



**The Phoenix School**

Cambridge

## **THE PHOENIX SCHOOL CAMBRIDGE**

### **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. The Phoenix 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.

In line with recent legislation including the Children 2004, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DfES/04217/2006, The Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2009 (Standards 4, 4A, 4B, 4C) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the school takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, the School is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to 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, qualifications, 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.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

These policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at The Phoenix School.

## **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 DCSF guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the School's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Head and other staff 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.
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility to the Head to lead in all appointments. School governors may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with the Head in conjunction with the Chair of Governors.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

### **Advertising**

To ensure quality 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.

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

### **Application**

The Phoenix School uses CVs as its method of application and requires applicants to give information 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).

The applicant will be asked to make a declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and it will be made clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

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.: General Teaching Council for England).

### **References**

References for short listed applicants will be sent for immediately after short listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two professional character references must be provided. 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 phone or face-to-face will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The school does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

## **Interviews**

There will be a face-to-face interview whenever possible, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. 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 NCSL 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 and qualifications. Only original documents will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. The unsuccessful applicant's documents will be destroyed following the end of the recruitment programme.

## **OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS**

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks, copies of qualification and proof of identity. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the NCSL Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files. The Head will contact the successful applicant to confirm that all paperwork has been received and a start date can be agreed.

### **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 pupils. Therefore any convictions and cautions, that would normally be considered 'SPENT', must be declared when applying for any position at The Phoenix.

- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formally known as CRB Disclosure).

All staff at The Phoenix requires an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

It is the School's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates where it is felt necessary and in addition any employee that takes leave for more than three months (i.e. maternity leave, career break etc.) must be re-checked before they return to work.

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

### **Portability of DBS Certificates Checks**

The DBS Code of Practice, the Independent Boarding School Association and OFSTED does not facilitate portability of DBS Certificate checks unless the applicant has registered to the DBS Update Service. For clarity, portability refers to the re-use of a DBS Certificate obtained for a position in one organisation and later used for another position in another organisation. The Phoenix School is committed to adhering to these Codes of Practice and does not accept DBS Certificates carried out by another organisation unless they are registered with the DBS Update Service.

### **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 Headteacher. A decision will be made following this meeting.

### **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 the 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 demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally 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 sponsor all new foreign members of staff.

### **Induction Programme**

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the School policies and procedures, including the Child Protection Policy and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

### **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 School. The Centralised Register will contain 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 e.g. sports coaches etc.

### **Record Retention/ Data Protection**

The Phoenix School will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The 6 month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 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.

## **ONGOING AND LEAVING EMPLOYMENT**

### **Ongoing Employment**

The Phoenix 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 Annual Review/appraisal procedure.

### **Leaving Employment at The Phoenix 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 (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (ie: physical, sexual and emotional and neglect) the School's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

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

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Head will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the school. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly Safer Recruitment Evaluation audit which will be presented to the Governing Body.

**This is a whole school policy which also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage.  
This policy is submitted to Governors for approval.**

**Signed on behalf of the Governors:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping strokes.

**Policy Adopted: September 2015**

**Reviewed: September 2016**

**Date of next review: September 2017**