



Recruitment Policy

This document applies to all parts of The Pilgrims' School,
including the Early Years Foundations Stage

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Introduction

The Pilgrims' School is committed to providing the best possible care and education for 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 for its entire staff. The school recognises that in order to achieve these aims it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain employees of the highest calibre, who share this commitment.

The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

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

- To ensure the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of merit, ability 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
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance, including the recommendations of the 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

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

Recruitment and selection procedure

All applicants will be required to complete the School's application form requiring information about academic and employment history and suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms may not be considered. **A CV will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.**

Applicants will also receive details explaining the application process, and a job description and person specification for the role, along with the School's Safeguarding Policy and this Recruitment Policy.

Checks will be made of previous employment history to ascertain satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment. These checks will then be checked against references and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate.

The School will consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on short listed candidates. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the School may want to explore with applicants at interview. This forms part of the School's wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working in a school environment.

The applicant may then be invited to attend an interview at which their skills will be discussed in more detail. In the case of teaching post applicants, they will be invited to teach a lesson, details of which will be given in advance.

All formal interviews will be conducted by at least two people, chaired by the Head/Director of Finance & Resources or another senior member of staff. It is recommended best practice that at least one person on the interview panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

Any offer of employment will be made in writing and accompanied by a draft contract, and will be conditional upon:

- Agreement to the starting date and the terms of the contract of employment
- The receipt of two satisfactory references (see below)
- The receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the school considers to be satisfactory
- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role. (The school is aware of its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and no job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments)
- Confirmation that the applicant is not barred from working with children
- The applicant being free under UK law to commence work in the school

The statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006" applies to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 AND to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

In accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, newly appointed staff may not begin work (or residence) at the school until satisfactory completion of all checks and receipt of references.

Pre-employment checks

In accordance with the recommendation of the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school carries out the following pre-employment checks in respect of prospective employees:

1) Verification of identity and address

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications:

- Current, valid passport or an official photographic ID; and
- Two utility bills or statements from different sources showing name and home address; and
- Documentation confirming their National Insurance Number; and
- Original documentation confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in the application form.

Where an applicant has changed their name by any mechanism (including marriage or deed poll)

original documentary evidence of the change will be required.

The date of birth is required in accordance with the DfE in Keeping Children Safe in Education to verify the identity and history of the applicant. The school does not discriminate against applicants on the grounds of age.

2) References

References will normally be taken up either prior to interview or prior to job offer.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory to the School. One of the references 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, if applicable.

Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

Both referees will be sent a reference form and the job description and person specification for the role for which the applicant has applied. The school will verify each reference received for applicants for all positions. Where references are received electronically, the School will ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

3) Criminal Records Check

The school will apply for criminal record certificates from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) or will confirm valid DBS Enhanced Disclosures are held by all the following:

- prospective staff members (including part-time and casual employees in all posts),
- governors,
- volunteers (except those in non-regulated positions),
- peripatetic music teachers and similar,
- occasional sports coaches and those involved in other activities,
- and any non-employed adults resident in the school,
- and any person taking part in a regulated activity with pupils.

For all the above an enhanced disclosure is requested from the DBS which contains details of all convictions on record (including some 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. An enhanced disclosure will also reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children by virtue of their inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children maintained by the Independent Safeguarding Authority. An enhanced disclosure may contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

In the case of persons with recent periods overseas, the equivalent of a disclosure will be sought from the relevant overseas authority.

The School expects supply, agency or contracted staff to register with the DBS on their own account, and suitable proof of registration and identity will be verified before they have access to pupils. A

Barred List check will also be conducted.

Prohibition from Teaching Orders That the applicant is not subject to a prohibition from teaching order issued by the Secretary of State.

Disqualification by Association It is no longer a requirement for staff to complete a written Staff Disqualification Declaration although applicants will be required to declare that there is no reason why they should not be working with children.

Prohibition from Management Check (also known as Section 128 Directions). Any proprietors appointed after 12 August 2015 are to be subject to a check under s.128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. This now also applies to Governors and SLT members.

Right to Work in the UK That the applicant is from the UK or is entitled to work in the UK or holds the necessary visas or work permits.

Professional Qualifications That the applicant holds the necessary qualifications, including Qualified Teacher Status, where appropriate.

DBS Update Service

Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must give consent to the school to check there have not been changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. A barred list check will still be required.

If disclosure is delayed

A short period of work is allowed under controlled conditions, at the Head's discretion. However, if an 'enhanced disclosure' is delayed, the Head may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- Without confirming the appointment;
- After a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person will be working in regulated activity and all other relevant checks (including any appropriate prohibition checks) having been completed satisfactorily;
- Provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;
- With appropriate safeguards taken (for example, loose supervision);
- Safeguards reviewed at least every two weeks by the Head/Director of Finance & Resources and member of staff;
- The person in question is informed what these safeguards are; and
- It is recommended, but is not a requirement, that a note is added to the single central register and evidence kept of the measures put in place.

Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders

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 bar them from employment within the school. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out 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, (but excluding any which are subject to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013)). 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 DBS 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 also unlawful for the School to knowingly employ someone who works in the relevant settings and is disqualified from providing childcare under the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

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 or;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children

it will report the matter to the Police and/or the DBS.

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;
- whether the conviction or caution is 'protected' as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020 (if yes, it will not be taken into account);
- 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:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, and
- 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 or similar within the last ten years.

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 Head before a position is offered.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they 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.

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. Therefore, the school does not retain either originals or photocopies of DBS certificates. However, successful applicants will be required to provide these documents for visual inspection prior to employment and/or if subsequently requested.

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

Retention of records

The School will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy. Copies of DBS certificates will not be retained for longer than 6 months.

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 six months of appointment of the successful applicant.