



Bexhill
Academy

Safer Recruitment Policy

This policy was adopted on 1 November 2017

Next Review: 1 November 2018

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Bexhill Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the Academy expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

In line with recent legislation including the Children Act 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, the academy takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils the academy is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The academy has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the academy based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

This policy's objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Bexhill Academy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Academy Trust Board to:

- Ensure the Academy has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with all guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the Academy's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Principal and other Managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the Academy operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the Academy.
- Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Regulated activity for children is unsupervised activities on a frequent basis, for example, teaching, training, care or supervision, advice or guidance on well being or driving a vehicle with children as passengers.

Frequent is once a week or more on an on going basis or four or more times in a single month or overnight.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the Academy will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the Academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Application Forms

Bexhill Academy uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. C.V.'s will not be accepted.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (eg: General Teaching Council for England).

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

References

References for short-listed applicants will be sent for immediately after short-listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone or face-to-face will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The Academy does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

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

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed at the end of the recruitment programme.

OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks, copies of qualification and proof of identity, plus additional checks for teaching staff in line with current Safeguarding legislation. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' **must be** declared when applying for **any** position at Bexhill Academy.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formerly known as CRB Disclosure)

All staff at Bexhill Academy require an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate **must be** obtained before the commencement of employment of **any** new employee.

It is the Academy's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates every three years and in addition any employee that takes leave for more than three months (ie: maternity leave, career break etc) **must be** re-checked before they return back to work.

Members of staff at Bexhill Academy are aware of their obligation to inform the HR Department of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

Portability of DBS Certificates Checks

Staff may wish to join the DBS Update Service if they are likely to require another check in the future. Applicants may sign up to the Service if their check was issued after 17 June 2013, for a fee of £13 per annum, which is payable by the applicant.

Copies of DBS Checks

The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees/applicants should bring their Certificate to the Human Resources Department (for employees within 7 days of issue or applicants before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity). A copy will be taken and kept on file.

Dealing with convictions

The Academy operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;

- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Principal. A decision will be made following this meeting.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the Academy 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 UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

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

Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire via the Academy's Occupational Health referral service and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

Overseas checks

All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. The Academy, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, will, if applicable, sponsor a new foreign member of staff (see Certificate of Sponsorship section).

Applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a police check/certificate of good conduct from the relevant Country. This must be part of the documents brought to the interview.

Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS)

If an appointed applicant is a national of a non-EEA country, a CoS may be required. Before any offer of employment is made, the Interviewing Manager's should consult with the Human Resources Department to establish whether the academy has any unallocated Sponsorship Certificates.

Criteria for issuing a CoS is:

- The job is in a “designated shortage” occupation, or
- It passes the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT)
- The job is at NQF6 Level or above
- Minimum salary levels are met.

Human Resources Department will only be able to issue a CoS. In addition to the CoS the applicant must apply for entry clearance/leave to remain through the UK Visas and Immigration and provide personal evidence of competence in English and ongoing maintenance.

The process can take up to three months and staff cannot, under any circumstances, be employed until permission is given.

Detailed advice on the above is available from the Human Resources Department.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the Academy policies' and procedures, including the Child Protection Policy, and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in School and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfE requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Human Resources Department. The Single Centralised Register will contain details of the following:-

- all employees who are employed to work at the Academy;
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the Academy whether employed directly or through an agency;
- all others who have been chosen by the Academy to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, Academy Board members, peripatetic staff and people brought into the Academy to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members eg: sports coaches etc.

A designated Trust Board Member, along with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, will be responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting his/her findings to the Safeguarding Board.

Record Retention / Data Protection

Bexhill Academy will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie: shredded). The 6-month retention period is in accordance with

the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow the School to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal.

All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the Human Resources Office in a locked and secure cabinet.

On-going Employment

Bexhill Academy recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The Academy will therefore provide on-going training and support for all staff, as identified through the appraisal procedure.

Leaving Employment at Bexhill Academy

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (ie: physical, sexual and emotional and neglect) the School's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, Bexhill Academy will inform the DfE and the Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances why the employee is leaving Bexhill Academy's employment.

Visiting Speakers

The Academy frequently makes use of external speakers covering both academic and wider curriculum topics. These specialists are sourced from appropriate organisations have been observed at national conferences or have been invited following recommendations from staff contacts at other schools or organisations. The DSL keeps a log of all visiting speakers and, in addition to the knowledge of the staff who have sourced them, will research the visiting speaker on the internet to gain further comfort to their suitability. All staff are regularly reminded of the protocols associated with the signing in and supervision of visiting speakers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Human Resources Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the School. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a termly SCR audit