



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Originator	Reviewed by	Date of Review	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date	Website
School	R&A	May 2022	Board	23/5/2022	March 2024	Yes

"Excellence Every Day"

Our Mission

Our mission is to make sure that all our students, regardless of their circumstances, discover their personal best and thrive academically, individually and socially.

We are relentless in driving high expectations and make no apology for ensuring high standards across the school. We will continually ensure every student achieves excellent results, with high-quality teaching and a first-class curriculum, underpinned by outstanding cultural capital experiences and exceptional pastoral care.

Values

- Excellence**
 We strive for greatness in everything we set our minds to. We endeavour to do our very best and excel in all aspects of school life.
- Respect**
 We treat others in our diverse, inclusive community as we wish to be treated. We acknowledge individual differences yet join together in an uncompromising respect for each other.
- Responsibility**
 We understand that we own our actions. We work hard to understand our emotions and manage them effectively, whilst ensuring we put any mistakes right.
- Resilience**
 When we encounter challenges, we persevere and bounce back. We see setbacks as stepping stones to success and always give 100%.
- Ambition**
 Our ambition knows no limits. We will push ourselves to be the best version of ourselves to ensure success.

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1. Policy Statement

Employees are the school's most important resource. In serving the needs of its students, the school can only be as effective as the people it employs. The recruitment and selection processes are of paramount importance in order to recruit staff with the necessary skills and attributes to enable the school to fulfil its aims and objectives.

The intention of this policy is to ensure that all stages of the recruitment process contain measures to deter, identify, prevent and reject unsuitable people from gaining access to students within the organisation.

The Academy Trust has overall responsibility for staffing matters in this school. The Academy Trust decides the number of staff (both teaching and support staff). When a member of staff leaves, the Academy Trust will decide whether or not to replace him or her. The Academy Trust may delegate staffing functions to the Headteacher, or an individual governor or committee of governors working with or without the Headteacher.

The normal expectation is for the Headteacher to lead the process of making staff appointments outside the leadership group (i.e. other than Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and Assistant Headteachers). The Academy Trust should delegate these functions to the Headteacher unless there are good grounds not to do so.

2. Scope

Internal candidates or others personally known to the interview panel must be treated in exactly the same way as all other candidates. This policy and associated procedures apply to all members of staff. Additional guidance on the procedures to be followed in the recruitment of atypical and casual staff is provided separately.

3. Definitions

Timescales

For the purposes of this policy, 'one week' is deemed to be 7 days, inclusive of weekends, but exclusive of statutory holidays and concessionary days.

'At risk'

Where posts have been identified for redundancy the postholder(s) will be deemed to be 'at risk'.

4. Guiding Principles

Guiding principles, which reflect good employment practice and appropriate employment legislation, are those minimum principles established in consultation with Headteachers and the recognised Trade Unions and Professional Associations.

These principles are highlighted as key steps in the following procedure summary.

These principles should be viewed as minimum 'must dos' designed to assist academies in making sound, informed employment decisions. The standards ensure measures to safeguard children.

5. Procedure Summary

Justification for Recruitment

Before recruitment begins, the following will be given consideration:

- is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
- does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- is it appropriate to evaluate the grade of the post?
- could the work be accommodated in other ways?
- what terms and conditions are being offered for the post? Are they appropriate and consistent with the rest of the school?
- are there any staff 'at risk'? Staff at risk within the organisation must be given first consideration for any vacancy prior to an external / internal advertisement being placed
- leaders should consider widening the diversity of the team which could include consideration of part time working/job share/positive action initiatives.

Filling the Vacancy

In order for the recruitment process to commence, the Headteacher must authorise the post using appropriate documentation. The following documentation must be updated for recruitment to all posts including those that will only be advertised internally:

- Job Description
- Person Specification.

Advertising

It is normal practice that all vacancies are advertised, both internally within the school, as well as externally. However, where it is considered that existing staff have the prerequisite skills, consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only. Staff who have been identified to be 'at risk' may be considered for vacant posts prior to internal/external advert if they meet all the essential criteria of the vacancy.

There may be exceptional occasions when the schools deem it appropriate to use "search" techniques.

Advertisements for posts will incorporate the following statements:

"The John of Gaunt School is

- committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- If successful for this position you will be expected to apply for an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service before appointment is confirmed.
- References covering 5 years will be sought on shortlisted candidates before interview."

Enquiries

All enquirers will receive a recruitment information pack detailing the requirements of the post. Wherever possible, this will be provided in electronic format and in alternative formats where requested.

Selection

Shortlisting

- Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet all the essential criteria defined in the person specification. If the number of candidates meeting the essential criteria is excessive, further selection must be undertaken utilising the desirable criteria to achieve a workable shortlist.
- Candidates' equality and diversity monitoring forms are separated from the application forms prior to the shortlisting process. The shortlisting panel will not have access to this information.
- Shortlisting must be undertaken independently (followed by discussion) by at least two individuals who are experienced in the recruitment process and who will go on to be involved in the interviewing process. At least one member of the panel should have completed Safer Recruitment training.

Interviewing

- The interview must be conducted by a panel, the *suggested* composition of which is detailed in the appendix. All interviews for one post must be conducted by the same panel.
- All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. Individual questions particular to the candidate are appropriate.
- As part of the selection process, departments may wish candidates to undertake other forms of assessment, for example teaching a class or completing a written task. These tests/assessments must be directly related to the role in question and must be measurable against objective criteria. Candidates must be informed of the details in the letter inviting them for interview. Those administering or overseeing the tests will need to establish objective criteria to be measured and feed these into the subsequent process. These additional tests/assessments should be held in accessible rooms where required and requested by a candidate with a disability.

Appointment

The choice of candidate will be determined by the majority view from the formal interview panel. The panel will take account of any other information that will have been generated as part of the selection process. In the case of a tied vote, the Chairs decision will carry.

A formal offer of appointment is to be made/confirmed in writing and will be conditional upon receipt of references which satisfy school requirements, medical assessment, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks, such as DBS.

Consideration should be given to whether reasonable adjustments for a successful candidate with a disability are required, through discussion with the candidate.

Confidentiality

All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for confidentiality to be maintained.

Documentation

At all stages of the recruitment process, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that notes are kept detailing the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates. These notes could be called upon as evidence of the fairness of the process, either through an internal assessment or to support an external investigation. The notes should therefore be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants would normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them (please note that applications are retained for 6 months only) as part of the record of the interview.

All records must be returned to HR by the Chair of the panel.

Feedback

All applicants may receive formal written communication informing them of the status of their application upon request. Feedback will be provided by either the Chair of the panel or HR at the request of any applicant at any stage of the recruitment process.

Monitoring

For equality and diversity purposes, recruitment statistics are monitored on a biannual basis by gender, ethnicity, disability, age and by school and job type. This information is disseminated to Heads and the Board of Directors.

6. Responsibilities

The Head teacher and the Academy Trust will be responsible for the management and implementation of this policy.

They will ensure that managers/supervisors and where appropriate, governors involved in recruitment and selection are aware of their responsibilities within this policy.

The school management is responsible for providing a regular report to the Academy Trust on the equality monitoring of its recruitment and selection decisions as well as reports on the composition of its workforce including anonymised analysis of any data held for monitoring purposes on the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

7. Procedure

The following details the procedures required to undertake recruitment and selection to completion. It splits the process into a number of stages. It is necessary to ensure that

the procedures are followed as described since they are derived from legislation, policy and good practice. The HR Manager is available to advise any department requiring help at any stage within the recruitment process.

The stages detailed in the document are:

7a.	Pre-advertisement	Preparation prior to a position being advertised
7b.	Pre-interview	From promotion of vacancies through to short-listing of applications
7c.	Interviewing	Procedures relating to setting up interviews and selecting the most appropriate candidate
7d.	Post-selection	The administration required once a selection has been made
7e.	Administration	A detailed summary is provided in the following pages

7a. Pre-advertisement

In order to begin the recruitment process, the following are required:

- authorisation from Headteacher
- Job Description
- Person Specification

Authorisation

Authorisation is required to ensure that all staff recruitment is either covered by the existing approved budget/latest outturn numbers or, for any additional staff, that it is approved. It enables the HR Admin team to action the request immediately without having to seek additional information which could delay the process.

Authorisation must evidence that consideration has been given to the proposed grade of the post.

Job Description

A Job Description defines the purpose and the principal duties and responsibilities of a particular role. It provides a framework which outlines the expectations, both for the employee and the employer, and forms part of the working agreement, but is not *in itself* contractually binding.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to produce an electronic copy. The key elements normally included are:

- *Identifying factors* - post, grade and Department to whom the postholder is responsible etc.
- *Summary* - one or two short sentences to summarise the overall purpose/objectives of the job.
- *Duties & Responsibilities* - a descriptive list to provide an outline of the job. Tasks should be listed in order of importance.

Person Specification

The purpose of a Person Specification is to provide criteria against which the recruitment of candidates will be carried out objectively in line with Equality and Diversity guidance. It defines both essential and desirable criteria and is usually prepared as a grid.

The Person Specification should be based upon the Job Description.

Essential criteria Requirements without which a candidate will not be offered an interview.

Desirable criteria Requirements which enhance the candidate's application or basis for consideration and may facilitate more detailed shortlisting for interview.

The criteria required of the ideal candidate and the format of the Person Specification may vary, but typically could include:

Qualifications Only where considered appropriate and specific to a profession or trade.

Experience Either in the type of role outlined in the Job Description, or in a preparatory role.

Skills Relevant to the post.

Special requirements Will be specific to the job, e.g. ability to lift heavy weights, ability to work with specific client groups.

When deciding the difference between essential and desirable criteria, the author of the Person Specification should be very clear that any criteria listed as essential will be binding on the Department and as such would rule out the appointment of any candidate not meeting all such criteria.

7b. Pre-interview

This section considers the stages from the initial contact with applicants through to the shortlisting process.

Initial contact with potential applicants

Advertisements are designed to attract the attention of applicants, who are then encouraged to view the web site for further details/information and to download a recruitment information pack. A hard copy format will be sent if requested.

Application form

It is policy that all applications are made by completion of a school application form. This may be accompanied by a supporting letter of application if appropriate.

Receipt of replies

This requires that all applications are logged by HR and referenced appropriately. HR will endeavour to release applications to the shortlisting panel no later than two working days after the closing date.

Confidentiality/security

The school's policy is that the confidentiality of an applicant's details is of paramount importance. It is important under the Employment Practices Data Protection Code to ensure that personal data (such as application forms) is shared only with those that need to know involved in the recruitment process.

Where it is necessary for applications to be taken off site for consideration, the utmost care should be taken regarding their security. For example, applications should not be left unattended in a vehicle or in any public place.

Shortlisting

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to make appropriate arrangements for shortlisting, which will be undertaken by at least two members of the panel.

The shortlisting should be undertaken against the information compiled on the Job Description and the Person Specification. It is important to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the way in which personal data is used and assessed in the shortlisting process. It is important that the selection criteria used is applied in a fair and consistent way. Notes must be kept on candidates to justify any decisions made regarding selection for interview. These must be written on the shortlisting form provided by HR in order to maintain the appropriate records. The notes should, therefore, be relevant to and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants would normally be entitled to have access to notes about them which are retained as part of the record of the shortlisting exercise. All records must be handed to HR following shortlisting.

7c. Interviewing

Following shortlisting, selected applicants will be invited for interview by HR. The purpose of an interview is to facilitate the selection of the most suitable candidate for the post, although it should be recognised that this is only one part of the selection process.

Invitations to interview

Ideally candidates should be given at least one week's clear notice of an interview date. The invitation should include the details of any skills assessments and related preparatory work that they will be required to undertake prior to or as part of the recruitment process. Candidates should also be asked to bring with them satisfactory evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK and the originals of any qualifications required for the role. The candidates should also be asked whether any reasonable adjustments are to be made for the interview.

Composition of interview panels

Practice regarding the composition of the formal interview panel relates to the seniority of the vacancy/nature of the post. The following is a guideline only. It is recommended that a member of HR forms part of the panel for senior posts.

Vacancy	Interview panel
Technical staff	Co-ordinating Technical or Line Manager One member of academic staff
Non-Teaching staff	Line Manager
Teaching staff	Headteacher or nominee Head of Department
Leadership roles	Headteacher Chair of Governors or nominee HR Manager

It is recommended that interview panels will contain an odd number of panel members, however, interviews will be carried out by at least two individuals. In determining the number (and 'mix') of panel members, consideration should be given to the candidate's circumstances for example, race, gender, age.

Conduct of the interview

When conducting interviews every member of the panel must make notes of questions asked and answers given. This will provide feedback and evidence of why the candidates have been selected or rejected. As with shortlisting, these notes should be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants will normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them which are retained as part of the record of the interview. These notes will periodically be monitored and checked.

The panel must determine prior to the interview the questions and areas of discussion which will be put to each candidate. Care must be taken to avoid questions which are discriminatory.

Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters
- to declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure
- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

As well as leading the process, the following are the administrative responsibilities of the Chair

- advise candidates what happens next
- advise candidates that all employment is offered subject to satisfactory references which meet the school's requirements and appropriate medical and other checks including DBS checks if appropriate to the role
- check whether candidates require a work permit and seek evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. This should be asked of every candidate.

To avoid potential discrimination, all applicants should be asked to provide evidence of eligibility to work in the UK, not just applicants who may look or sound 'foreign' or who appear to have a 'foreign' name. All candidates will be asked to bring suitable evidence with them when invited to interview. Candidates will be notified of the type of documents that are acceptable for this purpose. This will usually be in the form of a passport or a documented National Insurance Number together with a full birth certificate. This original documentation will be seen by the HR department or their nominated representative at the time of interview.

In case of doubt, or should other evidence be provided, reference should be made to HR before any offer of employment is given.

In addition, The Chair of the panel should:

- obtain signature to the application form if on line application
- where qualifications are required as essential criteria, copies of certificates are to be made and forwarded to HR
- collect completed notes and the signed Interview Assessment Forms from the panel members and hand them to HR.

Misrepresentation of the nature of the job in question must be avoided. It is good practice only to give an accurate representation of the successful candidate's career prospects, in order not to give rise to expectations which may never be fulfilled.

It is important that interviews are conducted in a courteous and professional manner, since a badly managed and conducted interview could lead to legal action against the potential employer or the individual(s) involved in the interview. It is important that candidates leave with a positive impression of the school.

Other selection activities

Some departments will give candidates an opportunity for a 'tour', usually accompanied by an individual who is not on the selection panel. Whilst this may be good practice to enable the candidate to gain a better insight to the role, feedback to the panel must not be given unless the candidate has been made aware in advance that the 'tour' is part of the selection process. Consideration must be given to physical access issues for disabled candidates.

In such cases, feedback must be objective against pre-agreed criteria and a written note made. The note should be handed to the Chair of the selection panel to be retained as part of the selection process.

Similarly, presentations, skill tests or other activity that forms part of the selection process must be measurable against objective criteria and a written note made and handed to the Chair of the selection panel to be retained as part of the selection process.

Under the Data Protection Act, applicants will normally be entitled to have access to these notes if a specific request is made.

The choice of candidate

After discussion, the choice of candidate to be appointed will be made on a majority vote from the formal interview panel (when panel consists of an odd number). The panel will

take account of any other information that will have been generated as part of the selection process. Where a majority agreement cannot be reached, the Chair will have the final decision.

If the candidate selected does not take up the appointment, any decision to offer the appointment to the second-choice applicant must be taken by the whole panel. Before the panel disbands it should agree, if possible, on the reserve name(s).

7d. Post-selection Administration

It is important for securing the foundation of a good relationship with the successful candidate and to ensure that a good impression is left with the rejected candidates, that this final stage is completed properly.

Offer of employment

A verbal offer of employment on behalf of the school can be made by the Chair of the panel. It must be made clear, however, that the offer is conditional upon the satisfactory completion of references, medical assessment, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks as outlined above. A verbal offer of employment must be followed up in writing by HR.

Only when all of the above have been obtained and cleared will the school regard the offer of employment as legally binding.

Unsuccessful candidates must be notified as early as possible of the outcome of their interview by the Chair of the panel. Ideally this should be no more than three working days after the successful candidate has confirmed their acceptance of the post.

Medical assessment

Medical questionnaires will be forwarded to the successful candidate by HR along with the conditional offer of employment.

Under normal circumstances new members of staff must not commence employment prior to medical clearance being obtained. Failure to adhere to this guideline may result in employees being dismissed due to their medical unsuitability to carry out the functions of the job.

The school promotes equality of opportunity, including those with disability, and undertakes to make all reasonable adjustment to accommodate needs. In the few instances where an applicant fails to meet the medical requirement, this will be as a result of their medical unsuitability to that role and not as a result of their disability.

References

Employment references should be obtained from at least the last or current employer, either in writing or by initial contact via the telephone, to be confirmed in writing. Where applicable, references will cover a five-year period. The questions and information gleaned from the reference must be relevant to the aspects of the post in question e.g. where cash handling is involved in a post, the honesty of the prospective employee must be discussed.

Safer Recruitment.

Where possible, references will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies can be probed during the selection stage.

- References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted.
- Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or e mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges
- 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.

In some circumstances, where the individual is 'known' to the school (as may be the case with internal candidates), the taking of references may be 'waived' by the school.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

All staff identified as working in regulated activity will be required to have a DBS check. This will be undertaken consistent with current legislation.

Additional checks

In line with safer recruitment practices, the following checks will be completed in addition to those previously mentioned in this section:

- an identity check
- a barred list check
- a prohibition from teaching check
- a section 128 check (for management positions as set out in paragraphs 144 - 147 in KCSiE September 2020)
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK; this would include recording checks for those European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions described in paragraph
- a check of professional qualifications
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

7e. Final Administration

In order to finalise the recruitment process there are certain tasks which should be completed:

- all unsuccessful interviewed candidates to be advised by the school/Department
- all recruitment documentation is taken to HR for archiving

- all Equality and Diversity monitoring forms are destroyed by HR after completion of the recruitment process and the appropriate recording of the information
- all original copies of the details relating to the successful candidate are sent to HR for inclusion on the individual's personal file, together with their application
- all additional copies of candidate details used for interview purposes are collected and destroyed.

8. Candidate Feedback

Candidates often wish to gain feedback, in relation to either initial selection and/or interview, for their own development. Feedback from shortlisting or interview will be provided by the Chair of the panel.

This feedback should be judged against the selection criteria. It should be honest, but constructive. It is important to realise that a prospective employer can be held liable for unfair selection by a candidate and this feedback can be used as evidence. This, however, is a rarity if the feedback is honest and appropriate to the candidate. It is essential that both shortlisting forms and interview notes are completed in order that a professional approach may be taken.

9. Monitoring

The school will from time to time undertake audit exercises in order to monitor the effectiveness of this policy and procedures.

10. Unsolicited Applications

It is acknowledged that from time to time unsolicited applications will be received, typically by way of receipt of a speculative letter or email. In such circumstances, the communication should be acknowledged and the author referred to the current vacancies. The speculative communication should then be destroyed unless the author is specifically advised to the contrary.

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