SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

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1. Policy Statement

Lighthouse is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work and following safer recruitment guidelines.

Lighthouse School is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills experience and ability to do the job is critical to the school's performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy and the Volunteer Policy, as well as Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 and Guidance For Safer Working Practice For Those Working With Children And Young People In Education Settings.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

<u>The Board of Trustees of the school will:</u>

- 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;
- monitor the school's compliance with procedures and policies and ensure that appropriate staff and Trustees have completed safer recruitment training.

<u>The Principal and other Managers involved in recruitment will:</u>

- ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance;
- ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers working in the school;
- monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this policy;
- promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process.

The Board of Trustees delegates the power to offer employment for all posts to the Principal and/or other Senior Managers.

3 Scope and Purpose of the Policy

- To ensure the recruitment of all staff is conducted in a fair, effective and economical manner.
- To achieve this purpose, those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.
- This policy applies to all the school employees and Trustees responsible for and involved in the recruitment and selection of staff.
- The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has delegated the responsibility to the Principal for appointing all staff.

4. Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people takes place at each stage of the process.
- To ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all school staff.
- To ensure all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, sex or pregnancy and maternity.
- To ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

5. Principles

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment.
- All vacancies advertised will include a job description detailing the post-holder's responsibilities for safeguarding.
- Employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills required to fulfil the role.
- Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members. At least one panel member will have received appropriate Safer Recruitment Training.
- Selection will be based on a minimum of; completed application form, short listing and interview, but, whenever possible, involve other assessments.
- Posts will normally be advertised on our school website and the advert will include reference to the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

- The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment(s) to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

6. Pre-recruitment Process

6.1 Objective

The objective of the recruitment process is to attract, select and retain staff who will successfully and positively contribute to the future development of the school. The first experience an individual has is important; therefore, the experience should be positive and all those responsible for recruiting will:

- Leave a positive image with unsuccessful applicants.
- Give successful applicants a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them.
- Take reasonable actions to reduce the risk of a bad selection decision, recognising the potential cost and the school's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

6.2 Application Form

A standard application form will be used to obtain a common set of data from all applicants and always include key information on safeguarding. As such, candidates must provide information on employment history and if appropriate adequately explain the reasons for any gaps. The candidates must complete, sign and date the declaration.

6.3 Job Description and Person Specification

A job description and, where applicable, a person specification will be issued for all posts. In the case of volunteers this will include a volunteer role profile. The job description/volunteer role profile will have a clear reference to an individual's responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

6.4 Criminal Self-Disclosure

All short-listed candidates will be asked to complete a self-disclosure form with their invitation to interview.

6.5 References and online social media searches

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be requested directly from the referee using the standardised school form.

References will be sought on all short-listed candidates and will be obtained, where possible, before interview in order for any issues or concerns they raise can be explored further with the referee, and/or taken up with the candidate at interview.

The school will take reasonable steps to verify references received electronically. In addition, short-listed candidates will be screened on social media to help identify any

potential issues. Appendix One details guidance on conducting social media searches for shortlisted candidates. All searches will be carried out in line with this guidance and documented using the Online Search Record in Appendix Two. The search will be saved on the recruitment file until it is destroyed following a 6-month period. For success candidates it will be recorded on their HR file which is retained until 6 years after leaving the school, when it will be confidentially destroyed. HR, the Business Manager and the Principal have access to this information.

Where information is found that is of concern this will be reported to the safeguarding chair of the recruitment panel in order to further discuss at interview. A record will be made in writing of the candidates response during interview and retained on the recruitment file, or on the HR File if appointed, as detailed above.

7. Interviews

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate for the post, including at least one question exploring candidate suitability to work with children and young people. The selection process for people who will work with children and young people will always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

7.1 Interview Panel

A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel.

The members of the panel will:

- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments;
- be appropriately trained, (at least one member of interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training within the last 3 years).
- meet before the interviews to:
  1) Reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing.
  2) Consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel this will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to consider changing the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

7.2 Scope of the Interview

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also explore the candidates:

- attitude towards children and young people;
- ability to support the school's ethos for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- gaps in employment history; and any concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.

8. Conditional offer of employment: Pre-employment checks

An offer of employment for the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- verification of the candidate's identity;
- verification of eligibility to work in the UK;
- appropriate overseas checks, and references from any overseas education employer;
- verification of the candidate's mental and physical ability to carry out the intrinsic tasks of the role;
- receipt of at least two satisfactory and verified references;
- verification of qualifications;
- verification of professional status where required e.g. QTS status (unless properly exempted);
- a check of the DfE Barred List;
- a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure (with adult and child barred check), with the certificate seen and verified by the school (for Volunteers a written risk assessment in relation to the undertaking of an Enhanced DBS Disclosure);
- a check that candidates taking up a management role are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State;
- a check using the Employer Access Online Service to establish whether a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State for Education or GTCE sanction exists against the individual (for posts carrying out 'teaching work');
- verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999) unless the successful candidate is an ECT undertaking their statutory induction (for teaching posts);
- Any additional checks as deemed appropriate.

All checks will be appropriately documented and retained on the individuals personnel file with information recorded on the school's central record in line with the statutory requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2024). Where information is unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided this will be followed up;

Where:

- the candidate is found to be on the relevant barred List, or the DBS Disclosure shows a disqualification from working with children by a Court; or,
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, the application; or,
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, the facts will be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Where an appointee's DBS certificate is not received in time for commencement date, they will only be able to commence work if the school is satisfied that:

- appropriate supervision is in place;
- other checks (references etc) are completed satisfactorily;

- the DBS barred list check has been completed.
- School will complete a risk assessment on day 1 of their employment and ensure this is shared with the relevant responsible parties .

The following personnel should have their details entered on the School Central Register :

- Staff in regulated activity;
- Regular and/or unsupervised Volunteers, including Trustees;
- Supply Staff;
- Regular visiting professionals in regular contact with children – e.g. Coaches;
- Contract staff in regular contact with children;

All leavers will be deleted off the school central register upon their date of leaving.

9. Post-employment induction

There will be an induction programme for all staff which includes the arrangements for Child Protection and Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 (and Annex A) and Annex B as appropriate) and Safer Working Practice Guidance.

10. Supply Staff

When the school needs to use the services of a supply agency checks will be made to ensure the agency operates a safer recruitment process and provides confirmation that the following have been checked and judged as satisfactory:

- Identity
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure (with adult and child barred check);
- Right to work in the UK;
- Any Prohibition Order, Interim Prohibition Order or GTCE sanction for those undertaking 'teaching work;'
- Qualifications (where applicable);
- Overseas Checks, including and EEA check where applicable.

When the supply member of staff arrives at the school, their original identity document will be checked and it will be confirmed that they are the same person on the documentation from the agency. HR will also need sight of the original DBS certificate and will make a note of the number and date of issue, but will not take a copy. The supply staff's details will be entered on the Single Central Record (SCR).

Appendix 1

As part of our safer recruitment we conduct online searches for shortlisted candidates in a fair and effective manner using Socialmediacheck.com. This is recommended by Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) as part of due diligence in order to identify any safeguarding or suitability issues. The online search does not replace our other recruitment checks. These checks ensure consistency by analysing content from major social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and remove any unconcitous bias from the checking process. The analysis will identify any risks against 8 categories:

- Toxic language;
- Extremist groups;
- Hate speech;
- Swearing and profanity;
- Potential nudity;
- Negative sentiment, and
- Key client terms.

Data protection law applies to online searches in the same way it does to any other element of the application process. All searching and gathering of candidate information is data processing, and we will comply with the seven principles of this as set out under the UK GDPR in that data will be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and transparently;
- Collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to achieve our purpose;
- Accurate and kept up to date;
- Processed and held securely;
- Only retained for as long as is necessary to achieve our purpose.

The seventh principle is that our school is responsible for complying with these principles and must be able to show this, and needs to meet at least one of the six lawful bases for processing personal data. On this basis, our purpose for processing online searches is a public task because we are processing data to carry out our duty to safeguard using safer recruitment techniques, which is in the public interest.

The 2010 Equality Act protects candidates from discrimination based on nine protected characteristics, and to avoid any form of discrimination, Socialmediacheck.com will seek permission prior to conducting social media checks.