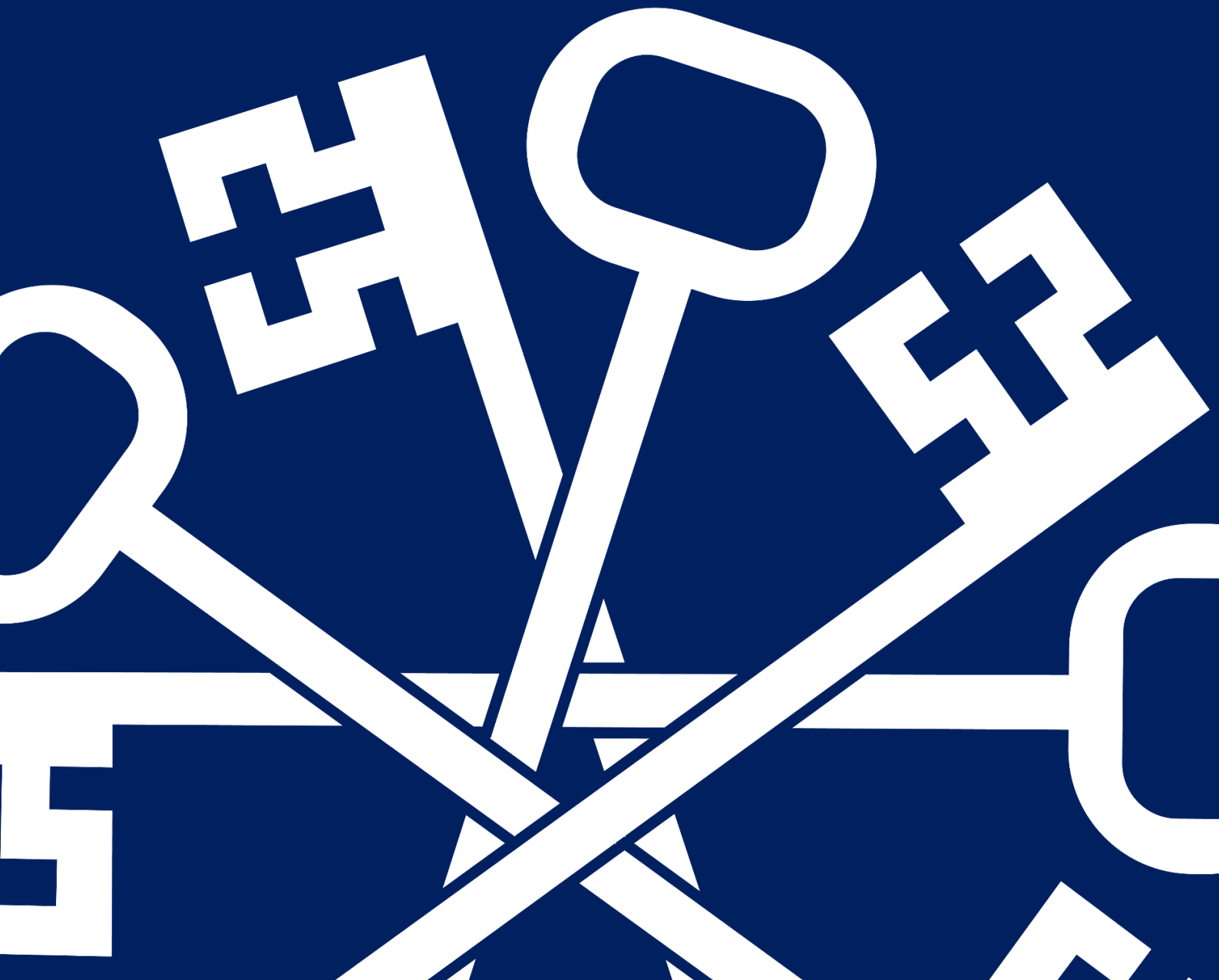
KEYS ACADEMIES TRUST

Recruitment and Selection Policy Version 3.0



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1. Policy Statement

1.1. At the heart of our mission is the belief that every individual has untapped potential waiting to be unlocked. By fostering an environment that challenges and supports growth, we want to create pathways for social mobility. By providing the right tools, guidance, and opportunities, we enable each person to overcome barriers and reach their fullest potential.

1.2. We want our schools to not only places of learning but vibrant communities where every person feels they truly belong. Within this students, teachers, and support staff alike should feel they are developing and succeeding. This success should be an achievable reality for all, irrespective of background or circumstance. It may be quite different for each of us, but the key is the feeling of pride in doing well and enjoyment of the journey.

1.3. We are committed to building inclusive environments where the uniqueness of every individual is celebrated, and where collective growth is the norm.

2. Change Summary

2.1. 2.0: changes made to bring policy in-line with KCSiE, including social media checks and GDPR updates.

3. Introduction

3.1. The Board of Trustees is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

3.2. The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Trust/school Equality and Diversity policy.

3.3. We will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.

3.4. We will comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education with regard to DBS and other pre-employment checks.

3.5. We will ensure compliance with the Data Protection regulations and the more stringent requirements contained within the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The GDPR encompasses the core principles of the DPA and provides more onerous responsibility and accountability for fair and transparent processing. Our Privacy Statements provide specific details in accordance with the GDPR principles and can be found on the websites of our member schools. Further information on the Trust's approach to GDPR can be found at Keys Academies Trust - GDPR (www.keystrust.org)

4. Delegation of Appointments and Constitution of Appointments Panels

4.1. The power to offer employment for all posts below the level of Assistant Head is delegated to the Headteacher of each school within the Trust. The Headteacher may not delegate the offer of employment to any other senior manager or governor.

4.2. The Headteacher is expected to involve at least one Academy Committee member or Trustee in the appointment of all members of the school's Senior Leadership Team.

4.3. Shortlisting panels will comprise a minimum of two people (normally three). In accordance with the statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. In addition, at least one member will have undertaken general recruitment or equalities training. Those that carry out the shortlisting will be present on the interview panel to ensure a consistent approach.

5. Advertising

5.1. All vacant posts will 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 employees are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before an external advertisement. In these circumstances, the shortlisting panel may decide that certain parts of the recruitment process may be omitted but all candidates will be subject to a formal interview, the satisfactory reference requirements and any other necessary checks.

5.2. The advert will include the level of DBS check required depending on the role being recruited for and whether the role with involve regulated activity.

5.3. Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Which means certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers. If they are disclosed, they will not be taken into account.

5.4. All adverts state the requirement for a certificate of good conduct where applicable, in addition, for teaching posts, a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked.

5.5. Within the advert the applicant will be provided with the school's policy and practice in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

5.6. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the school will consider carrying out an online search as part of the due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Where an online check will be carried out, this will be indicated in the advert and/or recruitment pack.

6. Information for Applicants

6.1. All applicants for all vacant posts will be provided with:

a) A job description outlining the duties of the post and an indication of where the post fits into the organisational structure of the School.

b) A person specification may also be provided. This will also include a statement on behalf of the Board of Trustees of their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people

c) An application form or a means to apply online. CVs will not be accepted.

d) An Information pack containing:

i. A description of the School relevant to the vacant post.

ii. Reference to the School's policy on Equality and Diversity.

iii. Reference to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

iv. DBS and other pre-employment checks required.

v. A statement that canvassing any member of staff, or member of the Trust or Local Governing Body, directly or indirectly, is prohibited and will be considered a disqualification.

vi. The closing date for the receipt of applications.

vii. An outline of the terms of employment including salary.

viii. Reference to the School's policy on recruitment and selection.

7. Short Listing and Reference Requests

7.1. The shortlisting panel will use an agreed shortlisting process. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants based on the essential and desirable criteria for the post. The selection panel will agree the candidates to be called for interview.

7.2. The shortlisting panel will take up at least two references on each shortlisted candidate. If a candidate for a post working with children is not currently working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment working with children to confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving. One reference will be from the applicant's current employer.

7.3. Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm:

a) The referee's relationship with the candidate.

b) Details of the applicant's current post and salary.

c) Performance history.

d) All formal time-limited capability warnings which have not passed the expiration date

e) All formal time-limited disciplinary warnings where not relating to safeguarding concerns which have not passed the expiration date

f) All disciplinary action which may include those where the penalty is “time expired” and relate to the safety and welfare of children.

g) Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children.

h) Whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate’s suitability to work with children. If so, the School will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children.

7.4. References are the "property" of the shortlisting panel and strict confidentiality will be observed. Employer testimonials or ‘bearer references’ i.e. those provided by the candidate and/or marked ‘to whom it may concern’ will not be accepted. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied. The shortlisting panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the candidate. References will be verified, and any discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate at interview. Electronic references will be checked to ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

7.5. References will be checked against information on the application; any discrepancy/issue of concern noted will be taken up with applicant at interview. The school will contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided.

7.6. On receipt, equality monitoring information will be separated from applications.

7.7. If the field of applicants is felt to be weak the post may be re-advertised.

7.8. Where the school has carried out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of the due diligence, any concerns which arise may be discussed with the applicant at, or prior to, the interview stage.

7.9. All shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. For example:

a) If they have a criminal history

b) whether they are included on the barred list

c) whether they are prohibited from teaching

d) whether they are prohibited from taking part in the management of an independent school

e) information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted

f) if they are known to the police and children's social care

g) have they been disqualified from providing childcare (Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018)

h) any relevant overseas information

7.10. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate will be asked to physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

7.11. The Trust has a policy for the provision for and the requesting of references.

8. Interviews

8.1. The format, style and duration of the interviews are matters for the Headteacher to decide in consultation with any governors or trustees involved in the process but the following will be adhered to:

a) Briefing:

All candidates will be given relevant information about the School to enable the candidate to make further enquiries about the suitability of the advertised job.

b) The formal interview:

Before the interviews the selection panel will agree on the interview format including any other assessment methods. The questions asked will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirement of the job description and the person specification and each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post. The same areas of questioning will be covered for each applicant and no questions which would discriminate directly or indirectly on protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be asked.

8.2. The selection process for every post, will include exploration of the candidate's understanding of child safeguarding issues. Questions will include:

a) Finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children

b) Exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role

c) Probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking for the reasons for this

d) The interview will also explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children. Area that may be concerning and lead to further probing include:

e) Implication that adults and children are equal

f) Lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children

g) Inappropriate idealisation of children

h) Inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children

i) Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours

8.3. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

8.4. The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions, other than those protected, that the candidate has declared and are relevant to the prospective employment.

8.5. The recruitment documentation will be retained for six months from the date of interview. Applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. After six months all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

9. Offer of Employment by the Selection Panel

9.1. The offer of employment by the selection panel and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties subject to:

a) Verification of identity (including Birth Certificate)

b) verification of right to work in the UK

c) Proof of relevant qualifications

d) Satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure

e) A Certificate of Good Conduct (if applicable) which may include EEA sanctions and restrictions

f) Barred list check

g) Teacher prohibition (if applicable)

h) Section 128 check (if applicable)

i) Pre-employment medical screening

j) Satisfactory references

k) Disqualification under the Childcare Disqualification Act 2006, as amended

l) The successful candidate will be informed, normally by offer letter, that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks

9.2. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified

10. Personnel File and Single Central Record

10.1. Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of his/her employment with the School including:

a) Application form – signed by the applicant

b) Interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in the employment history

c) References – minimum of 2

d) Proof of identity (including Birth Certificate)

e) Proof of right to work in the UK

f) Proof of relevant academic qualifications

g) Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable) which may include for teaching positions, a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked

h) Evidence of medical clearance from the pre-employment medical screening questionnaire and subsequent Occupational Health service

i) Evidence of DBS clearance and barred list check

j) Teacher prohibition checks (where applicable)

k) Evidence of a Section 128 direction (where applicable)

l) Offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment

m) Disqualification under the Childcare Disqualification Act 2006, as amended (where applicable)

10.2. Retention of personal information for the successful candidate following the end of their employment will be in accordance with the Trust Data Retention Policy, which is compliant with relevant Data Protection Act. When retained documents have reached their data retention limit, they will be securely destroyed.

10.3. Trust Schools will destroy information obtained by a vetting exercise as soon as possible or within six months. A record of the result of the vetting or verification of the successful candidate will be retained on the employees file and the Single Central Record.

10.4. Trust Schools will normally collect personal information from you only where we have your consent to do so, where we need the personal information to perform a contract with/involving you, or where the processing is in our legitimate interests and not overridden by your data protection interests or fundamental rights and freedoms. In some cases, we may also have a legal obligation to collect personal information from you or may otherwise need the personal information to protect your vital interests or those of another person. The School will retain a record of consent as evidence that we have obtained consent to collect and process the data and that applicants have been advised of the purpose of the collection and processing.

10.5. You have the right to withdraw your consent at any time and can do so by informing the School's Local Data Officer, with the exception of documents that are required for a statutory requirement.

10.6. Trust Schools will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

11. Start of Employment and Induction

11.1. The pre-employment checks listed in paragraph 8.1 above must be completed before the employee starts work. Exceptions will only be made in circumstances where a risk assessment has been undertaken. Exceptions will never be made in the case of the barred list and teacher prohibition checks.

11.2. All new employees will be provided with an induction programme which will cover all relevant matters of School and Trust policy but in particular safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will include the:

a) Child protection policy which will include amongst other things the policy and procedures to deal with peer on peer abuse

b) Behaviour policy (which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

c) Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct)

d) safeguarding response to children who go missing from education

e) role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and deputies)

11.3. Copies of all policies and a copy of Part one or Annex A of KCSIE, if appropriate will be provided to all staff at induction

11.4. The Trust has a policy for the onboarding and induction of new starters.

12. Version History

VERSION	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	DATE

1.0	Policy drafted using EPM Model Policy as basis	Matthew DEERE	14/08/2018
2.0	Reviewed against EPM Model Policy reworked due to KCSIE changes	Matthew DEERE	20/09/2021
2.1	Reviewed against EPM Model Policy (last updated April 2023)	Sarah BYFORD	30/07/2024