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Education

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Introduction

At Projection Education , we recognise that children with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs are often more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. It is therefore vital that we create a culture of vigilance.

This policy ensures we adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter, identify, and reject individuals who are unsuitable to work with our pupils. We are committed to recruiting staff who possess the emotional resilience, professional boundaries, and safeguarding awareness necessary for this specialist setting.

This policy is informed by:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSiE, DfE, September 2026)
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2026)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Relevant employment law, data protection law (Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR), and childcare disqualification regulations (Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018).

The purpose of this policy is to set out the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people

Roles and Responsibilities

The Proprietor

- Responsible for ensuring the school follows statutory safer recruitment guidance. At least one member of the interview panel will have completed safer recruitment training.

Head of Education

The Head of Education must:

- Ensure the school operates safe recruitment practices and appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers

- Ensure that contractors and agencies comply with safer recruitment requirements
- Promote safeguarding of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process, including ensuring the Single Central Record is up to date.

Inviting Applicants

- All vacant posts of three months or more will normally be advertised externally to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible.
- Advertisements will make clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and include the statement: *Projection Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended) and subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and children's barred list check."*
- Adverts must also state whether the post is in regulated activity and whether barred list checks are required.
- Prospective applicants will be provided with:
 - Job description and person specification (including competencies required to support SEMH pupils, eg. De-escalation skills, resilience)
 - Safeguarding and child protection policy
 - Safer recruitment policy (this document)
 - Application form and guidance notes

Applications and Shortlisting

- All applicants must complete an application form in full. CVs are not accepted.
- Application forms must include: full employment history with explanations for gaps (4 weeks or more), qualifications, and referee details.
- Applications must be signed (electronic signatures permitted, but hard copies should be signed at interview if shortlisted).
- At least two people must review applications, one of whom is safer-recruitment trained.
- Where a role involves regulated activity, applicants must be reminded that it is an offence to apply if barred.
- An online search will be made of all shortlisted candidates

References

- At least two references must be obtained before interview where possible, covering the last five years.
- References must include the most recent employer. For those currently working in schools, the reference must be confirmed by the Headteacher.
- References must come directly from the referee (never via the candidate).

- References must ask:
 - The applicant's suitability to work with children
 - Any safeguarding-related disciplinary issues
 - Any formal capability procedures
 - Suitability for the role as described in the job description

Selection and Interview

- Selection processes may include additional assessment exercises alongside the interview.
- At least two interviewers are required, one trained in safer recruitment.
- Interviews must explore:
 - Gaps in employment
 - Discrepancies between application and references
 - Applicant's motivation for working with children
 - Understanding of safeguarding responsibilities
- Panel members must record objective notes, with candidate names, panel member names, and dates.
- Appointment decisions must be subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks.

Pre-Employment Checks

All offers are conditional on completion of checks, including:

- Proof of identity (including birth certificate where possible)
- Proof of right to work in the UK
- Enhanced DBS check (with barred list check where regulated activity applies)
- Verification of professional qualifications
- Medical fitness to work
- Childcare disqualification checks where applicable
- Prohibition from teaching and Section 128 management checks
- Overseas criminal records checks and, where appropriate, letters of professional standing

DBS Update Service: With the applicant's consent, the school may check status via the DBS Update Service. Any information disclosed must be risk assessed by at least two senior leaders.

Retention of DBS information: A copy of a DBS certificate will not normally be retained; if retained, it must not be kept longer than six months and only where justified. The SCR will record the check and date.

All checks must be completed before the successful candidate starts work unless there is a written, supervised, risk-assessed exception.

Existing Staff

Checks may be repeated if:

- There are concerns about a staff member's suitability to work with children
- An individual moves into regulated activity
- There is a break in service of 12 weeks or more

Agency, Contractors, Volunteers, and Others

- Written confirmation must be obtained from agencies/third parties that appropriate checks have been carried out.
- Contractors in regulated activity must have an enhanced DBS with barred list check; others in regular contact require an enhanced DBS without barred list.
- Volunteers: risk assessments must be carried out to decide the level of checks. Volunteers in regulated activity require an enhanced DBS with barred list check.
- Future Governors: subject to Section 128 checks.
- Agency staff will not be used.

Single Central Record (SCR)

The SCR must include:

- Identity check
- Barred list check (where appropriate)
- Enhanced DBS check
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Overseas checks (where relevant)
- Professional qualification checks
- Right to work in the UK check
- Section 128 check (management/governor roles)
- Dates and who made the checks

The SCR must cover all staff, proprietor body, supply/agency staff, contractors, governors, and regular volunteers.

Induction and Probation

- New employees must undergo induction including safeguarding training, KCSIE part 1, staff code of conduct and policies.
- Probationary procedures must confirm safe practice and ability to identify/report concerns.
- Any volunteers and governors must also receive safeguarding induction.

External Referrals

- **DBS referrals:** Required if a person is removed from regulated activity (or would have been had they not resigned) for reasons of harm, risk of harm, or relevant convictions.
- **TRA referrals:** Required where a teacher has engaged in conduct that may result in prohibition.

Review: This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in line with statutory guidance .