



# **SAFER RECRUITMENT Policy & Procedure 2021-22**

**Date Policy Updated:** 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021, by Trust Strategic HR Manager  
**Date policy approved:** 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021, by SCRCAT – Directors HR Committee  
**Subject to consultation with Local Secretary TU's**  
**Date of next review** Autumn Term 2022

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that:

- Aims to create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and young people in our schools. As part of this aim, we adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children and young people from applying or securing employment or volunteering opportunities within our schools
- Attracts the best possible applicants to apply for any vacancies
- Has safeguarding as of paramount importance throughout all stages of the recruitment, selection and induction process
- Deters prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young adults
- Identifies and rejects applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- Follows current legislation and guidance as a result of the Bichard Inquiry Report 2004 and the Keeping Children Safe in Education document 2021.

## **2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS**

The policy supports the statutory requirements outlined by the DfE guidance on the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education document and Hull's Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Guidance.

## **3. IDENTIFICATION OF RECRUITING PARTIES**

3.1 The school currently has members of staff and the Trust Board who have completed the recommended Safer Recruitment training and passed the required assessment.

3.2 The named trained Safer Recruitment Personnel within each academy is kept within each academy and held centrally in HR on the Single Central Record (SCR).

3.3 The CEO will ensure all staff and directors involved in the recruitment process have been fully briefed about the procedures and protocol prior to the commencement or engagement in the recruitment process. All Safer Recruitment Personnel must re train and complete the course every five years.

## **4. INVITING APPLICATIONS**

4.1 All advertisements for posts will include the following statement:

St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring disclosure.

## 4.2 Applications Forms

All our schools will use a standard application form for every applicant, based on the Trust templates. CVs will not be accepted. We will expect and require candidates for all posts, paid or voluntary, to provide a full employment history and to account for any gaps or discrepancies either on the application or, subsequently, at interview.

4.3 Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in their application being rejected or in summary dismissal if the applicant has already been appointed. This may also result in the matter being referred to the police and/or a professional regulatory e.g. the Disclosure and Barring Service.

4.4 Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

- Job description and person specification
- The school's child protection policy
- The school's safer recruitment procedure
- The selection process for the post (contained within this policy)
- An application form.

4.5 All prospective applicants must complete **in full**, an application form. Incomplete application forms may be rejected at the short-listing stage.

## 5. SHORT LISTING AND REFEREES

5.1 Short listing of candidates will be carried out in relation to the identified person specification for the post. Each candidate will be firstly checked against the 'essential' criteria'. If a large number of candidates meet the essential criteria, then the selection panel may consider the desirable criteria in order to make a subsequent shortlist. There should be at least two people shortlisting, those people should continue with the recruitment and selection process until it is complete.

5.2 References will be sought directly from the referee and from a senior person with appropriate authority, not just a colleague. References will be completed using the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust agreed format. Open references will never be accepted (i.e. general and to 'Whom It May Concern') – further appropriate named referees would need to be sought from the candidate.

5.3 References will be sought **and received** wherever possible for all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, before interviews taking place. The purpose of this is to use the interview as the opportunity to explore any issues of concern that may have been raised with the candidate's references.

5.4 References should always be obtained from the candidate's current employer. Where a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving should be obtained from the school, college, local authority or organisation at which they were employed.

In line with the "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021", **ALL** references **must** be scrutinised, and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed.

5.6 Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or e-mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A written follow up will be required from the referee as a record of any matters discussed over the telephone.

5.7 Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies.

5.8 Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
- Any current disciplinary warnings
- Any time-expired warnings that relate to the safeguarding of children
- The candidate's suitability for the post.

5.9 If requested, school employees are entitled to see and receive copies of their employment references.

## **6. THE SELECTION PROCESS**

6.1 Our schools use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates. At least 1 member of the panel will have completed the Safer Recruitment Training (hold the certificate (details of those staff are kept on the SCR)).

6.2 Interviews will always be face-to face, apart from in exceptional circumstance.

6.3 If a face-to-face interview has not been carried out at the first interview stage and the candidate is still being considered for appointment, a face-to-face meeting must be carried out before an offer of employment is made.

6.4 Prior to interviews, the interview panel will agree a set of structured questions, which will include:

- Exploring what attracts the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation to work with children or young people
- Examine skills, asking for examples of experience of working with children or young people which are relevant to the role
- Probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment frequently, and having these explained to a satisfactory conclusion
- Question so the candidate can demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people
- In addition to the standard questions, the interview panel may ask any individual question necessary to clarify any discrepancies between the information supplied by the candidate at the interview/on their application form and that which was provided in the references. This relates in particular to satisfying the panel about any matters relating to safeguarding as well as any other discrepancies.

6.5 Candidates will always be required:

- To explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- To explain to a satisfactory conclusion any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters
- To declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS enhanced clearance.

6.6 For some posts, including for members of the leadership group or teaching posts, the selection process will normally include an activity involving children or young people e.g., meeting the school council, taking an assembly, etc.

## **7. DECISION ON APPOINTMENT**

7.1 After all the candidates have been interviewed, the interview panel will consider all the information available to them and will assess each candidate against the criteria for the post, which will identify which candidate should be appointed. The panel will make notes of the reason for its decision and will sign and date the notes; the notes relating to the successful candidate will be retained indefinitely on their personal employment file. For the unsuccessful candidates, all application information will be kept on record for six months following the interview.

7.2 Under the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, candidates have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process.

7.3 Candidates who wish to access their interview notes must make a 'subject access request' in writing within 6 months of the interview date, after such time all papers are then destroyed.

## **8. PRE-APPOINTMENT VETTING CHECKS**

All offers of appointment are conditional upon the satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks.

Schools **must**:

- Verify a candidate's identity
- Obtain (via the candidate) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity). A school must be in receipt of the DBS enhanced clearance as soon as it is available to the candidate. Failure to present this information by the candidate could lead to disciplinary action being taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check from the candidate if the person is working in regulated activity, even if the individual has never been to the UK before
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities – via completion of a confidential health questionnaire
- Verify the person's right to live and work in the UK, including EU nationals
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school considers appropriate
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA) system should be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS), and the completion of teacher induction or probation
- Verify all other certificates and qualifications (not photocopies) which must be signed off by the Head of School or the Head of Schools' delegated officer (i.e. HR Manager or Office Manager) and logged on the SCR.
- Check that a person taking up a management position is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State

- Ensure that the candidate employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, or any sanction or restrictions
- Where applicable, carry out checks to ensure the individuals who will work in the early years provision or later years provision (for children up to the age of 8), are not disqualified from working in these settings under the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018
- Produce a 'Good Conduct' certificate if they have lived outside of the United Kingdom within the last 10 years
- Application forms no longer include a section on any criminal self-declaration. This will be carried out separately following shortlisting.
- Application forms submitted electronically, will require any shortlisted candidates to sign in person, immediately prior to their interview (or otherwise in person).

## 9. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECKS

9.1 Where a DBS certificate is required, it must be obtained from the candidate before, or as soon as it is practicably possible after the person's appointment date. Whilst an individual can start work before the DBS certificate is available, the school must ensure that they are appropriately supervised and all other checks are complete, including a separate Children's Barred List check.

9.2 A clear (no content) indicative notification of DBS completion **MUST** be received for all individuals before being allowed unsupervised contact with children or young people. Where a certificate contains content, the original certificate **MUST** be reviewed, and a meeting will be held with the individual prior to making a recruitment decision.

## 10. INDUCTION

10.1 All staff new in post, including volunteers will receive an induction to include safeguarding training. In addition, new starters will be provided with a copy of the last version of the DfE guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Part 1), Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, whistle blowing and child protection policies, and asked to sign to confirm they have received and understand the documents, as well as having an opportunity to raise any questions.

10.2 Every new member of staff will have an identified Induction Mentor who will oversee the induction process and will continue to monitor for a minimum of 12 weeks to ensure they adhere to policies and procedures as outlined in the induction process.

10.3 The Induction Mentor will ensure new staff members have sufficient support and guidance and will monitor working practices to identify any anomalies. Any concerns will be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Head of School.

## **11. SUPPLY STAFF**

11.1 St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. Any information disclosed as part of the DBS check will be treated confidentially. Each member of supply staff will be recorded on the SCR, even if they are only working for one day.

11.2 When the supply staff arrives in school identity checks will be carried out and recorded on the SCR.

## **12. PERIPATETIC STAFF**

St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust will require that all necessary checks and DBS requirements have been satisfactorily completed for peripatetic staff.

## **13. VOLUNTEERS**

13.1 There is an expectation that the St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust follows the same procedures for volunteers and will ensure they complete a volunteer application form and two references are obtained.

13.2 Under no circumstances should a volunteer for whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised with children/young people or allowed to work in regulated activity.

13.3 Schools must obtain an enhanced DBS check, including a Children's Barred List check if the volunteer is **unsupervised** and teaches, or looks after children young people regularly. Schools are not legally permitted to request a Children's Barred List check on a **supervised** volunteer, as they are not considered to be engaging in regulated activity.

13.5 In instances where volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised Training Course (such as PGCE, NVQ etc.) then references and

completion of an application form will not be necessary. However, the school will need to see the DBS clearance, if applicable.

#### **14. PROFESSIONAL VISITORS (HEALTH VISITORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, MUSIC PERI'S ETC.)**

Before the professional visitor can conduct their work, ID checks and DBS clearance verification checks will be carried out by administration staff in the primaries and HR in SMC, this information is stored on the visitors tab on the SCR.

#### **15. DUTY TO REFER TO THE DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)**

There is a legal requirement for our schools to make a referral to the DBS if any staff member is removed from regulated activity (or would have been removed had they not left), and we believe the individual has:

- Engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children or young people
- Satisfied the harm test in relation to children or young people, or
- Been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representation) offence.

#### **16. DUTY TO CONSIDER REFERRAL TO THE TEACHING REGULATION AGENCY**

If a teacher is dismissed due to gross misconduct or might have been dismissed or we would have ceased to use their services had they not left, then the school must consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State.

#### **17. EQUALITIES**

At St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Academy Trust we do not discriminate against any child or adult on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We embrace the individuality of all our community members and comply fully with the Equality Act 2010.

Other related academy policies that support this Safer Recruitment Procedure include Child Protection, Induction, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistle Blowing and Disciplinary.