



PRIORY SCHOOL

EDGBASTON

SAFE RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND DISCLOSURE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Mission Statement

Priory School is a thriving Independent Catholic school which welcomes those of all faiths and none.

We love, live and learn joyfully as children of God.

In partnership with parents or guardians, we provide a caring community with high standards of teaching and learning, enabling all pupils to achieve success.

Approved by Risk & Compliance Committee 19 January 2018

1. The governors and staff of Priory School are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional or cultural needs.
2. The staff, governors and pupils are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff.
3. To meet the needs of our school community all our policies, including this one, can be made available in different formats such as different font sizes or styles, colour or alternative languages.
4. The governing body understands that it has responsibility for ensuring the effective oversight of this policy and will assess, evaluate and review as necessary.

The Headmaster oversees all staff appointments at Priory School and will interview all staff, including volunteers prior to appointment. The Headmaster has received training in safer recruitment.

1. Introduction

Priory School is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The School is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The School recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The aims of the School's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department for Education (DFE) in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

2. Recruitment & Selection Procedure

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an **application form** containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms are not acceptable. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

Applicants will receive a job description/person specification for the role applied for.

Once the closing date has been reached and the applications have been received, each member of the interview panel will receive a copy for the shortlisting process. This will usually involve the panel members meeting to determine those best qualified and experienced for the role with particular reference to the job description/person specification.

The shortlisted applicants will then be invited to attend a **formal interview** at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. The interview panel usually consists of the Head and relevant Deputy and/or Assistant Head or, in the case of a position in the Facilities, Finance or Administration sections, the relevant Manager. The structure of the interview usually follows set questions, which are allocated to designated members of the interview panel. This ensures that each candidate is treated equally.

During the interview the applicant will be asked relevant questions to verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.

In addition to the formal interview, applicants for a teaching post will usually be asked to teach a lesson, which is observed by a specialist who reports the findings of their observation to the interviewing panel. For other roles, such as that of Receptionist, ICT Manager or Finance Manager a specific task is set or a presentation may be requested. At the end of the interview process, the panel assembles and discusses each candidate interviewed to determine the best fit for the role.

If it is decided to make an **offer of employment** following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- the receipt of two satisfactory references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers satisfactory.

If the candidate has previously **worked with children**, one of the referees must be their employer from **that position**.

A personal character referee cannot be someone who is a relative or solely a friend;

- a Prohibition check;
- the receipt of a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service with which the School is satisfied.

If the offer is accepted and the above conditions are satisfied, the applicant will be issued with a **contract of employment** as confirmation of employment.

3. **Pre-employment Checks**

In accordance with the recommendations of the DFE in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" the School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

3.1 **Verification of Identity and Address**

All applicants who are invited to an Interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, address and qualifications:-

- passport/National Identity Card and full birth certificate or marriage certificate and current driving licence (including photograph)
- two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address; and
- documentation confirming their National Insurance Number (P45, P60 or National Insurance Card); and
- documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

3.2 **Barred List Check for All Staff and Regular Volunteers**

For all staff, Governors and regular volunteers, such as the officials of the Friends of Priory School (Parents Association), a Barred List check is carried out as part of the DBS application process prior to the person taking up their position.

No employee, Governor or regular volunteer will take up their position at Priory School until a valid DBS has been presented to the Head. The DBS will be applied for by Priory School unless evidence of a portable DBS that will be checked has been presented. In this way, since the DBS for schools **includes** the barred list check this will mean that **all** employees and Governors have the barred list check before taking up their position or appointment.

In the case of supply staff, the valid DBS and photo ID is checked by either the Deputy Head of Prep or the Deputy Head (Academic) of Senior School or, in their absence, the Assistant Head of Prep or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) of Senior School according to the placement

of the supply teacher. Details are kept within a file in the relevant Deputy Head's office and are recorded on the Single Central Register.

3.3 Prohibition Check for Teaching Staff

For all teaching staff a prohibition check is carried out prior to the offer of the position via the Department of Education website: Teacher Status Checks: Information for Employers: Detailed Guidance – Gov.UK. Prohibition from Management checks are also carried out where necessary.

3.4 Health Questionnaire

A comprehensive health questionnaire must be completed, which includes questions regarding their physical and mental health.

3.5 References

References will be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will be normally be sent a copy of the job description/person specification for the role which the applicant has applied for.

If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:-

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.

The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

The School will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed. The School will always seek information about previous employment and get satisfactory explanations for any gaps in employment. The reason for leaving previous employment should be ascertained.

3.5 Criminal Records Check

Due to the nature of the work, the School applies for criminal record certificates from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members, governors and volunteers.

There are two types of check that may be requested from the DBS depending on the nature of the position:

- **Standard disclosure** - for positions that involve regular contact with those aged under 18 years or people of all ages who may be vulnerable for other reasons and for occupations that involve positions of trust.
- **Enhanced disclosure** - for posts involving greater contact with children or vulnerable adults, including regularly caring for, training, teaching, supervising or being in sole charge of such people.

A standard disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record including current and spent convictions (including those which are defined as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. If the individual is applying for a position working with children or young adults, the standard disclosure will also reveal whether he/she is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DFE and the Department of Health.

An enhanced disclosure will contain the same details as a standard disclosure. It may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

The current policy of the school is to apply for an enhanced disclosure in all cases.

No employee, Governor or volunteer will take up their position at Priory School until a valid DBS has been presented to the Head. The DBS will be applied for by Priory School unless evidence of a portable DBS that will be checked has been presented. In this way, since the DBS for schools **includes** the barred list check this will mean that **all** employees and Governors have the barred list check before taking up their position or appointment.

In the case of supply staff, the valid DBS is checked by either the Deputy Head of Prep or Senior School or, in their absence, the Assistant Head of Prep or Senior School according to the placement of the supply teacher.

The School expects supply/temporary worker agencies/contractors that are used by the School to register with the DBS on their own account and to follow their policy or their own comparable policy. Proof of registration will be required before the School will commission services from any such organisation.

The school also obtains assurance that staff employed by other organisations who work with our pupils (e.g. ski instructors) have received appropriate child protection checks.

The School must ensure that it does not appoint someone to a post from which they have been barred.

3.6 Staff Disqualification Declaration

All employed staff and all Governors are required to sign a 'Disqualification Declaration' in accordance with the Department of Education (DfE)'s statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE).

3.7 Right to Work in the UK

The job application form specifically asks whether the applicant requires a permit to work in the UK. A candidate's right to work in the UK is further determined when the proof of identity documents are checked. The presence of an EU passport or National Insurance Number, for example, clearly indicates the right to work in the UK. In the absence of an EU passport a work permit would be requested. If there is any uncertainty regarding the evidence provided then the advice on the GOV.UK website will be followed.

3.8 Awaiting DBS Clearance

No employee, Governor or volunteer will take up their position at Priory School until a valid DBS has been presented to the Head. The DBS will be applied for by Priory School unless evidence of a portable DBS that will be checked has been presented. In this way, since the DBS for

schools **includes** the barred list check this will mean that **all** employees and Governors have the barred list check before taking up their position or appointment.

4. Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

4.1 Background

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar him/her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in paragraph 4.2 below.

In view of the fact that all positions within the School will amount to "regulated positions" within the meaning of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000), all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DfE and the Department of Health of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. If:

- the School receives an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children; it will report the matter to the Police, DBS and/or the National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL).

The reasons such an order would be considered are: “unacceptable professional conduct”, “conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute” or a “conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence”.

4.2 Assessment Criteria

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:-

- against adults: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence;
- against children or adults: serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

4.3 Assessment Procedure

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out

above. The assessment form must be signed by the Headmaster of the School before a position is offered.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/she can do so by contacting the DBS direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the School will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

4.4 Retention and Security of Disclosure Information

The School's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information.

In particular, the School will:-

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the School's senior management team and designated administrative staff.

The School complies with the provisions of the DBS code of practice, a copy of which is available on request.

5. Retention of Records

If an applicant is appointed, the School will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after one year unless the applicant specifically requests the School to keep their details on file.

6. Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter they should contact the Head or the appropriate Deputy Head.

Child Protection

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Dismissal on the Ground of Misconduct

The document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018' gives detailed advice.

The extract that follows makes the responsibilities of the employer very clear in cases of child protection.

Schools and colleges have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult; where the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual; where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals should be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual. Guidance on referrals can be found on GOV.UK.

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services....., the school will decide to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of inclusion on the barred lists is required; and in the case of a member of teaching staff whether to refer the matter to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy

Monitoring and Review

This policy is constantly being reviewed to take account of educational initiatives and respond to the future priorities of the school.

This policy will be monitored by the Head and reviewed annually by the Head.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Council and signed off by the Chair of the Governing Council

Reviewed and Revised by JC December 2016

Reviewed by JC November 2018