

# SCHOOLS - RECRUITMENT POLICY

(including Safer Recruitment)

This document applies to Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, and is advisory for Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools.

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## SCHOOLS RECRUITMENT POLICY

### Purpose

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) recognises school employees as being fundamental to the success of the school, and to the effective safeguarding of children. LCC aims to recruit a diverse and consistently high performing workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills to help the school achieve its goals. This will be achieved by ensuring that recruitment processes are fair, consistent, transparent, cost-effective and in line with equality and diversity practices. In addition, the appointment of all school employees will be in accordance with the current statutory DfE (Department for Education) guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#).

### Principles

- Recruitment is an activity where those involved in the recruitment process will see confidential information of a personal nature. Due care and consideration will be given for this information during and after the process, in line with relevant Data Protection policies.
- An Appointing Officer will manage a recruitment process. They will be trained accordingly and have the authority to recommend to the Governing Body the decision to appoint.
- As a minimum the Appointing Officer will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
- The Appointing Officer will establish a selection panel consisting of 2 or more people.
- Successful candidates cannot commence employment until all the relevant pre-employment checks have been carried out, and the candidate has been cleared to start employment.
- Where LCC is the employer, a representative of LCC may attend proceedings relating to the selection of any teacher. The Governing Body must consider any advice offered by the representative. Where the Governing Body of a maintained school is the employer, and where it has been agreed that LCC has advisory rights, the Governing Body must consider any advice offered (Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools October 2019).

### Notification of a Vacant Position

When a Head Teacher position arises, the Chair of Governors will contact the Education team at LCC on [Educationteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Educationteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk), and the School's Education Locality Lead, to notify that a vacancy has arisen and to seek advice and support in accordance with DfE and NGA (National Governance Association) guidance. In the case of church schools, the relevant Diocese will also be contacted by the Chair of Governors.

In addition, under the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, the Governing Body must notify LCC via [schnotify@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:schnotify@lincolnshire.gov.uk) of the following:

a) Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

- Any vacancy for Head Teacher;
- Any post for a Deputy Head Teacher which it intends to fill;
- Any teaching post to be filled for a period of more than 4 months, and providing LCC with a job description and person specification for the post;
- The name of any member of support staff to be appointed along with a job description, hours of work, the duration of appointment, pay and grade.

b) Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools

- Any vacancy for Head Teacher;
- Any post for a Deputy Head Teacher which it intends to fill;
- Any teaching post to be filled for a period of more than 4 months, and providing LCC with a job description and person specification for the post.

### **Ensuring a fair recruitment procedure**

In accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, LCC on behalf of relevant schools is committed to ensuring that equal opportunities are advanced, and discrimination is prohibited, throughout all stages of recruitment. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to gender, trans status, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership. This policy should be read in line with the LCC Diversity and Inclusion Policy (LINK).

LCC and Governing Bodies recognise and value the diversity of their workforce and communities and seek to ensure that all the attributes, talents and skills available throughout the community are recognised when employment opportunities arise. This commitment extends to the development of current employees, and internal applications are encouraged for opportunities available.

All vacant posts should be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally. Any internal recruitment process will follow the procedures set out in this policy

LCC may nominate an applicant for a post who may be at risk of redundancy or requiring redeployment. Whilst redeployees are not entitled to priority consideration for post in another school, schools and Governing Bodies are encouraged to work positively with LCC and other schools in considering at risk employees for suitable positions.

In order to ensure a healthy and safe working environment which supports all staff, personal health and wellbeing at work is embedded and considered within recruitment processes. Including mental health as well as physical health, this approach is embedded at all stages; from job design, selection, recruitment, training, development and appraisal.

### **Disability Confident Scheme**

LCC is a member of the **Disability Confident Scheme**, which extends to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. Foundation and Aided schools would need to join the scheme themselves to be a Disability Confident employer. Under the scheme, all disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements of the job as set out in the job description and person specification will be guaranteed an interview.

### **Care Leavers**

Applicants who are care leavers of LCC, (up to and including the age of 25) who meet the minimum criteria for the post and inform LCC of their care leaver status at the time of their application, will be offered an interview.

For the purpose of this policy, a care leaver is a young person aged between 16 and 25 who has left the care of Lincolnshire Local Authority after being previously looked after. To be a care leaver the individual must have been looked after by Children Services for:

- at least 13 weeks between the ages of 14-16;
- or, has spent 13 weeks cumulatively after their 16th birthday under the care of the Local Authority;
- been the subject of a Special Guardianship Order and was in care prior to that Order being made.

### **Selection criteria**

Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job. All employment decisions including those on recruitment, selection, promotion, training and career development, are based solely on job related objective criteria.

An up-to-date job description and person specification will be produced for all posts:

**Job Descriptions** - ensure potential applicants understand the requirements of the post. This will provide the base for recruitment, selection and induction, training, appraisal and other employment activities. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications should be developed for all roles in the School, including Teaching staff and the Leadership Team.

**Safeguarding requirement** - In order for the school to fulfil its obligations to safeguard children and to meet the standards set by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board, all school based job descriptions must include reference to the post holder's responsibility to

safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This is included in the template job description.

**Generic job descriptions** – for support staff are held on a central job description library held by Lincolnshire County Council on Perspective Lite. These job descriptions have been through the job evaluation process, and it is strongly advised that schools access these job descriptions first.

**Job Evaluation** - The County Council's Human Resources service provides an evaluation service and grades will be notified to Head Teachers on receipt of a job description. It is important that new grades are not applied before a formal evaluation has taken place. Those schools which use a different Human Resources provider will need to consult with them first but this service must be commissioned from the Council's Human Resource provider to ensure equal pay requirements are met.

**Person Specifications** - should include qualifications, professional registrations (if required), skills, competencies and previous experience required for the post. The person specification should also include the requirement to be cleared by the DBS for work with children and the Fluency Duty wording

**Link to selection** - each requirement on the person specification will be graded as either 'Essential' or 'Desirable'. These grades will be used for short listing purposes after the closing date. The person specification can also detail how these issues will be tested – e.g. application form, interview, or assessment day.

As a general rule it is unlawful for an employer to specify that they require a person with particular characteristics e.g. a particular race or gender, unless there is a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the position, and this can be objectively justified as a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. Any school wishing to apply this exemption must first seek HR advice.

### **Fluency Duty**

Part 7 of The Immigration Act 2016 contains a duty on public authorities, including schools, to ensure that each person who works for them in a public-facing role speaks a level of English which is sufficient to enable them to effectively carry out their role. This is known as the Fluency Duty.

### **Disclosure of personal relationships or conflicts of interest during the recruitment process**

All applicants are required to disclose if they are related or have any personal relationships with any employee of the school. Applicants are asked to state the name of the person and the relationship.

An employee shall not be involved in any appointment process where they are related, or have a close personal relationship outside of work with the individual considered for appointment.

All candidates will be asked by the appointing officer if they have any other outside business interests that may conflict with those of the school/LCC. Where these are declared, the Appointing Officer will discuss the significance of this with the candidate to determine whether or not their application can proceed.

## Interviews

Those conducting recruitment interviews will ensure that the questions that they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive. The interview will focus on the needs of the job and skills needed to perform it effectively.

As a Disability Confident Scheme employer, the Appointing Officer will ensure that any reasonable adjustments for the purpose of interviewing candidates are put in place.

Arrangements may include, but are not limited to:

- allowing deaf or speech impaired people to bring an interpreter with them;
- alerting employees to be prepared to show blind people to the place of interview;
- ensuring that the place of interview is accessible to any candidate with a mobility disability or that assistance is available to them when they arrive;
- allocating extra time for interviews or assessments;
- contacting occupational health for advice on additional adjustments.

In accordance with Safer Recruitment requirements, the Appointing Officer may wish to complete the Candidate Interview Assessment Form, ensuring that **any gaps** in employment and training history are full explored with the candidate to obtain and record an explanation.

## Outcomes after interview

- **Rejection** - the candidate is not suitable for the position. Candidates who are unsuccessful after interview will be informed of the outcome of their interview, as soon as reasonably practicable. The Appointing Officer will be sensitive to the need to provide feedback to candidates, if requested to do so and will provide information about where the candidate did not meet the required criteria.
- **Provisional Offer** – Where a candidate is successful, a provisional offer of employment is made. This enables the school to undertake all necessary **pre-employment recruitment and vetting checks** before a final offer is made. Pre-employment checks include, but are not limited to:
  - identity checks;
  - qualifications and certificates;
  - asylum and immigration (right to work) checks;
  - (enhanced) DBS / criminal records checks;
  - pre-employment medical / health screening;
  - employment and character references;
  - professional registration checks.

A provisional offer of employment may be withdrawn where any of the above checks are not satisfactory, as deemed by the Governing Body or LCC, or if candidates fail to complete their pre-employment check tasks within 15 days of the process commencing.

Schools are required to securely retain any recruitment process documentation and notes for the successful candidates and unsuccessful candidates for a period of 6 months. This is for the purpose of feedback requests or to respond to any questions concerning the recruitment/interview process. After 6 months, all documentation should be securely destroyed.

## References

KCSIE recommends that references are requested prior to a candidate attending interview, as this will allow any concerns they raise to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. This should be made clear to candidates in the advertisement and candidate information pack.

All external appointments are subject to the receipt of two satisfactory work references, one of which must be the applicant's present or most recent employer. In exceptional cases the panel may agree that either one or both references need not be work references (e.g. for school leavers or returners to work after a long career break). Where this is the case, character references will be sought instead. References from a partner or relative will not be accepted.

One reference is required for internal candidates, which will be requested from their current Manager / Head Teacher.

For teachers, there is a statutory duty for current employers to provide details of any capability procedures involving the individual in the previous 2 years, and the reasons for this.

## Statement of Good Conduct

Under Safer Recruitment requirements, if any candidates have lived, studied or worked overseas schools must make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This may include, obtaining a **statement of good conduct** (sometimes referred to as a certificate of good repute) that relates to the time they resided in that country. The exception is candidates who are serving / living with someone who is serving in the armed forces during that time. A candidate will be asked to apply and pay for this statement, after an offer of employment is made.

The Appointing Officer must check application forms carefully to establish whether this will be a requirement and must alert those candidates that this will be a requirement should they be the successful candidate.

From January 2016 – 31 December 2020 it was a statutory requirement to check any new Teacher was not included in the list of individuals prohibited in an EEA nation. This list was accessed via the Teacher Services System. The EEA list is no longer operation now we have left



the EU; however, schools should still do what they can to verify that the successful applicant has not been prohibited in another country.

Criminal records checks for overseas applicants can be carried out via: [Criminal Records Checks for Overseas Applicants](#)

### **Right to Work in the UK**

In ALL cases, a right to work in the UK check must be carried out prior to any applicant being permitted to start work, and is carried out as part of the interview process. The Recruiting manager/Appointing Officer is required to see the applicant's original documents, with the applicant present, and check that:

- the documents are genuine, original and unchanged and belong to the person who has provided them;
- the dates for the applicant's right to work in the UK have not expired;
- photos are the same across all documents and look like the applicant;
- dates of birth are the same across all documents;
- the applicant has permission to do the type of work being offered (including any limit on the number of hours they can work);
- for students, they must provide evidence of their study and vacation times;
- if 2 documents give different names, the applicant has supporting documents showing why they're different, e.g., a marriage certificate or divorce decree.

The guidance for these requirements is regularly updated and therefore Head Teachers/Appointing Officers should refer to the most up to date (national) guidance as to how to carry out right to work checks and what documents can be accepted. Further information internally is provided in the **Schools Recruitment and Vetting Checks Policy**.

### **DBS and Barred List check**

For appointments where the employee will be undertaking regulated activity an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, will be required prior to starting work. The barred list check is a check to establish that the person is not barred from regulated activity - legally this can only be done if the person is in regulated activity.

The full legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Regulated activity includes:

- a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for (see (c) below) or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children;
- b) work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers.

Work under (a) or (b) is regulated activity only if done regularly. Regularly means on more than three days in any period of 30 days, and other than driving, if any of the work takes place between 2am and 6am and it gives the person the opportunity to have face to face contact with the children. Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes:

- c) relevant personal care, or health care provided by or provided under the supervision of a health care professional:
  - personal care includes helping a child with eating and drinking for reasons of illness or disability or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability;
  - health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional.

Personal care does not include such activities as, for example, parent volunteers helping with costumes for school plays or helping a child lace up football boots.

If a school knows or has reason to believe that an individual is barred, it commits an offence if it allows the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

For any other staff and governors who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate.

The Appointing Officer must see the actual DBS certificate from the employee and will record the disclosure certificate number and the date of the check on the schools Single Central Record. The certificate will be returned to the candidate and not retained on file.

Individuals can join the DBS Update Service at the point an application for a new DBS check is made, enabling future status checks to be carried out to confirm that no new information has been added to the certificate since its issue. This allows for portability of a certificate across employers. There is an annual fee for using the update service, which Community and Controlled schools fund, Foundation and Aided schools fund the annual fee at their discretion.

Before using the update service, the school must:

- obtain consent from the applicant to do so;
- confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity; and
- 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.

The school can then subsequently carry out a free online check. This would identify whether there has been any change to the information recorded, since the initial certificate was issued and advise whether the individual should apply for a new certificate.

In exceptional circumstances, where a school allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure that the individual is **appropriately supervised** and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed. The school must also complete a DBS Risk Assessment.

If a DBS check reveals details of convictions which may render the applicant unsuitable for the applied for post, the appointing Governor/Head Teacher will discuss the situation with the applicant in line with the DBS Code of Practice. A Cause for Concern Risk Assessment Proforma will also be completed.

#### Health clearance of successful candidate

All new employees will be required to go through a health clearance before appointment. This is carried out via the occupational health provider.

The Appointing Officer will arrange for a fitness for work questionnaire to be provided to the candidate, via the health management portal, to complete online. Occupational health will notify the Appointing Officer of any reasonable adjustments required, or any other health concern that they need to be aware of, in agreement with the employee.

#### Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, and the 2018 Regulations

The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge)(Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 replaced the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

The regulations place additional requirements on schools employing staff working in early years provision with children from birth up to and including the first of September following their 5th birthday, and in later years provision (before and after school childcare) with children who have not attained the age of 8, as shown in the table below:

	During School Hours	Outside School Hours
Reception age or younger	Covered	Covered
Older than Reception age until age 8	Not Covered	Covered
8 years or older	Not Covered	Not Covered

\*Outside school hours does not include school clubs, e.g. choir or sports' teams, but does include breakfast clubs or after-school provision.

All schools providing such child care, regardless of the setting, must take appropriate steps to ensure that they are not employing a person disqualified to work with these age groups in a childcare setting.

For new employees an up-to-date enhanced DBS certificate will help schools establish whether the offences committed by that individual are relevant offences. For existing employees school should use the DBS update service. The criteria for disqualification under the 2006 Act and the 2018 Regulations include those set out in the list below:

- a) inclusion on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Children's Barred List;
- b) being found to have committed certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults which are referred to in regulation 4 and Schedules 2 and 3 of the 2018 Regulations;
- c) certain orders made in relation to the care of children which are referred to in regulation 4 and listed at Schedule 1 of the 2018 Regulations;
- d) refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare, or children's homes, or being prohibited from private fostering, as specified in Schedule 1 of the 2018 Regulations;
- e) being found to have committed an offence overseas, which would constitute an offence regarding disqualification under the 2018 Regulations if it had been done in any part of the United Kingdom.

The above list is only a summary of the criteria that lead to disqualification. Further details about the specific orders and offences, which will lead to disqualification, are set out in the 2018 Regulations.

N.B. Following the introduction of the 2018 regulations there is no longer a disqualification by association requirement for individuals working in childcare in non-domestic settings (e.g. schools and nurseries).

All schools providing such child care, regardless of the setting, must take appropriate steps to ensure that they are not employing a person disqualified to work with these age groups in a childcare setting. Applicants must complete the Childcare Disqualification Self Declaration prior to their appointment.

Individuals who are disqualified are not permitted to continue to work in early or later years' provision or be directly concerned in the management of that provision. An application can be made to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification and further details about how to make an application for a waiver can be found in the fact sheet "Applying to waive disqualification: early years and childcare providers".

### **Qualifications and Professional Accreditations**

The school must ensure that any person employed to teach has the required teaching qualification. The DfE Teacher Services System should be used before appointing a teacher to check for:

- the award of QTS
- completion of teacher induction

Further advice on undertaking these checks is available on the government website Teacher Status Checks: Information for Employees. Applicants should also provide evidence of qualifications essential for the post, irrespective of the post they are applying for.

### **Prohibition Order Check**

Anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012. The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 define each of the following activities as 'teaching work':

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
- delivering lessons to pupils;
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils;
- reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

The regulations provide that these activities do not constitute 'teaching work' if they are carried out under the direction or supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the Head Teacher. This means that, generally, when appointing into teaching assistant (TA) positions, prohibition checks will not be required. The school must carry out a check of any prohibition using the Teacher Services System.

### **Compliance with Data Protection**

Schools will process personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with their Data Protection Policy on processing special categories of personal data and criminal records data, as detailed in their Recruitment Privacy Notice.

Data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job.

### **Data Monitoring**

Application forms include a Recruitment Monitoring Form to monitor equality and diversity. The form will be removed from all applications received, prior to short listing and will not form part of the short listing process.

The Recruitment Monitoring Forms of successful candidates can be stored, collated and reviewed to support the school with equality and diversity monitoring.

### **Support Staff Probation period**

New employees to LCC, (excluding teaching staff), are subject to a six month probation period before their appointment is confirmed, unless otherwise stated. Probation periods give the school the opportunity to assess a new employee's suitability in the role they have been appointed to and for the employee to demonstrate their ability to effectively perform their duties, have the opportunity to become familiar with the main duties and tasks of their post and demonstrate the standard of performance, attendance and conduct expected of them. The probationary period is also an opportunity for the new employee to determine if the position and the school are suitable for them.

### **Agency Workers**

For Agency and Off-Payroll Workers it is the responsibility of the school to decide if the IR35 off-payroll rules apply to the worker and it will then be the responsibility of the school to deduct tax, employers' contributions and apprenticeship levy where appropriate. Further information is available in the LCC Schools IR35 Guidance.

Where the school engages an agency worker the school must obtain written confirmation from the agency that the same checks have been carried out for supply staff as the school would have carried out on its own staff. The school will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. This will be recorded on the School's Single Central Record.

Schools should be aware of the rights of agency workers, as per the Agency Workers Regulations 2010. These regulations give agency workers the entitlement to the same (or no less favourable) treatment as comparable employees with respect to basic employment and working conditions, if they complete a qualifying period of 12 weeks in a particular job. Guidance on the recruitment and the treatment of agency workers is provided on GOV.UK. and in the Department for Education Agency Workers Regulations; Supply Teachers guidance; and in the [Agency and other off-payroll working guidance](#).

## Apprentices

Where a school recruits and appoints apprentices themselves the recruitment checks detailed in this policy will be followed. Where the school recruits an apprentice through an apprenticeship provider the school will obtain written confirmation from the provider that the same checks have been carried out for the apprentice as the school would have carried out on its own staff. The school will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. This will be recorded on the **School's Single Central Record**.

## Volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of the school workforce. A volunteer is someone who gives their time with unpaid activity to help an organisation or an individual. Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Volunteers, who on an unsupervised basis teach or look after children regularly, or provide personal care on a one-off basis in schools and colleges, will be in regulated activity. The school or college will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (which will include barred list information) for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity. Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be rechecked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information). However, schools may decide to conduct a repeat DBS check (which should include barred list information) on any such volunteer.

Schools may obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (not including barred list information), for volunteers who are not engaging in regulated activity but have the opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, e.g. supervised volunteers.

## Single Central Record

Schools are required to keep a single central record. This document must cover all staff, including supply staff and teacher trainees on salaried routes, who work at the school. The information that must be recorded is:

- have the appropriate checks been carried out
- have certificates been obtained
- the date on which each check was completed / certificates obtained

For supply staff and apprentices, schools should also include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff / apprentice has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

Where checks are carried out on volunteers, schools should record this on the single central record.