



# Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy

*Information for Parents: This policy is available on request.*

The Ursuline Preparatory School does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

This policy is applicable to all persons appointed to work with our pupils including those in the EYFS.

## **Introduction**

Ursuline Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

We are committed to using disciplinary procedures that deal effectively with adults who fail to comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures and practices, including referring any allegation of abuse against an adult working with children to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of the allegation being made.

A referral will be made if an adult has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

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

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people

- Ensure staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the post.
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people

The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024) and the school's Single Equality Scheme.

We will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, in line with our Single Equality Scheme.

We will comply with the requirements of DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education. (September 2024).

## **1. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Trustees of the school will:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department for Education guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them
- Ensure that appropriate staff and governors have completed safer recruitment training

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly monitored, reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
- ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in the school
- monitor any contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process

## **2. Delegation of Appointments and Constitution of Selection Panel**

The Trustees delegate the power to offer employment for all posts to the Headteacher. The Headteacher may not delegate the power to offer employment to any other Senior Manager or Trustee. The Headteacher will involve at least one Trustee who has qualified under safer recruitment, in the appointment of all qualified teachers and other posts, wherever possible. Trustees will always be involved in the appointment of senior staff.

Selection panels will comprise a minimum of two people. In accordance with the statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

## **3. Advertising**

All vacant posts will be advertised to ensure quality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before an external advertisement is placed. Any internal recruitment process will follow the procedures set out in this policy.

All advertisements for posts, paid or unpaid, will include the following statements:

“Ursuline Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment”

“The successful candidate will have to meet the requirements of the person specification and will be subject to pre-employment checks, including an enhanced DBS check together with satisfactory references”.

#### **4. Information for Applicants**

All applicants will be provided with:

- A Job Description, outlining the duties of the post, and a Person Specification
- An Application Form (cv's will not be accepted)
- A description of the school, relevant to the vacant post
- Reference to the Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy, DBS and other pre-employment requirements
- An outline of terms of employment including salary and date and time of employment (where applicable)
- The closing date for the receipt of applications

Prospective applicants must complete, in full, and return a signed application form. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed forms has passed.

Candidates submitting an application form completed online will be asked to sign a copy of the form if invited to interview.

#### **5. Short Listing and Reference Requests**

The selection panel will shortlist applicants against the Person Specification for the post. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants.

Our Bursar will obtain two references, one of which must be from the candidate's current/most recent employer (and one not more than 6 years previously), will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the selection process.

References will be sought directly from the referee, and where necessary, s/he will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges. The referee will be contacted by telephone when references are received to verify the written reference was sent by themselves.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

The school will make telephone contact with any referee to verify the details of the written references provided

If a candidate for a post working with children is not currently employed in a post working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment (not one more than six years previously) in which the candidate has worked with children to confirm details of the candidate's employment and his/her reasons for leaving.

Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm, in writing:

- The referee's relationship to the candidate
- Details of the candidate's current post and salary
- The candidate's attendance record
- The candidate's performance history and conduct
- Any disciplinary action involving the safety and welfare of the children, including any in which the sanction has expired
- Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of the children
- Whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people (if so, the school will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children)
- The candidate's suitability for the post

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

References are the "property" of the selection panel and strict confidentiality will be observed. Employer testimonials i.e. those provided by the candidate and/or marked 'to whom it may concern' will not be accepted. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied. The selection panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the candidate, for any post. References will be verified and any discrepancies or areas

of potential concern will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

If the field of applicants is felt to be weak, the post may be re-advertised.

## **6. Interviews**

Before the interviews, the selection panel will agree on the interview format.

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. Interviews will always be face-to-face.

Candidates invited to interview will receive:

- A letter requesting photographic identification, qualification certificates/evidence and right to work in UK evidence, also details confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
- Details of the interview day including details of the panel members
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview
- The opportunity to visit the school prior to interview
- Be made aware that a full background search through social media will be taken.
- References should be obtained once candidate is shortlisted and prior to interview. However, If the candidate is unable to provide references prior to the interview. Then they **MUST** be produced at interview.

The questions asked will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirement of the Job Description and the Person Specification and each candidate will be assessed against all the criteria for the post.

The same areas of questioning will be covered for each applicant and no questions which would discriminate directly or indirectly on protected characteristics under the Equality Act will be asked.

The selection process for every post will include exploration of the candidate's understanding of safeguarding issues.

Candidates will always be required:

- To explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- To explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the selection panel
- To declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure
- To demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people

The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions, other than those protected, that the candidate has declared, and which are relevant to the prospective employment.

The recruitment documentation will be retained for six months from the date of interview. Under the Data Protection Act, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. After six months, all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

## **7. Pre-appointment checks**

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, our Headteacher, Bursar or School Secretary will:

- Verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available
- Obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the candidate will be engaging in regulated activity
- In the case of a late DBS it must be clear that the DBS has been applied for, all other checks including the Barred List have been received and are satisfactory. Additionally a risk assessment must be put in place and reviewed every two weeks. The member of staff must be supervised and have the knowledge that they will be supervised
- Check that a candidate to be employed as a Teacher is not subject to a Prohibition Order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online Service

- Use the Employer Access Online Service to check for any existing prohibitions and sanctions made by the GTCE before its abolition at the end of March 2012, and for information about any teacher qualifications held and whether induction has been passed
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities (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)
- Verify the candidate's right to work in the UK (if there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then we will follow advice on the GOV.UK website) No appointment will be offered at this stage if there is uncertainty
- Make any further checks that we consider appropriate, if the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Require the candidate to complete the school's Staff Suitability Declaration.

All checks will be:

- Documented and retained on the personnel file
- Recorded on the school's Single Central Record
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received

## **8. Offer of Employment by the Selection Panel**

The offer of employment by the selection panel and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties, subject to satisfactory completion of the pre-employment checks and satisfactory references. The successful candidate will be informed, normally by offer letter, that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks.

- Proof of identity – Birth certificate and photographic identity i.e. passport/driving licence
- Proof of right to work in the UK
- Overseas check
- EEA check
- Prohibition from Management Check
- Disqualification Check
- References Check



- Medical Fitness Check
- Proof of relevant academic qualifications
- Evidence of DBS clearance, Barred List (where applicable) and Teacher Prohibition checks
- Offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment

## **9. Start of Employment and Induction**

The pre-employment checks listed above must be completed before the employee starts work. Exceptions will only be made in circumstances where a risk assessment has been undertaken for a late DBS scrutiny. All other checks must be completed before the commencement of work.

All new employees will be provided with an induction programme which will cover all relevant matters of school policy including safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, child protection procedures, whistle blowing and guidance on safe working practises. The induction process will be facilitated by Mrs. Parker Litjens (1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Head – Pastoral), and either Mrs. Mongelard (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Mrs. Thomas (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead).

## **10. Adults working with children who are not employed directly by the school**

### Supply Staff

We will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed. We will carry out identity checks when the supply staff member arrives at school. We must also see a copy of the supply staff's DBS on their arrival.

### Volunteers

We carry out DBS and barred list checks and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post (as above) and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees. References are taken up, as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips/PTA events) are supervised, in accordance with legislation.

### Students on placement

When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, NVQ etc.), references and completion of an application form will not be required. However, we will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with barred list check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at school. We will also require students to complete the Staff Suitability Declaration if they are working with the EYFS.

### Students on work experience

Students on work experience will always be supervised.

### Contractors

We ensure that contractors, or any employee of the contractor, working at the school have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required.

Contractors and contractors' employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children.

If a contractor working at the school is self-employed and will be in regulated activity, we will obtain a DBS check, together with all normal checks as per normal members of staff, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

We will check the prohibition from teaching. These are now done online through Teachers Services.

**This policy will be monitored via scrutiny of all appointment and recruitment records and will be reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance.**