



Gosfield School

Safer Recruitment Policy

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Gosfield School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The school takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils and its compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) (KCSIE)*, and any advice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The School is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Safer Recruitment Policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the School based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to:

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

It is the responsibility of the Principal 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
- Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure

The Governing Body has delegated responsibility to the Principal to lead in all appointments. School Governors may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with the Principal.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Regulated activity for children is unsupervised activities on a frequent basis, for example, teaching, training, care or supervision, advice or guidance on wellbeing or driving a vehicle with children as passengers.

Frequent is once a week or more on an ongoing basis or four or more times in a single month or overnight.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will appear on all documentation, including the School's website and clarify that DBS and other vetting checks will be completed.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

Application Forms

Gosfield School uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role. In addition, all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history, which will be scrutinised and addressed at interview if selected.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. CVs alone will not be accepted.

All applicants will be made 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 (e.g. Teaching Regulation Authority).

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

When a person specification is produced, it details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The selection process will scrutinise the suitability of the applicant against the job description and person specification.

Shortlisting

At least two people will be involved in all shortlisting of applicants and will judge them against standard criteria. Online searches will be conducted by the shortlisting panel for all applicants invited, prior to interview. Any concerns raised will be investigated as part of the interview process.

References

References for short-listed applicants will be requested immediately after short-listing, before interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. If for any reason, the candidate requests that this does not happen until an offer is made, referees will be contacted immediately and references checked against the application form and verified as acceptable by contacting the referee by telephone. If the reference flags concerns, this will be discussed with the candidate and it is at the school's discretion if we continue with the recruitment of the candidate. The offer letter **will** state that the 'offer is subject to 2 satisfactory references and receipt of all relevant paperwork.' Two references must be provided before any member of staff can start working with us and as a minimum, should make us aware of any reason or have any concern that the applicant may be not suitable to work with children. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up.

Direct contact by telephone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference. KCSIE does not specify a number of references but implies that there will be more than one. For inspection purposes, the usual expectation is, therefore, that for suitability purposes there will be a minimum of two 'unless there is a good reason not to.' If it is not possible to obtain 2 full references as per the School's standard form, (i.e. only giving dates of when the candidate was employed and no further information, Inspectors may recognise that these do confirm an element of the candidate's employment history and their whereabouts for a period, although such references should be supplemented by one or more others to address the suitability questions. The school should continue to contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided.

All references will ask referees to respond to specific safeguarding questions. References will be scrutinised against information given on application form. The School will note issues of concern to be followed up at interview or with referee.

The School does not accept open references (i.e. to whom it may concern), testimonials or references from relatives.

Any reference from the candidate's current employer must be completed by a senior person with appropriate authority, this is now obligatory.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. They will have met beforehand to discuss the questions and interview criteria. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with the relevant Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process. At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address, qualifications and right to work in the UK. Teachers will also be required to prove QTS. Only original documents will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Any issues will be noted and shared with interview panel for clarification. Any lack of documents will be queried and the panel will agree whether to interview or not.

The interview will check the suitability of the applicant to work with children, explore safeguarding/child protection understanding and there will be a record made of questions and answers.

Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed six months after the end of the recruitment process.

OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS Certificate, prohibition checks, disqualification from childcare checks, overseas checks (where applicable), 2 x satisfactory references, medical checks, copies of qualifications and proof of identity. No member of staff can start without all documents in place, unless a risk assessment has been completed and authorised, pending receipt of enhanced DBS certificate. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the relevant Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files. The Principal will check and countersign all teaching staff files and the Head of Operations will check and countersign all support staff files before they start in post.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to children. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' **must be** declared when applying for **any** position at Gosfield School.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate

All staff at Gosfield School require an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate is obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

A Children's Barred List/List 99 check is obtained as part of an enhanced criminal record check via the DBS. Should a DBS application be delayed, a barred list check should be carried out if a risk assessment is to be put in place.

Pre-existing enhanced DBS checks for members of staff whose previous employment was in a school within three months of joining Gosfield School will be accepted, but a separate barred list check will be carried out before they start employment.

Any employee that takes leave for more than three months (e.g. career break etc) must be re-checked before they return to work.

Members of staff at Gosfield School are aware of their obligation to inform the Principal of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

Portability of DBS Certificates Checks

New staff and existing staff requiring DBS renewal checks, will be asked to join the update service, with fee payment reimbursed by the School.

Copies of DBS Checks

The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees/applicants should bring their certificate to the Principal (for employees within 7 days of issue or applicants before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity). Copies of the DBS header, showing certificate number, will be made and retained on the employee file for 6 months.

Risk Assessment for staff awaiting DBS check

In rare circumstances it is possible that a member of staff will not have had their DBS check processed by the time they are due to commence employment. In such circumstances it will normally be the case that the member of staff will not be able to work with children at School. However, where this is not the case it will be possible for the Principal to use his discretion following a risk assessment, which must be completed as per Appendix A. Where this is the case **a cleared barred list check must be obtained**. In all such cases the member of staff must be accompanied at all times by another member of staff who has undertaken full safeguarding training and is made aware of safer recruitment procedures. It will only be possible for this arrangement to be in place following satisfactory receipt of two references.

Dealing with convictions

The School operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence
- How long ago the offence occurred
- One-off or history of offences
- Changes in circumstances
- Decriminalisation and remorse

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Principal. A decision will be made following this meeting by the Principal.

Prohibition from Teaching

The School checks that anyone appointed to carry out teaching work, whether or not they have QTS status, is not subject to a prohibition from teaching order using Teacher Services.

Prohibition from Management

The School checks that anyone appointed to a management position, ie member of the SLT, Head of Department, member of staff with any other significant responsibility and Governors, is not prohibited from management via the DBS or via the Teaching Regulation Agency. This also applies to staff promoted internally.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the School will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to provide evidence of any academic or vocational qualification required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

Overseas checks

All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. The School, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, will, if applicable, sponsor all new foreign members of staff (see Certificate of Sponsorship section). We will check that such employees are not prohibited or restricted from working with children by another EU country. We will obtain a Police check/Certificate of Good Conduct for non EU countries.

For overseas trained teachers, we will require confirmation that NARIC has agreed equivalence of qualification with UK standards. EEA checks will be made on all teachers who have trained or worked in the European Economic Area. In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a police check from the relevant country.

Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS)

If an appointed applicant is a national of a non-EEA country, a CoS may be required. Before any offer of employment is made, the Principal should be consulted to establish whether the School has any unallocated Sponsorship Certificates.

Criteria for issuing a CoS are:

- The job is in a "designated shortage" occupation, or
- It passes the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT)
- The job is at NQF6 Level or above
- Minimum salary levels are met

In addition to the CoS the applicant must apply for entry clearance/leave to remain through the UK Visas and Immigration and provide personal evidence of competence in English and ongoing maintenance.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the School policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy, and make clear the expectations and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities. They are also given a copy

of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2020) and are expected to read and understand at least Part 1, including Annex A.

Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in School and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfE requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Executive Assistant to the Principal. The Single Centralised Register contains details of the following:

- All employees who are employed to work at the School
- All employees who are employed as supply staff to the School whether employed directly or through an agency
- All others who have been chosen by the School to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, Governors, peripatetic staff and people brought into the School to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, eg sports coaches etc

The designated Link Governor for Safeguarding is responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting his/her findings to the full Governing Body annually. The school currently have monthly meetings with the Link Governor for Safeguarding and the Executive Assistant to the Principal and notes are taken at these meetings and share with the Principal and Chair of Governors.

Record Retention / Data Protection

Gosfield School will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie shredded). The 6-month retention period is in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") and other related legislation and will also allow the School to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal.

All information retained on employees is kept in a locked and secure cabinet. This will be retained until termination of employment plus 6 years. Evidence of Right to work in UK will be kept until termination of employment plus not less than two years. Copies of DBS Certificates must not be kept for longer than 6 months. Copies of other evidence may be kept on file until termination of employment plus 6 years.

Ongoing Employment

Gosfield School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The School will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the professional development review/appraisal procedure.

Leaving Employment at Gosfield School

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee and these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (ie physical, sexual, emotional and neglect) the School's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, Gosfield School will inform the DfE and the relevant Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances why the employee is leaving Gosfield School's employment.

Visiting Speakers

The School frequently makes use of external speakers covering both academic and wider curriculum topics. These specialists are sourced from appropriate organisations, have been observed at national conferences or have been invited following recommendations from staff contacts at other schools or organisations. The Designated Safeguarding Lead keeps a log of all visiting speakers and, in addition to the knowledge of the staff who have sourced them, will research the visiting speaker on the internet to gain further comfort to their suitability. All staff are regularly reminded of the protocols associated with the signing in and supervision of visiting speakers. These protocols are detailed in the Visiting Speaker Policy, available to all staff.

Extra-Curricular Coaches and Teachers

It is the School's Policy to treat anybody in regulated activity as a member of Gosfield School staff for compliance purposes. Therefore, all relevant paperwork must be in place before they start working with us and our students. The ISI Commentary states that self-employed contractors should generally be checked by their professional associations. This is because it is not possible for self-employed people to obtain checks directly on their own account (except at the basic level), but professional associations usually assist with checks to enable their members to access work. If it cannot be confirmed in writing that the person has been checked by another organisation, the school should consider obtaining the DBS check itself.

Schools have discretion to make a reasonable decision about when to treat a self-employed worker as staff rather than as a contractor for the purpose of vetting checks. The expectation is that if the person is in regulated activity in the school they should normally be treated as 'staff'. For workers in this grey area, inspectors should respect the DfE policy intention to allow discretion to professionals in school and probe, if necessary, whether the school has made a reasonable decision in context. A contemporaneous note of risk-assessed decision (e.g. a brief note on the SCR) can be helpful evidence of a reasonable approach, though not in itself a regulatory requirement.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the School.

Signed  Date 04/09/23
Principal

Date of next review September 2025

APPENDIX A

GOSFIELD SCHOOL

Pre-Employment Disclosure Risk Assessment Form

Please ensure that all details recorded on this form are accurate and that the form is signed.

This form **MUST** be completed by the Principal where newly recruited staff or volunteers, who require Disclosure & Barring Service clearance, commence their duties before DBS clearance is received (*)

* Scanned or email copies will only be accepted if they have been signed by both parties.

Name of Candidate:		Post Title:			
EYFS or KS:		Workplace:	Gosfield School	Start Date Proposed:	

Please describe the nature of the work and the general duties of the job role? (Please also include amount of contact with vulnerable parties, frequency of contact and intensity of contact).
Please describe below the arrangements in place for supervision whilst waiting for DBS clearance. (supervision is required & if this cannot be accommodated, the start date must be delayed until DBS clearance has been received).
Will the position involve working with:-

Children	Children and Adults	Adults
<p align="center">Have 2 satisfactory references been received? <i>(2 satisfactory references must be received in order for a DBS risk assessment to be considered)</i></p>		
<p align="center">Has the individual submitted a completed DBS Application Form with relevant identification? <i>(This is a requirement in order for the DBS risk assessment to be considered)</i></p>		
<p align="center">Has a Barred List check been carried out prior to this Risk Assessment being signed by the Principal? YES/NO</p>		
<p align="center">What additional safeguard arrangements will be put in place (if any) whilst waiting for DBS clearance to be received?</p>		
<p align="center">Has the individual declared any convictions/cautions/reprimands/warnings? Circle Yes or No. <i>(Please note that the DBS Disclosure will record all spent and unspent information regardless of how long ago they occurred)</i></p>		
Yes	No	
<p align="center">If so, are the offences relevant to the post and the proposed contact with the vulnerable parties?</p> <p align="center">Is there a pattern of convictions?</p> <p align="center">How long ago did the offences occur?</p>		

Have the individual's circumstances changed? (If so, please explain)

Following the Risk Assessment, is this individual suitable to commence employment? (Overall assessment and comment required – Low/Med/High Risk)

Risk Assessment conducted: _____ Signature

(Appointing SLT/Officer/Principal):

Date: _____

Signed New Appointee: _____ Date: _____

