - The applicant's disciplinary record.
  - The applicant's capability record within the last two years.
  - The reason for leaving their post (if no longer employed).
  - If the candidate is applying for a teaching post and is not currently employed as a teacher, the school/college/local authority where they

were most recently employed as a teacher will be contacted for a reference.

- 9.4 Records will be kept of all responses.
- 9.5 Any uncertainties or issues followed up with the referee verbally will be recorded. Following reference checks, any concerns raised by referees will be put to the candidate at interview. Such responses will also be recorded.

## 10. Digital footprints

- 10.1 At Weatherhead High School we are committed to ensuring that safeguarding is a top priority.
- 10.2 In light of this commitment, where appropriate, potential candidates' social media or other online activity may be checked prior to interview and records made of any offensive or inappropriate material.
- 10.3 This process may include a search for the candidate via:
  - Google
  - Facebook
  - LinkedIn
  - This list is not exhaustive

## 11. Selection process

- 11.1 During interviews, candidates will be asked standard form questions and their responses recorded for ease of comparison.
- 11.2 Candidates will be asked open questions to assess their experience and suitability for the post, to explore their motivation towards safeguarding and suitability to work with children. This could include:
  - finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for
  - their motivation for working with children;
  - exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role;
  - probing where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.
- 11.3 Areas that may be concerning and lead to further questions include:
  - an implication that adults and children are equal;
  - a lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children;
  - inappropriate idealisation of children;
  - inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children; and
  - indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours;



- 11.4 Any gaps in employment history will be explored during the interview process.
- 11.5 Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Applicants will only be asked to disclose and discuss criminal convictions and/or cautions which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) that may deem them unsuitable.
- 11.6 Any concerns raised through contact with referees will be put to the candidate at this stage.
- 11.7 Candidates will be given the opportunity to ask any questions or discuss any concerns.

A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role.

## **12. Remote Recruitment**

- 12.1 The school will follow all the requirements set out in this policy when recruiting remotely, changing only the in-person nature of the interview and implementing necessary additional steps to support this.
- 12.2 A suitable online platform will be determined, taking into consideration ease of use, privacy measures and suitability for purpose.
- 12.3 Online interviews will be conducted in line with the school's policy on ICT Acceptable Use and Data Protection. All relevant privacy settings will be adjusted as required.
- 12.4 Tasks set for candidates will be adjusted to accommodate the online nature of the interview.
- 12.5 Candidates will be briefed on appropriate protocols in good time, prior to the interview. These will include, but are not limited to:
- The host of the meeting will ensure that the candidate remains in a waiting room until ready to join the interview
  - The candidate will participate in the interview with both the video camera and microphone features enabled at all required times
  - The candidate will participate in the interview in a suitable setting – a quiet area with a neutral background
  - The candidate will keep personal information which is not relevant to the recruitment process private, e.g. their email password, and will not ask

the staff members conducting the interview to share any such private information

- Where necessary, the candidate will be aware that the school may record the online interview, and that they will be required to consent to this in order for the interview process to continue.

12.6 If a candidate does not consent the school will consider whether the interview can still take place. The school will consider whether an alternative in-person interview can be arranged. If this is not possible the school will have a discussion with the candidate as to whether they can continue with the recruitment process at this time.

12.7 Candidates should be aware there is advice available from the DfE on 'Attending your first remote interview':  
<https://teaching.blog.gov.uk/2020/06/12/attending-your-first-remote-interview/>

### **13. Decision making**

13.1 At Weatherhead High School, we are committed to ensuring the best individuals are recruited to work at our school. Applicants will therefore be carefully checked against the selection criteria and all essential criteria from the person specification should be met before any offers of employment are made.

13.2 In line with our safeguarding obligations, we will carefully consider all information about past disciplinary action or allegations. This includes information obtained from the DfE Teacher Services Employer Access Online checks.

### **14 After the interview**

14.1 After the interview has been completed, the recruitment panel will:

- Assess all candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria.
- Notify unsuccessful candidates as soon as possible.
- Provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates if requested.

14.2 Unsuccessful applications, interview notes and assessment materials will be held securely for six months after the interviews, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged in line with our Records Management Policy and in line with the requirements for Data Protection Legislation.

14.3 After choosing a successful candidate, the school will:

- Make a conditional offer of employment to the candidate.
- Ask the successful candidate to provide identification and proof of qualifications, if this has not already been done.
- Complete the relevant pre-appointment checks.

## 15. Employment checks and DBS checks (incl. “regulated activity”)

For the purpose of this policy, engaging in “regulated activity” involves any individual who:

- Will be responsible for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children at the school.
- Will carry out paid or unsupervised, unpaid work regularly at the school, and where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children.
- Engages in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.
  - Regulated activity is described as being “regular” if it is carried out by the same person and is conducted:
    - Once a week or more often.
    - On four or more days in a 30 day period.
    - Overnight (between 2am-6am).

The level of DBS check, including whether a prohibition check is required, will depend on the applicant’s role. For most appointments, i.e. those in ‘regulated activity’, an enhanced DBS check with barred list information is sufficient.

### 15.1 General recruitment

15.1.1 Weatherhead High School will take care to ensure that:

- A successful candidate’s identity will be verified, preferably from a current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available.
- Evidence of appropriate qualifications will be obtained during pre-appointment checks.
- Verification of medical fitness for the role.
- Appropriate DBS checks are obtained for all successful candidates, including barred list information where the person is engaged in regulated activity subject to satisfying identification requirements in place at the time of application.
- Where an individual is successful in their application, and begins work in a regulated activity before a DBS certificate is available, a separate barred list check will be obtained:
- Where applicants have subscribed to the DBS Update Service, and give permission for this to be accessed, this service will be used instead.
- Any person holding QTS / QTLS are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State. This will be done using the Employer Access Online service.
- Successful candidates for management roles require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited under section 128 provisions.
- The successful candidate has a right to work in the UK.
- Where a candidate has worked overseas, that appropriate checks are carried out per this policy, and any statutory requirements.

**NOTE:** There is **no requirement** to obtain an enhanced DBS check if, in the three months prior to beginning work in their new appointment, the applicant has worked:

- In a school in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children or in any post in a school since 12 May 2006; or
- In a college in England in a position which involved the provision of education and regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or young people under the age of 18.

But a school or college **may** request an enhanced DBS check with barred list information should there be concerns and bearing in mind the duty schools and colleges are under not to allow a barred person to work in regulated activity. As such Weatherhead High School reserves the right to undertake an enhanced DBS check on appointment.

**NOTE:** A school or college **may not** request an enhanced DBS check with barred list check for anyone working in the school or college who is not in regulated activity, but may request an enhanced DBS check **without** a barred list check.

## **15.2 Volunteers**

- 15.2.1 Where a volunteer is recruited to engage in work which is not considered 'regulated activity', an enhanced DBS certificate will not be obtained.
- 15.2.2 Volunteers recruited to take part in regulated activity must obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check.
- 15.2.3 Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not provided a DBS certificate be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

**Note:** Where a volunteer is to be placed under supervision, they are not considered to be taking part in regulated activity and therefore it is illegal for the school to request a barred list check on the volunteer.

Supervision must:

- Be by a person who is in regulated activity.
- Be regular and day to day.
- Be "reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children".

## **15.3 Individuals who have lived outside the UK**

- 15.3.1 No exceptions will be made for candidates who have lived outside of the UK, all mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary. This may include obtaining a certificate of good conduct from relevant embassies or the police. For teaching staff, obtaining proof of their past conduct as a teacher from the professional regulating authority in the country in which they worked, where available.

15.3.2 Obtaining an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information, including for candidates who have not been to the UK before.

15.3.3 The DfE [guidance on the employment of overseas-trained teachers](#) will be consulted should an overseas candidate apply for a teaching position.

#### **15.4 Agency and third party staff**

15.4.1 In the case of any employee working at Weatherhead High School sourced from an agency or third-party organisation, confirmation must be obtained from the organisation, in writing, that all necessary DBS checks have been completed.

15.4.2 Confirmation must also be obtained that the individual who presents for work is the same person on whom all checks have been completed. A copy of photographic identification is generally appropriate.

#### **15.5 Trainee/student teachers**

15.5.1 At Weatherhead High School we will ensure that enhanced DBS certificates and barred list checks are obtained on all 'salaried' applicants for initial teacher training.

15.5.2 Where trainee teachers are fee-funded it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks and provide written confirmation that this has been undertaken.

#### **15.6 Recruitment of Ex-offenders**

15.6.1 The School has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

### **16. Single central record**

16.1 In accordance with legal requirements, Weatherhead High School will maintain and regularly update our single central record. All new employees will be added to the record, which will include:

- All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school.
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the school or college, including volunteers.

16.2 For each individual, the single central record will outline whether or not the following checks have been carried out/certificates obtained, along with the date of the check:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK

- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- Section 128 prohibition checks for qualifying staff

## **17 Monitoring and review**

- 17.1 This policy will be reviewed annually, (notwithstanding any statutory or legislative changes) in consultation with the recognised trade unions. It will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Governing Body in conjunction with the HR Manager.
- 17.2 We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

## Flowchart of Disclosure and Barring Service Criminal Record Checks and Barred List Checks –

