

St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School

Safer Recruitment Policy



St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School is a welcoming school where:

we pray together, care for each other, learn together - at all times serving with love and striving for excellence .

Rationale

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing the highest level of education and care for our pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children.

We recognise that the safe recruitment of our staff is essential in safeguarding the children in our care.

Safer practice in recruitment means considering and including issues relating to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process and for all adults or young people being recruited.

This policy is NOT a Recruitment and Selection Guide and deals only with safer recruitment.

Aims and Objectives

- to help identify, deter or reject any person unsuited to work with pupils through robust and appropriate selection and appointment procedures
- to ensure that the best staff are recruited on the basis of their suitability, merits and abilities as measured against the relevant job description and person specification
- to ensure that no applicant is discriminated against on any grounds as per the Equality Act 2010
- to ensure compliance with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance for schools and colleges in relation to safer recruitment in education
- to ensure compliance with current employment legislation

This guidance is used in conjunction with the advice and support of the Catholic Education Service and Archdiocesan documentation.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the **Headteacher, Business Manager** and all other staff involved in recruitment to:

- ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures
- ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work/apply to work in the school
- to monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this policy

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
- monitor the schools compliance with them

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Selection Panel

Any person with a personal or pecuniary interest in the appointment of an applicant must declare this as soon as they are aware of the application and remove themselves from any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision making.

At least one member of the selection panel will have been trained in Safer Recruitment (currently two governors have completed this training).

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Each job description and person specification will make reference to the post holder's responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The person specification will include specific reference to suitability to, and disqualification from, work with children.

Advertisements

Adverts for all posts will include the school's commitment to Safeguarding Children and reference the post's exemption from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act i.e:

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

This position is subject to appropriate vetting procedures including a criminal records check from the Disclosure and Barring Service which will require you to disclose details of all unspent and unfiltered spent reprimands, formal warnings, cautions and convictions in your application form.

Application Forms

All prospective applicants must complete, in full, the current CES application form relevant to the post.

Curricula Vitae or general letters of application will not be accepted

Application forms and supporting information will be scrutinised fully and explored with the applicant where necessary to resolve any discrepancies or anomalies, including breaks in employment.

As part of the application process (usually on the application form) applicants will be asked to complete a criminal records self-disclosure.

References

Professional and character references will include specific questions relating to the role applied for, a candidate's suitability to work with children, any substantiated allegations relating to children and/or any disciplinary action taken in relation to their work or contact with children as a result of which penalties or sanctions have either expired or remain in force.

References will also be used to confirm details provided by the applicant in the application form (such as the experience and qualifications claimed by the applicant).

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee – they will not be accepted directly from the applicant.

Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Open references or testimonials will not be accepted and only written references will be considered.

References will be sought on all shortlisted candidates, including internal, and where possible will be obtained before interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview. Where it is not possible to obtain references prior to interview because of delay on the part of the referee a reference will be received and scrutinised prior to confirmation of appointment.

In all instances where an applicant currently works in a school or educational setting, a reference will always be sought from the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors for Headteacher appointments) of that establishment.

If a candidate for a position is not currently employed in a school, but has been in their past, we will check with the school, college or local authority at which they were most recently employed, to confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving.

A minimum of two references will be received and scrutinised – one to be from the current or most recent employer and one to be a Faith reference from the parish priest of the parish in which the applicant resides, should the candidate be a practicing Catholic.

Information provided by the Headteacher for an internal candidate will be considered in the same way as a reference for an external candidate.

If a panel member knows something factual (i.e. that can be supported by evidence) about a potential candidate that other members may not know, the information will be shared so that the panel itself can decide its' relevance.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered carefully when assessing the applicant's suitability for the post (including information obtained from the NCTL Teacher Services checks)

Interviews

Interviews will be required for all shortlisted applicants and will always be conducted face to face. Telephone interviews may be used at the shortlisting stage but will not be a substitute for a face to face interview.

Candidates will always be required to:

- explain any gaps in employment
- explain any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the selection panel
- declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure

- demonstrate their attitudes, motives and values for working with children and young people, and their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people
- bring with them evidence of their identity (photographic), address and qualifications. Original documents only will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicants' documents will be destroyed.

Making the Offer of Appointment

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, is conditional upon satisfactory completion of the following pre-employment checks.

The Business Manager will:

- verify a candidate's identity, following the DBS identity checking guidelines <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checkingguidelines/id-checking-guidelines-for-dbs-check-applications>
- obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher, or to carry out "teaching" work, is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the NCTL The Teacher Services website.
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- conduct other checks related to the requirements of the role e.g. driving licence or valid insurance
- verify the person's right to work in the UK
- if a person has lived, or worked outside the UK make any further appropriate checks (see separate para below)
- verify professional qualifications, by requesting certificates of evidence as appropriate
- for staff who have worked in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 by requiring signature on declaration form (Appendix 1)

DBS Certificate

A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or, as soon as practicable, after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, we may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

Before using the Update Service we will:

- obtain consent from the applicant to do so
- confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity
- examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information.

Applications from Overseas Candidates

If an applicant has lived or worked overseas for a period of at least 3 months during the previous 5 years then further checks will be made to ensure that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. The Home Office has published guidance on criminal record checks for overseas applicants and can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

Agency and Third Party Staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency, or third party organisation, we use that the organisation has carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school that we would otherwise perform. This will include, as necessary, a barred list check, prior to appointing that individual. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Volunteers

We will prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised. Under no circumstances will we allow a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained to be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

In summary: for new volunteers in regulated activity who will regularly teach or look after children on an unsupervised basis or provide personal care on a one-off basis we will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check. For existing volunteers not in regulated activity there is no requirement to request an enhanced DBS check. However we may choose to request one if we judge it necessary but we cannot request a check of the barred list. If a volunteer is not engaging in regulated activity, we will undertake a risk assessment and use our professional judgment and experience when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check.

Governors

All Governors in maintained schools must now have an Enhanced DBS check. Any Governors who volunteer in our establishment will be treated on the same basis as other volunteers, that is, an Enhanced DBS check with a barred list check if they are to be engaged in regulated activity.

School needs to carry out a 'section 128' check to see whether a governor/prospective governor is banned from being involved in the management and governance of schools. If someone has been issued with a 'section 128 direction', they cannot serve on the Governing Body.

Foundation Governor applicants will now be required to have obtained their enhanced DBS certificate prior to submitting their application to the Diocesan Education Service for consideration. They will be required to present their DBS certificate to the Headteacher of the school, the School Business Manager or Clerk to the Governing Body.

Induction

All new employees are provided with an induction programme which includes detailed information and documentation relating to systems within the school, locally and nationally, that support the protection, safeguarding and welfare of our children.

These are listed in the school's safeguarding resources.

Single Central Record

A single centralised record is kept in accordance with the DfE requirements and the Liverpool Safeguarding Schools Handbook. This is overseen by the Business Manager and retained securely within school systems.

The Link safeguarding Governor is responsible for auditing the Single Central Record and reporting findings annually to the full Governing Body annually.

A Wider Culture of Vigilance

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School is committed to providing the highest level of education and care to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children. It is recognised that safer recruitment does not end at appointment. Our school is committed to creating a 'safer culture' and will ensure the following:

- that there are clear procedures in place to monitor, support and review new entrants to the organisation
- that there are clear procedures for reporting suspicions or concerns
- that any employee who reports a concern is supported in doing so
- that there is a clear commitment to taking appropriate action.