



“Creating excellence, embracing all.”

Safer Recruitment Policy

Headteacher : Jo Reid

Chair of Governors: Ben Potter

Policy determined 3rd October 2023

Botley School governing board

Botley School Vision statement

A high-quality education in a positive and happy school, where everyone is included, celebrated and encouraged to be a creative lifelong learner.

Botley School Values

Inclusivity Teamwork Kindness Respect Resilience Creativity



Introduction

The policy is based on the DfE revised guidance document [Keeping children Safe in Education 2023](#)

Our recruitment and selection policy incorporates the guidance included in the DfE document, with regard to Oxfordshire's guidance.

Recruitment and Selection Policy Elements of safe practice

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's child protection policy and equality policy.
- Every advertisement will make clear our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and will include the following statement for all:

Botley School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All successful applicants will be subject to the enhanced DBS checks.

- All job descriptions contain the phrase: **"it is the responsibility of each member of staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people he/she is responsible for, or comes into contact with in the school"**.
- We will obtain and scrutinise comprehensive information from applicants by using the standard Academy Trust application forms and will take up and satisfactorily resolve any discrepancies and anomalies before making an appointment.
- We will obtain independent references, preferably prior to the interview, which answer specific questions relating to the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as their suitability for the post (example of request for reference for teaching and non-teaching posts available).
- During the interview for the post, we will explore the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as their suitability for the post.
- We will verify the successful applicant's identity and, if necessary, their right to work in the UK.
- We will verify that the successful applicant has the qualifications, skills, experience and professional status (where required) as necessary for the post, and declared on the application form.
- We will verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- We will carry out through The Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) the mandatory check of the Children's Barred List / Prohibition Order and, as appropriate, an enhanced DBS check and Section 128 Direction check.
- We will carry out online searches on prospective candidates and will inform them that these will be carried out in advance.

Application form

Applications will only be accepted using the current Academy Trust form (teaching or non-teaching) which is designed to obtain a common set of core data in line with Oxfordshire HR guidelines.

A CV and covering letter is not sufficiently detailed and is therefore not an acceptable form of application for a post in the school. Applicants making speculative contact are asked to apply for a specific post using the relevant application form.

The Academy Trust application form also makes clear to candidates the implications of applying for a job working closely with children and young people.

Job description

For each post there is a job description that will include:

- The main duties and responsibilities of the post.
- A statement regarding the responsibility of the post holder to promote and safeguard the welfare of young people in the school:

“It is the responsibility of each member of staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people he/ she is responsible for, or comes into contact with, in the school.”

Person specification

For each post, we will provide a specification to include:

- The qualifications and experience required for the post.
- The skills, competencies and qualities that the candidate should be able to demonstrate.
- How the post requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process.

Candidate Information

Information on the school’s website additional to that regarding the post will include:

- The school’s Child Protection Policy statement
- The school’s Equality Policy
- Relevant information about the school

Scrutinising and short-listing

- All applications will be assessed against the criteria described in the person specification (example of shortlisting grid available).
- Scrutiny of the application forms to ensure that they are complete. Incomplete forms may be returned for completion. Information from referees should be compared with information on the application form.
- Gaps or discrepancies should be noted in the consideration of whether to short-list the applicant. Gaps or anomalies will need to be explained and verified if the applicant is short-listed. There must be a full chronological history of the individual and reasons for repeated or regular changes in employment should be explored.
- Records of short-listing decisions will be retained.
- If a member of the Governing Body will be involved in the interview, they should also participate in the short-listing process where possible.

Declaration of criminal convictions

All employment and voluntary work with children and young people is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. In cases where an applicant discloses a conviction a Risk Assessment should always be carried out prior to an offer of employment being made.

References

- References will be sought from a minimum of two referees, including for internal candidates. Referees must be from the most recent employer together with the next chronological order of similar type of work. References must be from a person in a supervisory position (ideally their most recent linemanager, in the case of schools it must be the headteacher) who can give a balanced and objective reference on the individual.
- The request for a reference will be sent out at the same time as candidates are invited for interview, so that any issues of concern can be raised with the referee and taken up with a candidate at interview.
- The reference request will include the specific information relating to the person's suitability for the post, and for working with young people (a job description (for support staff) and person specification (for teaching and support staff) will be provided to referees.
- We will verify the referee's identity, suitability and validity (by telephone contact, where appropriate) and will make a check that all questions have been answered satisfactorily.
- Open references or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted.

Selection for interview

- The invitation to interview will stress the need for candidates to bring the required documentary evidence for the DBS Disclosure, original documents certifying their qualifications, and, if necessary, proof of right to work in the UK.
- Documents will be checked on the day of interview. If there are any anomalies or cause for concern, the Headteacher or panel chair will be consulted.
- A copy of the documents used to verify the candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file (except DBS certificates where a record of the number/ recording person will suffice).
- All documentation relating to the unsuccessful applicants' identity and qualifications will be destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations.

The interview

- All interviews will be carried out by a minimum of two interviewers. In some cases, for example senior posts, a larger panel including governors is appropriate.
- As far as possible there will be a gender balance on the interview panel.
- At least one member of the Leadership Team who has completed Safer Recruitment Training should always be included for any appointment so that the panel has the necessary authority to make appointments.
- Details of the selection arrangements eg approximate times, venue, activities (as far as possible) should be sent to applicants invited for interview.
- The panel will agree the set of questions they will ask all the candidates. The questions will be set with regard to the person specification and the panel should explore any issues arising from individual candidate's applications and references.
- The questions asked will not be hypothetical or theoretical but competence-based relating to how a candidate has responded to, or dealt with, actual situations; or the questions will test a candidate's attitudes and understanding of issues relevant to the post.
- The panel will make notes on candidates' responses (using a grid to standardise this information) and will avoid questions which may indicate the potential for unlawful discrimination. • The panel should explore each candidate's ability to support the school's commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of young people.

- All notes taken during the interview will be retained by the school for twelve months from the date of interview and then will be destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations.

Involvement of students

- Applicants for teaching posts in the school will be observed teaching a class of students as part of the selection process.
- All short-listed candidates will be shown around the school by students, and their interaction observed, or the students' views sought.
- Where appropriate, for example for senior posts, school council members will interview the candidates.

Conditional offer of appointment

In line with existing recruitment practice, candidates should be contacted within three days of the interview by one of the interview panel to advise them about the recruitment progress.

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references.
- Photo ID verification of the candidate's identity.
- A Children's Barred List check and, where appropriate, a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check and Section 128 Direction check. No member of staff should start their employment without Barred List clearance. In some cases, a current DBS is accepted (eg similar role, similar known institution, not more than 3 months break in service, clear record of 'None Recorded'); in other cases a new DBS check will be required.
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness (mental and physical) through a pre-employment health questionnaire which is returned in confidence directly to the Occupational Health Service.
- Verification of qualifications and professional status (e.g. NPQH, Degree).

All checks, such as those through the [Teacher Services System](#), to be confirmed, documented and retained in the personnel file in accordance with the school's data protection arrangements. (School does not normally retain copies of DBS certificates, but may retain a copy for up to six months if necessary. A copy of the documents used to verify a candidate's identity, right to work in the UK and required qualifications should be kept on file). Further information may be required if a candidate has lived or worked outside the UK, including a check on sanctions or restrictions imposed by any EAA professional regulating authority.

If the candidate is on the Children's Barred List; or has been disqualified from working with children; or has provided false information or there are serious concerns about their suitability to work with children, these facts will be reported to the county's Safeguarding Team / DfE.

Single Central Record of Recruitment/Vetting Checks

The school has a single central record (SCR) of all checks carried out to verify the identity, qualifications, suitability to work with young people and, as appropriate, the right to work in the UK.

This applies to all staff in "regulated activity". A person will be considered to be in "regulated activity" if as a result of their work they:

- will be responsible, on a regular basis, in any setting for the care and supervision of children; or
- will work regularly in a school or college at times when children are on the premises (where the person's work requires interaction with children, whether or not the work is paid (unless they are a supervised volunteer), or whether the person is directly employed or employed by a contractor; or

- in a college, will regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.
- All staff employed to work in the school will be checked.
- All staff employed as supply staff will be checked by their agencies, who are expected to provide written documentation of their checking processes. The school will check that the person presenting herself/himself is the same person on whom the checks have been made.
- People who are regular volunteers and have direct contact with students are also subject to checking.
- **Governors** - we will carry out through The Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) the mandatory checks and an enhanced DBS check and Section 128 Direction check.

People who do not need a DBS disclosure:

- Visitors to the school who have brief, supervised contact with students (although all visitors will be required to wear a Visitor Badge identifying them as such).
- Contractors carrying out emergency repairs or servicing equipment on site without direct contact with the children.
- Contractors working in areas away from students.
- Lettings personnel who come on site after school hours, or who do not work with children.

However, the school must check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the school premises.

Trainee / student teachers

Any trainee salaried by the school will be checked by the school and for all those entering regulated activity an enhanced DBS with barred list information will be sought. Where trainees are fee-funded it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks and to inform the school that the candidate is suitable to work with children.

Work experience placements

When organising work placements for work experience, the school liaises with OCC to ensure that policies and procedures in places of work are designed to protect children from harm and school/OCC will determine the correct level of checks for those involved in the placements.

Starting work pending a DBS disclosure

Headteachers have the discretion to allow a member of staff to begin work pending receipt of the DBS check in school. Where this is necessary, the school must ensure the person is appropriately supervised, a Children's Barred List check has been completed and the request for a DBS check has been submitted in advance of the individual starting work. Appropriate supervision for the member of staff starting work needs to reflect what is known about the person concerned, their experience, the nature of their duties and the level of responsibility they will carry.

For all staff without completed checks it should be made clear that they are subject to this additional supervision. The nature of this supervision should be set out for them and the arrangements should be reviewed at least every two weeks until the DBS check is received.

The risk assessment is kept on the individual's file until the DBS check arrives. If there are convictions on the DBS check, then the Headteacher will be alerted and we will follow appropriate procedures for assessing risk.

Where a Disclosure indicates more serious cause for concern in working with children and young people, the member of staff must be immediately withdrawn from the school pending further enquiries.

Completing the process

The following documents will be retained by the Academy Trust's HR and Payroll Team so that a contract of employment can be sent out:

- Appointing instructions
- Application form of successful candidate
- Equal Opportunity monitoring information (subject to data protection procedures)

Existing staff

If school has concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, then the school will carry out relevant checks as if the person were a new member of staff. School has a legal duty to refer to the DBS any person who has harmed, or may harm a child or vulnerable adult or who has, or it is believed may have, been convicted of relevant offences. Where the school, or a contracted agency, dismisses a member of staff for serious misconduct, they must decide whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State, who may investigate the case and consider whether to issue a prohibition order.

Volunteers

Under no circumstances may an unchecked volunteer be engaged in, or left unsupervised in, regulated activity. Volunteers in regulated activity will be checked accordingly and school may, following a risk assessment, obtain an enhanced DBS for volunteers not engaged in regulated activity, but barred list information may not be obtained on volunteers who, because they are supervised, are not in regulated activity. Risk assessments may be carried out depending on the nature of the work and contact with children.