Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy 2024-2025

Document Control	
Version	*V 1.0*
Previous version location	*Sharepoint*
Reviewed by	*HR Business Partner*
Review date	*November 2024*
Considered/Endorsed by	*Principal*
Approved by	*Trust Board*
Principal Source(s)	*The Key*
Approved date	*December 2024*
Next review date	*December 2025*
Officer responsible	*HR Business Partner*

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Amendments to previous approved version

Reason for amendments

Update and clarification.

1 Policy Statement

It is a legal requirement that all educational establishments treat individuals who possess a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate due to a conviction or other related information revealed. Lighthouse School will ensure that all potential job applicants can access this policy on the recruitment section of the school website.

We recognise the contribution that people with criminal records can make as employees and volunteers and welcome applications from them. A person's criminal record will not, in itself, restrict that person from being appointed to a post. Any information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. Suitable applicants will not be refused posts because of offences which are not relevant to, and do not place them at, or make them a risk in a role for which they are applying.

All cases will be examined on an individual basis and will take the following into consideration:

- Whether the conviction is relevant to the position applied for.
- The seriousness of any offence revealed.
- The individual's age at the time of the offence(s).
- The length of time since the offence(s) occurred.
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour.
- The circumstances surrounding the offence(s), and the explanation(s) provided.
- Whether an individual's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2024/5.

2 Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees of the school will ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department for Education guidance and legal requirements and will monitor the school's compliance.

The Senior Leadership Team including the Principal and other managers involved in recruitment will ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and up- dated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance.

To ensure the recruitment of all staff is conducted in a fair manner, and in order to achieve this purpose, those who are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all applicants.

3 Aims and Objectives

To ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all school staff in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people, and that all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and therefore appointees are not discriminated against.

4 Principles

4.1 Lighthouse School complies fully with the Code of Practice for processing DBS checks to assess an individual's suitability for positions of trust within the school. The school is aware of and complies with the Equality Act, in particular the 9 protected characteristics within the act, therefore regardless of age, race, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability, pregnancy and maternity, or sex.

4.2 The school actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates. Candidates are selected for interview based on their skills, knowledge and experience.

4.3 All paid employees of Lighthouse School are in regulated activity and are therefore required to possess a suitable enhanced DBS certificate (with adult and child barred checks).

4.4 Volunteers are risk assessed thoroughly in order to determine whether a DBS application is appropriate for the position concerned.

4.5 Application forms, job advertisements and recruitment documents contain a statement to inform prospective applicants that an enhanced DBS check (with adult and child barred checks) will be requested in the event of an individual being offered a role at the school.

4.6 Lighthouse School encourages all applicants invited for interview to provide details of any criminal record history that is not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013 and 2020) at an early stage in the application process. Amendments to the Exceptions Order provide for certain spent convictions and cautions to be protected, and these cannot be taken into account, as they are not subject to disclosure. Please see the information provided at:

https://hub.unlock.org.uk/knowledgebase/filtering-cautions-convictions/ and at:

https://unlock.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/misc/What-will-be-filtered-by-the-DBS.pdf for further details prior to any self-disclosure.

4.7 The school requests that any self-disclosure be handed in a separate sealed envelope marked 'strictly personal' for the attention of HR when shortlisted for a role. We

guarantee this information will only be seen by those who need to view it during the selection process.

Self-disclosures will be discussed and considered for candidates at the interview stage in order for any potential concerns to be fully explored. For those who are not appointed their disclosures will be confidentially destroyed. The HR Department staff have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance of offences and circumstances of these under the relevant legislation for the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013 and 2020).

4.8 The Principal and a HR Representative will have an open and measured discussion with the potential employee regarding any offences or other related matters relevant to the role, where a DBS certificate or self-disclosure form reveals such information, prior to giving due consideration to withdrawing any conditional offer of employment already made. Failure to reveal such information could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment, and where an individual has already commenced employment at the school, this may lead to termination of employment.

4.9 DBS applicants are advised to read the Code of Practice at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annex A, and Guidance For Safer Working Practice For Those Working With Children And Young People In Education Settings.