



nishkamschooltrust

Recruitment and Selection Policy

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RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nishkam School Trust (NST) are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Any successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Disclosure.

This policy has been formed to reflect the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 and has been produced in line with the 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' document which came into force on 1st January 2007 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014.

The policy aims to ensure that NST applies a safe and fair recruitment process at all times.

2. POLICY

This policy has been devised to make safeguarding an integral factor in NST's recruitment and selection process to ensure the Trust creates a safe environment for its service users.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the recruitment of both permanent and temporary (including voluntary) staff is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner, which complies with relevant legislation.

To achieve this purpose, those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

3. PRINCIPLES

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- to ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people occurs at each stage of the process
- all applicants receive fair treatment and a high-quality service
- the job description and person specification are essential tools and will be used throughout the process
- applicants will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job
- selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members. At least one panel member will have undertaken the Safer Recruitment Online Training or workshops developed by Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)
- selection will be based on a minimum of a completed application form, short listing and interview
- regular monitoring and evaluation of the recruitment process will be carried out to assess its effectiveness and the impact on recruitment and retention, equality and diversity

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

4.1 Decision to recruit

A vacancy presents an opportunity to consider restructuring, or to reassess the requirements of a job. The following review is required to determine the needs to fill an existing job or a new post:

- What is the purpose of the post?
- Is the post still required?
- Has the job remained the same or have changing work patterns, organisation or technology resulted in changes to the role?
- Could the tasks be carried out differently e.g., could any additional duties, responsibilities or hours be advertised internally to offer advancement or increased hours offered to existing staff
- Is job-sharing appropriate?
- Will any review of the role affect the salary?
- Is sufficient funding available?
- Does the Governing Body need to agree any changes or that the post can be advertised?
- Will the new post be permanent or temporary?

Answers to these questions will help to clarify the actual requirements of the job and how it fits into the rest of the organisation.

4.2 Job description and person specification

When a decision has been made to recruit for a new or existing vacant post, a job description and personal specification will be created or reviewed to make clear the expectations of the job.

The documents will highlight the responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons the jobholder is responsible for, or comes into contact with.

4.2.1 Job Description

The job description is a list of the main responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the post holder.

4.2.2 Person Specification

The person specification is essential to the recruitment process as it defines the type of person being sought. It describes the essential and desirable skills, knowledge, qualifications, specific conditions and competences required to undertake the duties of the job description.

The person specification will be used to:

- inform the advertisement
- assess applications to shortlist for interview
- plan interview questions and selection tests
- assess applicants and make the final selection

4.3 Other Documents

All other materials such as the application form, and information/guidance for applicants that will form part of the recruitment pack sent to prospective applicants will be kept up to date, and will clearly set out the responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of children.

4.4 Job advert

All advertisements will contain the most up to date statement relating to the safeguarding and welfare of children.

The main aim of this stage is to attract suitable applicants in the most cost effective way. To help decide on the most effective recruitment method, consideration will need to be given to the nature of the post, the circumstances of the Trust at the time, the type of person required and budgetary implications. The most appropriate media will be used to attract the best field of candidates ensuring equality of opportunity is promoted in the recruitment method. The advertisement will reflect the Trust's vision and the kind of applicants governors wish to attract to the school.

Whenever possible the recruitment panel will agree dates for short listing and interviews before advertising the post; and the date for interviews will be incorporated into the advertisement and information packs to be sent to applicants, to ensure that all applicants have advance notice to make themselves available.

4.5 Information Pack for applicants

Information packs for applicants will include the following:

- covering Letter
- application Form
- job description and person specification
- a statement of the terms and conditions relating to the post
- the Trust's policies on equal opportunities and child protection
- information setting out the extent of the relationship/contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled
- any other relevant material to attract applicants (e.g., school prospectus)

4.6 Shortlisting

All applications will be treated confidentially and only circulated to those individuals involved in the recruitment process.

The appointment panel will meet to go through the applications which have been received in response to the advertisement, and select candidates who most closely meet the selection criteria set out in the person specification and invite them to the interview stage of the selection process.

Only information provided on the application form and any supporting statement will be used for selecting applicants. Prior knowledge of applicants will not be a factor in the selection process.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

During the shortlisting process, the appointment panel will check to ensure that the application forms are fully completed, the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies and to identify any gaps in employment.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted and, time permitting, will be returned for completion. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment will be noted so that they can be taken up at the interview stage if the applicant is shortlisted. In addition, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work, will also be explored and verified.

Where there is disagreement on the suitability of a candidate, this will be openly discussed and consensus reached if possible. If not, there may have to be a vote by the appointment panel members. The Head of Business Services can always be present to give advice subject to prior agreement.

A shortlisting form will be used to score the applications and record decisions. Applicants will be compared with consistency against the person specification criteria which can be evidenced from their application.

Reasons for not shortlisting an applicant will be recorded and retained for six months to demonstrate how criteria were not met and that discrimination did not take place.

Whenever possible, one consolidated and agreed record of the panel's reasons for selecting or rejecting applicants will be kept on file.

4.7 Interviews

The candidates shortlisted for an interview will be sent confirmation in writing by email/post and given adequate notice of the date of interview. The invitation will include:

- date, time and place of the interview
- format of the interview and whether any tests/presentations will be involved and what equipment will be made available for the tests/presentations
- documents that candidates should bring with them e.g., proof of qualifications, identification

The appointment panel will meet prior to the interview to agree:

- who will chair the interview
- what questions will be asked, in what order and by whom. Questions will relate to criteria in the person specification. It is possible however for the panel to ask questions about the health of an applicant before an offer of employment is made where it is necessary to:
 - find out whether an applicant is able to participate in an assessment to test their suitability for the role
 - establish whether there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable an applicant to take part in the recruitment process
 - establish whether the applicant will be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned
 - establish that a person has a disability where this is an occupational requirement
 - establish whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to assist an individual during the recruitment process
- the areas which need to be explored with each applicant based on the information provided in their application
- which other selection technique(s) will be used to assess experience and competencies identified e.g., presentation, test, mock class observation
- the timeframe for making a decision
- the arrangements for notifying the candidates of the outcome of the interview

- who will offer feedback if a candidate requests it and how it will be given

On the day of the interview it is recommended that the appointment panel meets in advance to finalise the arrangements for interviews, which may include considering:

- the layout of the room
- arrangements for escorting applicants to and from the interview room
- ensuring arrangements are in place if the applicant is to undertake a presentation/test e.g., appropriate equipment is available and set-up appropriately
- ensuring arrangements are in place for any documents (Identification, qualifications etc.) to be checked and photocopied

At the interview the chair of the panel will:

- Welcome the applicant and introduce the panel
- Explain the format of the interview and its duration.
- Give a brief outline of the school and the job role

Following this, the panel will put their questions to the applicant. During the interview, in addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the post, the appointment panel will also explore:

- The candidate's attitude towards children and young people
- The candidate's motivation to work with children and young people
- The candidate's ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people
- The candidate's emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours and attitudes to the use of authority and maintaining discipline
- The candidate's ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Any gaps in the candidate's employment history with a view to gaining a complete picture of their past employment history
- Any concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate
- If they wish to declare anything in the light of the requirement for a DBS disclosure

Panel members will take notes to assist in making evidenced judgements and to assist with feedback for unsuccessful applicants.

Copies of all applications and any notes relating to shortlisting and interview decisions will be retained for **6 months**, unless in the event of a legal challenge from an unsuccessful applicant, these documents will not be destroyed until the case is resolved.

At the end of the interview the panel will:

- Give applicants the opportunity to ask any questions that they may have
- Explain what will happen next including the timing of the decision or next stage in the event that there is a second interview
- Thank candidates for attending the interview

When all applicants have been interviewed, the panel will discuss each applicant in relation to the person specification, the application form, and the interview performance and any selection test they may have undertaken.

The panel will be as objective and fair as possible in order to select the best candidate for the job and use the Trust's interviewing scoring system to determine a successful applicant.

4.8 Conditional offer of appointment

Whenever possible the Trust will make a verbal conditional offer to the successful applicant after the selection process. The offer of appointment will be confirmed in writing, which will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory professional references
- Verification of the candidate's identity
- If required, verification of the candidate's medical fitness
- Verification of qualifications
- A check of the Barred Lists and a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- For teaching posts verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7th May 1999)
- Verification that teachers selected are not subject to a prohibition order
- Verification that leaders and managers are not subject to a Section 128 restriction or prohibition
- Check of teaching status number
- Verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK
- Overseas checks for those who work outside the EEA
- Overseas checks for those who come from countries within the EEA

A record of the checks will be held centrally in the form of a Single Central Record of checks as required by the Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education guidance.

4.9 References

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.

Generally, references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or open references and testimonials, i.e., 'To Whom it May Concern' will not be accepted.

All requests for references will seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion. A copy of the job description and person specification for the post will also be included with all reference requests.

References covering all posts held within the past 3 years will be requested. The Equality Act 2010 prevents employers from asking job applicants health related questions, unless it is for the specified reasons stated under the Act, before an offer of employment is made.

References will seek to establish the applicant's attendance record which includes periods of sickness absence. Where the references have been obtained and are available at the time of the interview, the interview panel will not be able to explore with the applicant the reasons for the amount of time off work due to sickness absence disclosed, before an offer of employment has been made. This will help the Trust to avoid discrimination on health grounds.

On receipt, references will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. Any areas giving concern will be explored with either the referee or the applicant. If any question has not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee will be contacted to seek clarification. The referee's responses will be recorded and, if necessary, discussed with the applicant. The information given in the reference will also be compared with the application form to ensure consistency with the information provided by the applicant on the form and to ensure that references are obtained relating to all posts held in the past 3 years. Any discrepancy in the information will be taken up with the applicant.

References for School Leaders or Teacher may request information on whether the candidate has been subject to capability procedures in the previous two years in line with guidance in the Governors Handbook May 2014.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case and advice will be sought from the Head of Business Services.

4.10 DBS

The Trust has a duty to ensure that all employees and volunteers recruited to work with vulnerable groups including children in a Regulated Activity are not “barred”. Such posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. The Trust will check the status of successful candidates against the relevant barred list(s) held by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) by conducting an Enhanced DBS check with children’s and/or adults’ barred list check. Where checks reveal that a candidate is ‘barred’ the individual will not be offered employment with the Trust.

It is a criminal offence for a barred individual to seek or undertake work in regulated activity.

If a DBS disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed in the course of the selection process, advice will be sought from the Head of Business Services/DBS Disclosure provider.

If the disclosure conviction information supplied is different from the information supplied by the candidate on their original job application they will be asked for an explanation. (It may be that the candidate may have forgotten or incorrectly remembered information on convictions they have because they occurred a long time ago or the applicant was young when the offences occurred).

If a judgement is reached that the applicant deliberately falsified the information supplied on the job application, this can be taken into account when considering whether the job offer will be withdrawn.

Where:

- The candidate is found to be on the Barred Lists or the DBS Disclosure shows they have been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or
- An applicant has provided false information in, or in support of their application; or
- There are serious concerns about an applicant’s suitability to work with children

the facts will be reported to the police and DfE Children’s Safeguarding Operations Unit.

4. 11 Prohibited Order

Teachers selected for appointment will be checked against the prohibited list to ensure they are compatible to teach. Offer of employment will be withdrawn if the teacher appears on the list

4.12 Section 128 directive

Any Teachers applying for leadership or management positions will be required to be checked against a prohibited list to ensure they are compatible to be a leader and/or manager within a school setting.

4.13 Overseas Checks

Applicants coming from overseas will be required to complete checks to confirm:

- a. their right to work in the UK
- b. Overseas checks for suitability to work with children for those coming from outside the EEA

- c. Overseas checks for suitability to work with children for those coming to the UK from countries within the EEA

4.14 Unsuccessful candidates

Applicants who have been unsuccessful will be informed of the decision promptly and courteously by a member from the interview panel. Factual and objective feedback will be given to the unsuccessful applicants, which focuses both on the candidate's strengths and development needs.

5. INDUCTION

New staff and existing staff moving to a new role within the Trust will:

- receive information about the Trust's policies and procedures
- receive support that is appropriate for the role to which they have been appointed
- be informed of the conduct expected of staff within the Trust
- have an opportunity to discuss any issues or concerns about their role and responsibilities

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the new member of staff, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned, the induction programme will include information about:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g., child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism, physical intervention or restraint, personal care, internet safety and any local child protection and safeguarding procedures including Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings
- safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and pupils in the establishment. All staff will have sight of Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings
- how and with whom any concerns about those issues will be raised
- other relevant personnel procedures e.g., disciplinary, grievance, capability and whistle-blowing

The induction will also include attendance at child protection training appropriate to the person's role.

6. SAFER CULTURE

The need for continued awareness of safeguarding issues is crucial. It is important that all staff in the school understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident about carrying them out.

It is also important that staff, pupils and parents feel confident that they can raise issues/concerns about the safety and welfare of children, and that they will be listened to and taken seriously.

This will be achieved by maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and protecting staff which is supported by:

- a clear written statement of the standards of behaviour and the boundaries of appropriate behaviour expected of staff and pupils that is understood and endorsed by all
- appropriate induction and training
- regular briefing and discussion of relevant issues
- provision of relevant material from the framework for PSHE in the curriculum
- a clear reporting system if a pupil, member of staff or other person has concerns about the safety of children

7. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD

The Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education guidance states that schools must keep and maintain a Single Central Record of any recruitment and vetting checks which have been undertaken.

In addition, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Border & Immigration Agency in February 2008 'Prevention of Illegal Working' all documents will be photocopied and retained whilst the person is employed at the school and for a further two years after he/she has left employment with the school.

The Trust will also conduct checks and hold records on the governing body, supply staff, contractors, volunteers and any other persons who will be involved in 'regulated activity' with pupils.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- verification of identity (preferably from photo ID and proof of address)
- DBS certificate
- medical assessment if appropriate
- asylum and immigration checks
- verification of professional qualifications
- prohibition/restriction checks

8. REVIEWING AND MONITORING

A general review of the policy will take place every year.