

Barnwell School

Safer Recruitment Policy



Achieving Excellence Together

Reviewed – September 24

To be reviewed – September 2025

SAFER RECRUITMENT

1. Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in education. Barnwell School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the pupils in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

2. Scope and Objectives

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

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies based on their merit, abilities and suitability
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- to ensure that all applicants are considered equally and consistently.
- to ensure that no applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds and specifically any protected characteristics as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Services (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.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Governing Body

- to ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of staff and volunteers in accordance with the DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- to monitor compliance with the above policies.

3.2 Headteacher/Senior Team/Recruiting Managers

- to ensure the school operates safe recruitment practices and makes sure appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers.
- to monitor contractors and agencies compliance with this document
- to promote the safeguarding of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process.

4. Safer Recruitment Implications during Covid 19

The DfE published interim guidance relating to Safeguarding for schools to adopt during any full or partial school closures due to the Covid 19 crisis, which this school will follow.

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. The school shall continue to use its judgement on whether recruitment is needed and how this can best be done given the circumstances. If the school is recruiting new staff or volunteers, it will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes as outlined in this policy and in Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In response to the crisis, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its [guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking](#) to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. The Home Office and Immigration Enforcement have also temporarily adjusted the [right to work checks](#) due to the coronavirus outbreak.

For the successful candidate, original copies must subsequently be shown as soon as reasonably possible and no later than the first day of employment.

5. Application Forms and Criminal Record Self Declaration forms for Shortlisted Candidates

All prospective applicants must fully complete an application form. CV's will not be accepted in isolation.

If shortlisted, candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration where they will be required to declare all unspent cautions and convictions; any adult cautions (simple or conditional) and spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2020).

The relevant self-declaration form is attached in Appendix 2.

6. References

A minimum of two references will be taken up and at least one of the references will be obtained from the candidate's current or most recent employer and will be sought directly from the referee.

The School will explore any discrepancy or gaps in employment identified through references during the interview where possible or, at least, before any offer of employment. This includes references for internal candidates.

If a candidate is moving from another school the reference must be from the Headteacher/Principal or another senior colleague (in the absence of a HT) and not from a colleague.

Open references or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted.

Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies and verify the source of the reference. This contact will then be recorded on the school's Single Central Record for successful candidates.

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

Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children.
- the candidate's suitability for this post.

Candidates are not automatically entitled to see their employment references.

7. Secretary of State Prohibition Orders and Section 128 direction (teaching and management roles)

In all cases, where an applicant is to undertake a teaching role of any kind (this may include non-teaching staff if they plan, prepare and deliver lessons and assess and report on pupils without supervision of a qualified teacher) a Prohibition Order check will be made. It is anticipated that this will be performed at the shortlisting stage but will in any case be made before any offer of employment is made.

The above activities do not amount to "teaching work" if they are supervised by a qualified teacher. If in any doubt or if the candidate has taught previously, or may teach in the future, the check will be undertaken.

Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting.

Prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA). Pending such consideration, the Secretary of State may issue an interim prohibition order if it is considered to be in the public interest to do so.

Section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. A person who is prohibited is unable to participate in any management of an independent school such as:

- a management position in an independent school, academy or free school as an employee
- a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body for an independent school
- or a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities.

A person prohibited under Section 128 is also disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a school as stated in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and the DfE [Governance Handbook](#).

Checks for all prohibitions, sanctions and restrictions will be carried out by logging into the Secure Access/DfE Sign in Portal via the Teacher Services' web page. This is a free service available to all schools and colleges.

Where the candidate person will be engaging in regulated activity, a DBS barred list check will also identify any Section 128 direction.

With effect from 1 January 2021, TRA checks will be for UK Citizens only and schools will therefore need to arrange for these checks to be carried out in the relevant country for overseas applicants (including those from the EEA).

8. Recruitment Panels

Subject to the availability of training and in accordance with KCSIE, the school ensures that at least one member of any interview panel has undertaken Safer Recruitment training and kept this training up to date.

Advertisements for posts, whether in newspapers, journals or online, will include the statement:

“The school is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.”

Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

- job description and person specification
- the school’s child protection policy
- the school’s safer recruitment policy (this document)
- the selection procedure for the post

9. Interviews

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post and may include a variety of methods. The school will conduct interviews in a face-to-face manner (which could be via remote methods using video conferencing software, such as Microsoft Teams or similar, if face to face is not practical). Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage.

Shortlisted candidates will be sent;

- Childcare Disqualification Declaration form (where applicable).
- Criminal Record Self-Declaration form (all)

Candidates will be required to:

- give a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment.
- provide a satisfactory explanation of any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters.
- declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS check (via the self-declaration form)
- provide a childcare disqualification declaration form if and when required.
- demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.
- demonstrate how they meet the job description and person specification.

- All applicants who are invited to interview will be asked to bring original evidence of their identity, address, right to work in the UK, relevant qualifications and a completed Criminal Convictions Self-Declaration form.

Photocopies will then be taken and destroyed for unsuccessful applicants no later than 6 months after the recruitment process has been concluded.

At least one member of the interview panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

10. Pre-Employment Checks

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including anyone who has lived or worked abroad, must be conditional on the satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks and the school will:

- verify the candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the [Gov.uk website](#).
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Children's Workforce DBS certificate including barred list information for those who will be working in regulated activity and an Enhanced Children's Workforce DBS (without the barred list check) for anyone who is working in the school but is not working in regulated activity (see Appendix 1)
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available. The school will also carry out a risk assessment if candidates will be starting work prior to a DBS certificate being available.
- ensure all shortlisted candidates have completed a Criminal Record self-declaration form disclosing any relevant convictions (see Appendix 2).
- 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 that they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role - see paragraph 10.2.
- verify the candidate's right to work in the UK. Advice on this can be found on the [Gov.uk website](#).

After 1 July 2021 candidates from an EEA Country, will be required to provide evidence of having obtained settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme. Candidates have until 30 June 2021 to register, so until then, their existing documents can be accepted (providing they have been living in the UK before December 2020).

From July 2021, any overseas external candidates must apply for a VISA via the [New Points Based Immigration Scheme](#).

- if the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school feel appropriate which would include an overseas police check (see paragraph 10.3 for further details)
- verify professional qualifications as appropriate by viewing original certificates. The Teacher Services system should be used to verify any award of qualified teacher status (QTS) and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

- ensure the candidate is checked against the prohibition from teaching orders – see paragraph 7 above.
- ensure the candidate is checked against the prohibition from management roles (Section 128) check where applicable (part of barred list check for those in regulated activity) - see paragraph 7 above.
- ensure the candidate completes a childcare disqualification declaration (where appropriate) – see paragraph 10.4.

10.1. Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK and Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status and Criminal Records Self Declaration Form

All shortlisted candidates 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 the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations (including evidence of settled status as required) and to complete the Criminal Records Declaration form. (See Appendix 2).

Good quality photocopies of all documents will be taken. These will then be signed and dated by the person who has evidenced the originals and the copy should state this;

“Originals seen and identity confirmed”.

- Successful Candidates: all documents will be stored securely on the employee file for audit and inspection purposes, including DBS certificates and any subsequent risk assessments.
- Unsuccessful Candidates: all documents will be kept securely for no longer than 6 months after the recruitment process has been concluded. After which they will be destroyed securely.

Please note that the legislation surrounding what information is disclosed in an Enhanced and Standard DBS certificate changed on 28 November 2020 and as a result, an employer may not receive full details of a candidate’s criminal history due to the changes to filtering.

However, in accordance with safeguarding, an employer is still legally entitled to ask shortlisted candidates to disclose their criminal history, however this no longer includes final warnings, cautions and reprimands. Further guidance on this can be found in the NACRO guidance [here](#).

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification required for the position and claimed in their application form.

10.2. Fitness to undertake the role

A confidential pre-employment health questionnaire must be completed to verify the candidate’s mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A successful candidate 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 **once an offer of employment has been made**. Confidential pre-

employment checks are usually carried out by the school's Occupational Health provider.

10.3. Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK

Candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in the school. In addition, the school must make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

The Home Office guidance on criminal records checks for overseas applicants can be found [here](#).

Further guidance on checks for overseas workers can be found on the gov.uk website.

Restrictions imposed by another EEA regulating authority do not prevent a candidate from taking up teaching positions in England, the school will consider the circumstances that led to the restriction or sanction being imposed when considering a candidate's suitability for employment.

10.4. Childcare Disqualification Declaration

Where relevant, (as detailed below), applicants must complete a Childcare Disqualification form provided by the school in relation to the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018. This is to cover circumstances where the individual has a conviction that may result in them being barred from working with children. Where a positive declaration is made a waiver can be applied for from Ofsted, and be satisfactorily granted, before the candidate may commence work.

This **only** applies to staff working in the following settings:

- Early Years Provision - staff who provide any care for a child up to and including reception age. This includes education in nursery and reception classes and/or any supervised activity (such as breakfast clubs, lunchtime supervision and after school care provided by the school) both during and outside of school hours for children in the early years age range; and
- Later years provision (for children under 8) - staff who are employed to work in childcare provided by the school outside of school hours for children who are above reception age but who have not attained the age of 8. This does not include education or supervised activity for children above reception age during school hours (including extended school hours for co-curricular learning activities, such as the school's choir or sports teams) but it does include before school settings, such as breakfast clubs, and after school provision.

11. Single Central Record

The school will keep a single central record of pre-employment, referred to in the Keeping Children Safe in Education Regulations as "the register". The single central record will cover the following people:

- all staff (including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff who work at the school)
- For independent schools, all members of the proprietor body
- For academies and free schools, this also covers the members and trustees of the academy trust.

- Confirmation that these checks have been carried out along with the date the check was undertaken/obtained must be logged on this record for all employees of the school.

12. Induction

Barnwell School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment but must be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The school will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff.

All staff who are new to the school will receive induction training that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices including Child Protection, PREVENT, FGM awareness and online safety.

Regular meetings will be held during the first 6 months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s).