



Safer Recruitment Policy



‘Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God...’ **Matthew 6.33**

The Local Management Board of St Patrick’s Catholic College is committed to the safety and welfare of children and is acutely aware that: ‘The safety and welfare of the child is paramount at all times’. The school mission simply states:

‘Seek ye first the Kingdom of God’

It is our mission therefore, to enable all our young people to flourish in their lives both inside and outside of college. This *‘human flourishing’* occurs when they feel secure and confident within the environment in which they live. Providing this security and confidence is a key aspect of the role of the college and this is underpinned by the college ethos in which everyone is valued and appreciated for their own intrinsic worth. In our college, the values of caring and consideration for all people are nurtured in a community which seeks to live out the gospel values in all it does.

The Safe Recruitment policy combines with a suite of other policies, with the express purpose of maintaining the safety of children. Further guidance can be found by referring to the school’s Safeguarding Policy.

Aims

This policy has been developed to ensure that the recruitment of staff or volunteers to work within St Patrick’s Catholic College is compliant with DfE guidance and the guidance issued by the Catholic Education Service (CES) regarding recruitment so that the risk of recruiting someone who intends to harm is minimised. It applies to all people who carry out work at St Patrick’s Catholic College, whether paid, voluntary, supplied by an agency or under a service term agreement.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The importance of safeguarding and protecting children will be promoted as much as possible throughout the recruitment process in order to deter would-be abusers. For every post the current Catholic Education Service application forms, contracts, guidance documents and associated policies will be used.

Separate guidance issued by the Middlesbrough Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service exists for the recruitment of a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

Timeline

The need for a thorough, safe recruitment process is paramount and timelines for the appointment of staff will vary depending on the time it takes to receive all of the appropriate pre-employment checks and for the candidate to serve a notice period. It is recognised that appointments often need to take place speedily to ensure continuity of provision for the children/young people in our academy,

however no appointment process will circumvent the measures described in this policy for the sake of expediency.

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

At the start of the recruitment process it is important to define what the responsibilities of the postholder will be, as well as the qualifications and experience needed to perform the role.

All Job Descriptions will, as a minimum, detail:

- Job Title
- Grade/Scale of Post
- Review Date
- Job Purpose
- Line Management
- Specific Responsibilities
- Skills & Abilities
- Responsibilities
- The postholder's specific responsibility towards the promotion and the practice of safeguarding the welfare of children that they come into contact with through their job.

All person specifications will, as a minimum, detail:

- Qualifications required
- Professional Registrations (if required)
- Define the skills, competencies and previous experience required
- The requirement to be cleared by the DBS for work with children and where appropriate disqualification by association

Each requirement on the person specification will be graded as either 'Essential' or 'Desirable'. These grades will be used for shortlisting purposes after the closing date. How these issues will be tested will vary from post to post.

Advertisements

The advertisement for a vacancy will demonstrate our commitment to safer recruitment and vetting procedures in order to act as a deterrent to would-be abusers. All recruitment advertisements will display the following:

- Our Lady of Light Catholic Academy Trust name and logo and the name and logo of St. Patrick's Catholic College
- Post Title
- Hours (this should indicate if full or part time)
- Grade or Scale
- Salary including any allowances offered e.g. TLR
- Permanent or Fixed Term (if fixed term the duration of the contract should be stated)
- Advert Text (which should detail the main responsibilities of the post)
- Safeguarding Children Statement: *"This academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and*

volunteers to share this commitment. Candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check as part of our commitment to safeguarding.”

- Closing Date and Interview Date

Application Packs

The following, as a minimum, will be provided to applicants:

- CES Application Form and Guidance for Applicants
- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Further information relating to the school
- CES Recruitment Monitoring Declaration Form
- CES Rehabilitation of Offenders Declaration Form

Shortlisting

After the closing date, the Recruitment Monitoring Declaration will be removed from the application documents before shortlisting. If the post is a teaching post then the candidates will be checked against the *Prohibited from Teaching* list through the Employer Access Online service. If the outcome of the check is clear then the application will proceed to shortlisting. If the check is not satisfactory, i.e. the candidate is prohibited from teaching then the necessary authorities will be informed and there will be no further contact with the applicant.

The shortlisting panel will review all applications and match them against the published person specification. Those who meet all of the relevant essential criteria will form a ‘long list’.

Invitation to Interview

Candidates will receive an invitation to interview letter using the model CES template which re-iterates the school’s commitment to safeguarding and stipulates that each candidate must bring evidence (original documents only) verifying their professional qualifications, identity, right to work in the UK and documentation required for the purpose of DBS checking. All invitation letters sent will include the following:

“St Patrick’s Catholic College is committed to safer recruitment so please bring with you to interview the following documents in order that your identity, entitlement to work in the UK and qualifications can be verified:

- *Photographic evidence of your identity e.g. passport, driving license*
- *Evidence of relevant qualifications you have included in your application*
- *Evidence of your ability to work in the UK (paperwork including your National Insurance number will suffice)”*

Interviews

On arrival for interview the original documents requested in the invitation to interview letter will be obtained from each candidate and copied. The copies will be verified, initialled and dated and held with the Pre-Employment Checklist pending the outcome of the interviews. The interview process will allow time for any discrepancy in a candidate's application or references to be scrutinised and clarified. Interviewers will question candidates regarding any employment gaps, criminal record disclosures, fitness for the role, previous experience, suitability for the post and their motivation to work with children. The Panel will be certain they have explored all relevant areas before they offer a post.

All interviews will be carried out on a face to face basis. On the rare occasions where teachers have applied from overseas then it may be appropriate to interview via video conferencing. All interview panels should include a representative of the Local Governing Body, where possible, and will include at least one person who has successfully completed safer recruitment training. This will enable the scrutiny of each candidate's motivation to work with children by a trained interviewer. The composition of an interview panel will reflect the nature of the post.

References

These will be requested prior to interview and be available to the Chair of the Panel on the day of the interview. One of the referees must be the candidate's current or most recent employer. Open references will **not** be accepted neither will references which have been provided by the candidate. Referees for all candidates will be asked specific role and child protection related questions. This avoids references which may have been written as part of a compromise agreement and would not state any adverse qualities or incidents involving the candidate.

The Academy Trust reserves the right to seek references from the current employer even if they are not listed as referees on the application form.

When references are received prior to interview the HR/ School Business Manager will follow up any discrepancies or issues to enable the panel to make a decision with reference to all the facts available at the time. Gaps and inconsistencies will be followed up before an offer of employment is made. Standard forms for seeking and responding to reference requests will be used for this purpose.

Employment Gaps

The CES application form allows for candidates to inform us of any gaps in their employment history. The HR/ School Business Manager will check for these gaps and highlight any found to the panel. These will be investigated at interview, along with the reason for them not being disclosed on the application form. The interview panel will explore patterns of repeated change in career or employers at interview, ensuring that the reasons for this are fully explored.

Qualification Verification

At interview, essential qualifications required for the post, including those set by statute, will be verified by the HR/ School Business Manager. Any concerns will be made known to the Panel immediately. A photocopy of all the original qualification certificates will be taken and if the candidate is successful, these will be placed on their personal file. If the candidate is unsuccessful, then these, along with evidence of identity documents will be securely destroyed.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

Disclosure of Criminal Record

Posts within schools are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (updated guidance March 2014), therefore as a prospective employer, we encourage candidates to disclose any *unspent* and *spent* convictions during the application stage by including space for this on our application form.

Disclosing a criminal background will not be used as a reason to not shortlist a candidate, unless it involves violence and/or the safety of children. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily bar a person from working with children. Successful candidates will be required to complete a DBS application form (and Disqualification by Association where appropriate).

Once Enhanced DBS with barred list clearance is verified, any discrepancy in convictions declared on the application form and the DBS clearance will be discussed with the candidate and may lead to the offer of employment being withdrawn with immediate effect, even if the person has commenced work.

Regulated Activity

An Enhanced DBS check is needed for all staff engaging in regulated activity. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with Barred List information will be required as the majority of staff will be engaged 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 or supervision of children; or
- will regularly work in a school or college at times when children are on school or college 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
- will regularly come into contact with children under 18 years of age.

A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity.

Post Interview Checks

Any offer of employment to any post at St Patrick's Catholic College will be subject to the following:

- **Employment history and references**
 - o We will always ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, we will check with the school, college or local authority at which they were most recently employed, to confirm details of their employment and reasons for leaving.
 - o References will be sought on all shortlisted candidates, including internal ones, before interview, so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview.

o On receipt, satisfactory references will be checked by the HR/ School Business Manager to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. The referee will be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate; for example if the answers are vague. They will also be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the candidate.

- **Verification of Candidates Identity**

It is vital that we know who our employees are and have evidence to prove this. Evidence of identity will be sought as part of the enhanced DBS check. We will verify a candidate's identity from current photographic ID and we will ask to see proof of address. Photocopies of documentation will be taken by the HR/ School Business Manager and kept on file for anyone appointed to work in the school. Where a candidate is not appointed, this documentation will be securely destroyed.

- **Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List Check**

o All employees will be considered to take part in regulated activity and therefore we will require them to be checked against the Children's Barred List and obtain an enhanced DBS check.

The Headteacher will review the completed DBS check and determine if it meets the required standard. Where it does not, the subject to contract offer of employment will be withdrawn with immediate effect. Advice and guidance should be sought from the HR Legal Advisor in this instance.

- **Medical Clearance**

Successful candidates will be required to complete a medical questionnaire dealt with by HR. Depending on the answers given by the candidate, a referral to Occupational Health may be required to assess fitness for work. If a referral is made then job offers are confirmed only when a letter has been received from Occupational Health declaring them fit for the post for which they have applied.

- **Prohibition Order**

The HR/ School Business Manager will ensure that a candidate who is a registered teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State. They will use the Employer Access Online Service to check this detail.

- **Right to work in the UK**

The HR/ School Business Manager will request documentation from the candidate to verify their right to work in the UK. This will be checked against the requirements of the Border Agency. Where the right to work in the UK cannot be verified, the offer of employment will be immediately withdrawn and the Border Agency notified of the details of the applicant.

- **Overseas Check**

If the candidate has lived or worked outside of the UK, the HR/ School Business Manager will complete any further checks which are appropriate.

- **Verification of Professional Qualifications**

The HR/ School Business Manager will request that successful candidates provide evidence of the qualifications that they have detailed on their application form. A copy of the certificates will be kept on the personnel file of the employee.

- **Verification of Professional Registration**

Some posts require a professional registration with regulatory body. This will be evidenced and placed on file, if the Person Specification states it is an essential criteria. The HR/ School Business Manager will verify the registration and will make a copy of this and place it on file

These checks will be listed on the Pre-Employment Checklist used by the school.

These checks will be made clear to candidates at interview. Any offer of employment will be subject to satisfactory checks being received and verified. When the interview panel have decided who they would like to appoint to the post the successful candidate will be notified and sent a pack of documentation which they should complete and return promptly to allow any remaining pre-employment checks to take place. The HR/ School Business Manager will oversee this process. The candidate will not be made an unconditional offer at any point prior to the receipt of all satisfactory pre-employment checks.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Starting employment before receipt of DBS check

If the Headteacher wishes for an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available then a risk assessment should be completed and held by the HR/ School Business Manager to identify any risks that this should pose to the students. The Headteacher will make the decision as to whether it is appropriate for this person to start employment after reviewing this document.

Temporary Staff Employed Directly by the school

Staff employed on a temporary contract issued by the school will follow the same recruitment process as any other permanent employee. All pre-employment checks must be completed.

Peripatetic Tutors and Agency Staff (Including Agency Supply Teachers)

All service providers/staffing agencies providing staff to undertake regulated activity will be required to provide evidence of the same pre-employment checks that the Academy would complete if they were directly employing the staff themselves. This should be submitted in writing and in advance of the provider starting work and should be agreed as part of any contract between the Academy and provider. We reserve the right to view the original copy of the disclosure from the agency if it contains additional information. Evidence of checks from external providers will be recorded on the Single Central Record by HR/ School Business Manager.

If evidence is not provided then the school will not allow the peripatetic tutors or agency staff to have unsupervised access to children.

Contractors etc

Children should not be allowed in areas where builders are working for Health and Safety reasons, so there should be little opportunity for workers to be unsupervised with children. It is difficult to say

that there will not be times when contact with a child occurs, however, this will be managed by the Headteacher who will use their professional judgement to determine supervision levels.

Anyone entering school premises to undertake activities which are not classed as regulated will be required to verify their identity, providing documents such as a passport or driver's licence along with company or council ID. The school will take all necessary precautions to ensure that the named individual is who they say they are.

Volunteers Engaging in Regulated Activity

Many volunteers in schools have the same unsupervised access to children as employees. A child will not consider a distinction between a volunteer and a member of staff when seeking help or support. An Enhanced DBS check incorporating a Children's Barred List check must be carried out prior to the volunteer starting their duties. Two references will also be required - one of these must be from their current or most recent employer/voluntary organisation. Open references will not be accepted neither will references which have been provided by the candidate. These checks will be carried out for all volunteers engaging in regulated activity.

If such a volunteer becomes a paid employee, then all pre-employment checks must be completed with the exception of the Enhanced DBS check as it will already be held by the academy.

Volunteers Not Engaging in Regulated Activity

A volunteer who is supervised at all times does not require a DBS check as they are not engaging in regulated activity. If such a volunteer becomes a paid employee, then all pre-employment checks must be completed including an Enhanced DBS check should be sought to reflect the change from volunteer to employee status.

Single Central Register

St Patrick's Catholic College will keep a Central Record of all staff that provides confirmation that relevant checks have been taken such as:

- Verification of Identity (Name/DOB/Address)
- Qualifications (Qualifications required to do the job and any professional registrations required)
- Children's Barred List check
- Disclosure and Barring Service check
- Employer Access Online (List of persons prohibited from teaching)
- Overseas Criminal Record Checks (applicable for any employee who has spent a period of time abroad)
- Professional references
- QTS check
- Right to work in the UK

This record will be kept by the HR/School Business Manager.

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Next date for review: **May 2019**

Ratified by LMB: **May 2017**

Signed:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors

DRAFT