



The Blue Coat School

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND DISCLOSURE POLICY

Date of Next Review: Michaelmas 2023

This Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy was devised by the Bursar and the Deputy Head (Pre-Prep) in consultation with colleagues in the school.

The Blue Coat School Birmingham Limited

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND DISCLOSURE POLICY

I. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1.

The Blue Coat School (the School) is committed to providing the best possible care and education for its pupils, and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and all recruitment materials make reference to this fact. The School is committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. In order to achieve these aims the School recognises that it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share these commitments.

1.2.

The aims of the Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy are to ensure that:

- The best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities, and suitability for the position;
- All job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- No job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, gender, sex or sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- The School is compliant with all relevant legislation and with the current recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) September 2022 [Here](#); 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006' August 2018 (DUCA) [Here](#); Working together to Safeguard Children' July 2018 [Here](#); and any guidance or Code of Practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- The School follows the procedures in respect of recruitment set out by Birmingham Local Safeguarding Children Partnership; and
- The School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

1.3.

All employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with this Policy and complying with its provisions.

1.4.

The Blue Coat School Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy applies to the whole school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception).

1.5.

The Blue Coat School Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy is available for parents in Main Reception and the Pre-Prep Office and it is also made available to applicants as part of the recruitment process.

2. DATA PROTECTION

2.1

The School is legally required to carry out the pre-appointment checks detailed in this procedure. Staff and prospective staff will be required to provide certain information to the School to enable the School to carry out the checks that are applicable to their role. The School will also be required to provide certain information to third parties, such as the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). Failure to provide requested information may result in the School not being able to meet its employment, safeguarding or legal obligations. The School will process personal information in accordance with its Staff Privacy Notice.

3. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

3.1

As set out in KCSIE (2022), advertised posts set out the following information in the job description and person specification:

- the skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post
- the safeguarding responsibilities (i.e to what extent the role will involve contact with children and whether the postholder will be in regulated activity)

3.2

The advert will include:

- the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make it clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as stated in the job description
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974).

Applicants will be informed that it is an offence to apply for the role if they are are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

3.3

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an **application form** containing questions about their academic and full employment history since leaving school and their reasons for leaving posts, including any gaps in employment; qualifications, together with the awarding body and date of the award; and their personal qualities and experience and their suitability for the role. They will be required to provide personal details such as current and former names, current address and national insurance number. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. Should there be any gaps in academic or employment history, a satisfactory explanation must be provided. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

3.4

Applicants will receive a relevant job description and person specification for the role. Application forms, job descriptions, person specifications and the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy are available to download from the School's website. Applicants are required to read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

3.5

An applicant submitting an electronic application form will be required to sign his or her application form if he or she attends for a formal interview. Applicants are selected for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience by a shortlisting panel of at least two people who will usually be involved in the interview process. They should consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons for them and explore all potential concerns. The school will carry out an online search as part of its due diligence in respect of shortlisted candidates so that any incidents or issues related to suitability to work with children that have happened and are publicly available online can be explored with the applicant at interview where relevant.

3.6

The applicant may then be invited to attend a **formal interview** in order to discuss his or her relevant skills and experience in more detail. All shortlisted applicants will be assessed at interview regarding their suitability to work with children. At least one member of every interview panel will have successfully completed appropriate training in safer recruitment as defined by the DfE.

3.7

The interview panel should agree structured questions which should include:

- Finding out what attracted the applicant to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children;
- Exploring their skills and asking for example of experience or working with children which are relevant to the role; and
- Probing any gaps in employment where the applicant has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

3.8

The interview panel should explore any potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children including:

- Implications that adults and children are equal;
- Lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children;
- Inappropriate idealisation of children;
- Inadequate understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and children; and
- Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

3.9

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- Verification of the applicant's identity (where this has not previously been verified);
- Verification of qualifications, whether professional or otherwise, which the School takes into account in making the appointment decision, or which are referred to in the application form, whether a requirement for the role or not;
- Verification of the applicant's employment history;
- The receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers to be satisfactory;
- For positions which involve "teaching work", information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to, or is the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School;
- For applicants who have carried out teaching work outside the UK, information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to, or is the subject of a sanction issued by a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School;
- The receipt of an Enhanced DBS Disclosure which must be considered satisfactory by the School (see 4.7 and 4.8);
- Where the position amounts to "regulated activity" (see below) confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List¹
- Information about whether the applicant has ever been subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School;
- For management positions, information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to the DfE, or is subject of a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School. There is no exhaustive list of roles that might be regarded as 'management'; roles include but are not limited to appointments to the Senior Leadership Team, teaching positions with departmental headship, and anyone who is line managing another member of staff;
- Verification of the applicant's physical and mental fitness for the role (see below);
- Verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK;
- A satisfactory declaration by the applicant that s/he is not disqualified from working with children (see Section 4.9 below); and
- Any further checks which the School decides are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK which will include an overseas criminal records check, a certificate or letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked or professional references.

¹ The School is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The School is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff and governors who will be engaging in regulated activity and to ensure that all such checks have been carried out by employment agencies providing supply staff for the School. However, the School can also carry out an enhanced DBS check on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e., roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

Whether a position amounts to "regulated activity" must therefore be considered by the School in order to decide which checks are appropriate. It is however likely that in nearly all cases the School will be able to carry out an enhanced DBS check and a Children's Barred List check.

4. PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

4.1

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSIE, DUCA and the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 the School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

4.2

In addition to the checks set out below, the School reserves the right to obtain such formal or informal background information about an applicant as is reasonable in the circumstances to determine whether they are suitable to work at the School. This will include internet and social media searches.

4.3

In fulfilling its obligations, the School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex, or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability, or age.

4.4 Verification of identity, address and qualifications

4.4.1

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, of the right to work in the UK, and of their address and qualifications, such as:

- A valid passport; and
- A birth certificate (required document); and
- Two utility bills (not a mobile phone bill) or statements (from different sources and issued within the past 3 months) showing his or her name and home address; and
- Documentation confirming his or her National Insurance number (latest P45, P60 – issued in the last 12 months, or National Insurance card); and
- Original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in his or her application form and necessary for the performance of the required role.

The School asks for this information at interview to ensure that the person attending the interview is who they claim to be, to ensure that they are permitted to work for the School if appointed and that they hold the qualifications that have been requested (if any). Further details of relevant identity documents are set out in Appendix I.

4.4.2

Where an applicant claims to have changed his or her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g., marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he or she will be required to provide original documentary evidence of the change.

4.4.3

The School asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) to assist with the vetting of applicants. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the School may verify the identity and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history, of all applicants. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

4.4.4

Providing false information will result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected.

4.5 References

4.5.1

References will be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview, including internal applicants. No questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made. References will be deemed to be confidential, and will not be shared with the candidate.

4.5.2

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the School. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer and be from a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to be aware of any issues including disciplinary investigations. If the referee is school based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher as accurate in respect of disciplinary investigations. If the current or most recent employment does or did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Where the position is administrative or does not involve direct contact with children, two references are required but it is not a requirement that the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. The reference should be from the current employer in this instance. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend. The School will verify that electronic references originate from a legitimate source. Where information is vague or where insufficient information is provided, the School will contact referees for further clarification. Any discrepancies between the references and the application form will be followed up with the applicant.

4.5.3

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which he or she has applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised so that they do not support terrorism or any form of "extremism". All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role for which the applicant has applied. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to provide information on the following:

- The applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, and disciplinary record;
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children and the outcome of any such procedures (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired), except where the issues were deemed to have resulted from allegations which were found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious;
- Whether any allegation or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of the children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people and the outcome of those allegations or concerns, except where the issues were deemed to have resulted from allegations which were found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious; and
- Whether the applicant could be considered to be involved in "extremism".

4.5.4

The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

4.5.5

The School will compare all references with any information given on the application form and check that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily, with appropriate follow-up where required. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

4.5.6

References should be obtained before the interview, where possible, which allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. Where a reference is not received prior to interview it will be reviewed upon receipt. Any discrepancies identified between the reference and the application form and/or the interview assessment form will be considered by the School. The applicant may be asked to provide further information or clarification before an appointment can be confirmed.

4.5.7

If factual references are received which contain limited information such as job title and dates of employment, this will not necessarily disadvantage an applicant although additional references may be sought before an appointment can be confirmed.

4.5.8

The School may at its discretion make telephone contact with any referee to verify the details of the written reference provided. In this event, detailed notes are made of the telephone conversation. These will be dated and signed by the person making the telephone call and must also record who was spoken to.

4.5.9

As stated in 3.9 an offer of employment is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references which must be received prior to the start of employment. If references are not received in good time prior to the start of employment, these will be followed up with telephone calls and alternative referees will be approached if necessary.

4.5.10

Internal references are permissible for internal candidates, particularly where colleagues from former employers are un-contactable due to the passage of time. These must be from a senior member of staff in a position to be aware of any issues.

4.6 Medical fitness

4.6.1

The School is legally required to verify the medical fitness (physical and mental) of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

4.6.2

It is the School's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete a Medical Declaration. The School may arrange for the information contained in the Medical Declaration to be reviewed by the School's medical advisor. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role together with the details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role e.g., proposed timetable, co-curricular activities, and layout of the School etc. If the School's medical advisor has any doubts about the applicant's fitness the School will consider reasonable adjustments in consultation with the applicant. The School may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.

4.6.3

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence, considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

4.7 Criminal records checks

4.7.1

Prior to 29 May 2013 an enhanced disclosure contained details of all convictions on record (including those which are defined as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any caution, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. It could also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer considered relevant to the role applied for at the School.

4.7.2

With effect from 29 May 2013 the DBS commenced the filtering and removal of certain specified information relating to old and minor criminal offences from all criminal records disclosures. The filtering rules developed by the DBS and Home Office designate certain spent convictions and cautions as "protected". "Protected" convictions and cautions are not included in a DBS certificate and applicants are not required to disclose them during the recruitment process. It is unlawful for an employer to take into account a conviction or caution that should not have been disclosed. If a protected conviction or caution is inadvertently disclosed to the School during the recruitment process it must be disregarded when making a recruitment decision.

4.7.3

A conviction will always be disclosable if it was imposed for a "specified offence" committed at any age. A Caution issued for a "specified offence" committed over the age of 18 will always be disclosable. However, a caution issued for a "specified offence" committed under the age of 18 is never disclosable. "Specified

offences” are usually of a serious violent or sexual nature or are relevant for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The list of “specified offences” can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-list-of-offences-that-will-never-be-filtered-from-a-criminal-record-check>

4.7.4

A spent criminal conviction for an offence committed in the UK when a person was over the age of 18 will not be disclosed in a DBS certificate (and does not have to be disclosed by the applicant) if:

- Eleven years have elapsed since the date of the conviction;
- It did not result in a custodial sentence; and
- It was not imposed for a “specified offence”.

A spent caution for an offence committed when a person was over the age of 18 will not be disclosed in a DBS certificate (and does not have to be disclosed by a job applicant) if:

- Six years have elapsed since the date it was issued; and
- It was not issued for a ‘specified offence’.

4.7.5

A spent conviction for an offence committed when a person was under the age of 18 will not be disclosed in a DBS certificate (and does not have to be disclosed by the applicant) if:

- Five and a half years have elapsed since the date of the conviction;
- It did not result in a custodial sentence; and
- It was not imposed for a “specified offence”.

A caution issued for an offence committed when a person was aged under 18 will never be disclosed in a DBS certificate (and does not have to be disclosed by an applicant).

4.8 Disclosure and Barring Service Check

4.8.1

All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School, including part-time, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches who will be undertaking regulated activities are subject to a criminal records check which is carried out with the Disclosure and Barring Service before starting work. A regulated activity is defined as an unsupervised activity such as teaching, training, instructing or caring for or supervising a child or children (as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended) or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children; working on a regular basis where the work gives opportunity for contact with children and engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once. Those who carry out paid or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in the School where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children are considered to be undertaking regulated activities and they are also checked with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

4.8.2

For all such positions, the School requests an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children’s Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity). An enhanced disclosure with barring information includes spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, and warnings held on the Policy National Computer; and information held on local police records which the police consider to be relevant to the workforce in which the person is applying to work.

4.8.3

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of the School will amount to ‘regulated activity’ if it is carried out:

- Frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- Overnight, meaning between 2.00 am or 6.00 am; or
- Satisfies the “period condition”, meaning three times or more in a 30-day period; and
- Provides the opportunity for contact with children.

4.8.4

Roles which are carried out on an unpaid/voluntary basis will only amount to regulated activity if, in addition to the above, they are carried out on an unsupervised basis.

4.8.5

It is for the School to decide whether a role amounts to “regulated activity” taking into account all relevant circumstances. However, nearly all posts at the School amount to regulated activity. Limited exceptions could include an administrative post undertaken on a temporary basis in the School office outside of term time or voluntary posts which are supervised.

4.8.6 The DBS Disclosure certificate

4.8.6.1

The DBS no longer automatically issue a copy of the DBS Certificate to the School. It is a condition of employment that applicants provide the School with the **original** DBS Certificate within two weeks of it being received so that the School can confirm the eligibility of the applicant for employment. Original certificates should not be sent by post. A convenient time and date for bringing the certificate into School should be arranged with the School’s HR Department as soon as it has been received. Applicants who are unable to attend at the School to provide the certificate are required to send in a certified copy by post or email within two weeks of the original certificate being received. Certified copies must be sent to the HR Administrator. Where a certified copy is sent, the original certificate must still be provided on the first working day at the latest.

4.8.6.2

Employment will remain conditional upon the original certificate being provided and it being considered satisfactory by the School. The School will compare any information disclosed on the certificate with any information shared by the applicant during the recruitment process. A decision not to appoint somebody because of their conviction(s) will be clearly documented so that the School can defend its decision if necessary. The School will take into account:

- the explanation from the applicant,
- the seriousness of the offence and its relevance to the post applied for,
- how long ago the offence occurred,
- whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents,
- the circumstances around the incident(s),
- whether the individual accepted responsibility for their actions, and,
- the nature of the incident(s) in relation to the Teachers’ standards (for teaching posts).

4.8.6.3

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS disclosure, or if a pre-existing enhanced DBS check is accepted under the three-month rule² for a member of staff starting work in regulated activity, or a pre-existing enhanced DBS check without barring information is accepted from an applicant who has subscribed to the DBS update service, then the Head has discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the disclosure certificate.

4.8.6.4

This discretion will only be allowed if the DBS application has been made, all other checks, including a clear check of the Children’s Barred List (where the position amounts to regulated activity), have been completed and once appropriate supervision has been put in place with an appropriate risk assessment. The Barred List check will be made as close as possible to the employee’s starting date and at least within 3 months of the employee starting. Confirmation of the appointment will not be finalised until the DBS disclosure has been received and deemed satisfactory by the School. The applicant must be informed of the safeguards in place whilst awaiting the DBS disclosure and these must be reviewed at least every two weeks. The Single Central Register will be annotated to this effect and records of the measures implemented will also be recorded. The Risk Assessment and its review will be kept in the staff member’s personnel file.

² In accordance with the **three-month rule**, members of staff in schools must be subject to an enhanced criminal record check on entry to the schools’ workforce and, thereafter, may move between schools without requirement on subsequent employer schools to carry out further DBS checks unless they leave the school’s workforce for three months or more. However, if a new school accepts a pre-existing check under this rule, they must carry out a separate barred list check, subject to the following point on the DBS update service.

From 17 June 2013, the applicant may subscribe to the DBS Update service. This enables other employers to check instantly online that there have not been changes since the issue of a DBS certificate. So, if an initial certificate included barring information, a change would be indicated during an update check if the certificate-holder’s barred

status were to change. A new full check would then be required to access more information about the nature of the change.

4.8.6.5

The DBS Reference number is recorded on the Single Central Register. Where appropriate, the School will use the Update Service from the Disclosure and Barring Service to check the Status of an applicant's DBS Certificate. When using the Update Service, the School must obtain consent from the individual to carry out an online check to view the status of the DBS check; confirm the DBS certificate matches the individual's identity; examine the original certificate to ensure that it is valid from employment within the School; and ensure that it is appropriate for the job they are applying for.

4.9 Applicants with periods of overseas residence

4.9.1

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence will still be subject to DBS checks. The School will take into account the "DBS unusual address guide" in such circumstances.

4.9.2

For applicants who are living overseas, or who have lived overseas previously, obtaining a DBS certificate may be insufficient to establish their suitability to work at the School. In such cases the applicant will be required to provide additional information about their suitability from the country (or countries) in which they have lived. The School's policy is to request such information from each overseas country in which the applicant has lived or worked for a period of three months or more in the previous five years as a minimum.

4.9.3

When requesting such information, the School has regard to relevant government guidance and will therefore always require the applicant to apply for a formal check from the country in question (i.e., a criminal records check, or equivalent, or a certificate of good conduct). The School will also have regard to the current Home Office guidance in determining the checks that can reasonably be undertaken from different countries. From 1 January 2021 it is no longer possible for the TRA Teacher Services system to make checks in respect of any teacher sanction or restriction that has been imposed by a professional regulating authority in the European Economic Area (EEA).

4.9.4

The School recognises that formal checks are not available from some countries, that they can be significantly delayed or that a response may not be provided. In such circumstances, the School will seek to obtain further information from the country in question, such as a reference from any employment undertaken in that country. In addition, where an applicant has carried out teaching work outside of the UK, the School will ask the applicant to provide proof of their past conduct as a teacher by obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority of the teaching profession in each country in which they have worked as a teacher. The School will also ask the applicant (and their referees) to disclose whether they have ever been referred to, or are the subject of, a sanction issued by the regulator of the teaching profession in the countries in which they have carried out teaching work. Advice on the appropriate regulatory or professional bodies is available from the National Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC).

4.9.5

The School may allow an applicant to commence work pending receipt of a formal check from a particular country if it has received a reference and/or letter of professional standing from that country and considers the applicant suitable to start work. Decisions on suitability will be based on all of the information that has been obtained during the recruitment process. Unless expressly waived by the School, continued employment will remain conditional upon the School being provided with the outcome of the formal check and it being considered satisfactory.

4.9.6

If no information is available from a particular country, the School may allow an applicant to commence work if they are considered suitable based on all of the information that has been obtained during the recruitment process. The School will take proportionate risk-based decisions on a person's suitability in

these circumstances. All suitability assessments must be documented and retained on file. If the formal check is delayed and the School is not satisfied about the applicant's suitability in the absence of that information, the applicant's proposed start date may be delayed until the formal check is received.

4.9.7

Work can only commence once sufficient overseas information has been received and only if the School has considered that information and confirmed that the applicant is suitable to commence work at the School.

4.10 Disqualification

4.10.1

The Childcare Act 2006 (Act) and the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (Regulations) state that it is an offence for the School to employ anyone in connection with our early years provision (EYP) or later years provision (LYP) who is disqualified, or for a disqualified person to be directly involved in the management of EYP or LYP. As part of the recruitment process all applicants for posts in the Early Years (children from birth up to 1 September following their fifth birthday) or for later years provision for children under the age of 8 must make a declaration on the Application Form in respect of disqualification under this Act and these Regulations. The full criteria for disqualification are set out in the guidance document to which applicants must refer for further details about the relevant offences and orders for the purposes of disqualification.

4.10.2

All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the School, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches, must comply with the DfE statutory guidance 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006' September 2018. Details about the relevant staff and volunteers for whom this is applicable are set out in this statutory guidance. The School cannot permit anyone who is currently disqualified to start work in a relevant role. The School also reserves the right at its absolute discretion to withdraw an offer of employment if, in the opinion of the School, any information disclosed in the self-declaration renders that person unsuitable for work at the school. Applicants are not required to disclose a caution or conviction for an offence committed in the UK if it falls into the categories as set out in 4.7 above. However, applicants who have any other criminal records information to disclose about themselves must also provide the following information:

- Details of the order, restriction, conviction or caution and the date that it was made;
- The relevant court or body and the sentence, if any, which was imposed; and
- A copy of the relevant order or conviction.

For the avoidance of doubt, the School does not require applicants to request any criminal records information directly from the DBS. The School only requires applicants to provide relevant information about themselves 'to the best of their knowledge'.

4.10.3

Disqualification occurs as soon as the criteria for disqualification are met. These criteria include:

- Being barred from working with children (by inclusion on the Children's Barred List);
- Having been cautioned (after 6 April 2007) for, or convicted of, certain criminal offences including violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults whether committed in the United Kingdom or overseas;
- Various grounds relating to the care of children, including where an order made in respect of a child under the person's care;
- Having been refused registration for the provision of childcare (including nurseries, day care and child minding or other childcare), having been disqualified from any such registration or having had that registration cancelled;
- Having been refused an application for registration of a children's home or having had any such registration cancelled; or
- Having been prohibited, restricted, or disqualified from private fostering.

4.10.4

All members of staff in relevant roles have an ongoing duty to inform the School if their circumstances change in a way which would mean they subsequently meet any of the criteria for disqualification. Any

failure to disclose relevant information at the recruitment stage or of a future change of circumstances, will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and may lead to the withdrawal of a job offer or dismissal for gross misconduct.

4.11 Prohibition Orders Check

4.11.1

The School is required to check whether staff who carry out “teaching work” are prohibited from doing so. This check is made through Teacher Regulation Agency Employer Access Online Service. This will enable the School to ascertain whether or not the applicant has a Prohibition Order imposed by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) or has a Prohibition Order imposed by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) prior to April 2012. An interim Prohibition Order might also be in place for an applicant if the Secretary of State has considered this to be in the public interest. This service can also be used to confirm the teacher’s QTS status, satisfactory completion of an induction period and satisfactory completion of a probation period.

4.11.2

In addition, the School asks all applicants for roles which involve "teaching work" (and their referees) to declare in the application form whether they have ever been referred to, or are the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by, the Teaching Regulation Agency or any other equivalent body in the UK.

4.11.3

It is the School's position that this information must be provided in order to fully assess the suitability of an applicant for a role which involves "teaching work". Where an applicant is not currently prohibited from teaching but has been the subject of a referral to, or hearing before, the TRA (or other equivalent body) whether or not that resulted in the imposition of a sanction, or where a sanction has lapsed or been lifted, the School will consider whether the facts of the case render the applicant unsuitable to work at the School.

4.11.4

The School carries out this check, and requires associated information, for roles which involve “teaching work”. In doing so the School applies the definition of “teaching work” set out in the Teachers’ Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 which states that the following activities amount to “teaching work”:

- Planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
- Delivering lessons to pupils;
- Assessing the development, progress, and attainment of pupils; and
- Reporting on the development, progress, and attainment of pupils.

‘Delivering’ includes delivering lessons through distance learning or computer-aided techniques. The above activities do not amount to “teaching work” if they are supervised by a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the Head. If in any doubt or if the applicant has taught previously, or may teach in the future, the check will be undertaken, including for Sports Coaches and Teaching Assistants.

4.12 Prohibition from Management Check

4.12.1

The School is required to check whether any applicant for a management position is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies, or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school (a **section 128 direction**). The School will carry out checks for such directions when appointing applicants into management positions from both outside the School and by internal promotion.

4.12.2

This check applies to appointments to the following positions made on or after 12 August 2015:

- Head
- Staff on the Senior Leadership Team (teaching and non-teaching)
- Teaching posts which carry a departmental head role or year group leadership.
- Any member of staff directly responsible for line managing one or more other members of staff.

4.12.3

It also applies to appointments to the Governing body.

4.12.4

The School asks all applicants for management roles to declare in the application form whether they have ever been subject of a referral to the DfE or are subject to a section 128 direction or any other sanction which prohibits, disqualifies, or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school.

4.12.5

It is the School's position that in order to fully assess the suitability of an applicant for a management role it must be provided with the above information. Where an applicant is not currently prohibited from management but has been the subject of a referral to, or hearing before, the DfE or other appropriate body whether that resulted in the imposition of a section 128 direction or other sanction, or where a section 128 direction or other sanction has lapsed or been lifted, the School will consider whether the facts of the case render the applicant unsuitable to work at the School.

4.13 Disqualification from acting as a charity trustee or senior manager

4.13.1

Under the Charities Act 2011 it is a criminal offence for a person to act as a trustee or senior manager of a charity when disqualified from doing so. The Charities Act 2011 sets out the grounds on which a person can be disqualified from acting as a trustee or senior manager. These include various spent and unspent criminal offences and other sanctions.

4.13.2

The Governors are the charity trustees of the School as they have general control and management of the administration of the charity. At the School, the disqualification rules will be applicable to all Governors, the Headmaster and Bursar who report directly to the Governors and who have responsibility for the overall management and control of the charity's finances.

4.13.3 Self-declaration

4.13.3.1

All those who are covered by the disqualification rules are required to complete a self-declaration form to confirm whether, to the best of their knowledge, they are subject to any of the disqualification criteria.

4.13.3.2

A failure to disclose relevant information, or the provision of false information, which subsequently comes to the School's attention may result in the termination of an appointment as a governor or senior manager or the withdrawal of an offer of employment and may also amount to a criminal offence.

4.13.3.3

All those who are required to complete a self-declaration form are also under an ongoing duty to inform the School if there is a change in their circumstances that results or may result in them becoming disqualified from acting as a governor or senior manager.

4.13.4 Checks by the School

4.13.4.1

To ensure that it has accurate and up to date information the School will also check the following registers in respect of each governor and senior manager who is already in post or is appointed in future:

- the Insolvency Register;
- the register of disqualified directors maintained by Companies House; and
- the register of persons who have been removed as a charity trustee.

4.13.5 Waiver

4.13.5.1

A person who discloses that one or more of the disqualification criteria is applicable to them may apply to the Charity Commission for a waiver of the disqualification. The School may at its absolute discretion withdraw an offer of employment for a senior manager or cease or terminate an appointment to the governing body if a waiver application becomes necessary or is rejected by the Charity Commission. The School is under no obligation to await the outcome of a Charity Commission waiver application before taking such action.

5. CONTRACTORS AND AGENCY STAFF

5.1

The School must ensure that the same checks are completed for contractors (and their employees) undertaking regulated activity at the School as it does for its own employees. The School requires written confirmation from the contractor that it has completed these checks on all those individuals whom it intends will work at the School before any such individual can commence work at the School.

5.2

Agencies who supply staff to the School must also complete the pre-employment checks which the School would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, the School requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before the individual(s) can commence work at the School.

5.3

The School will independently verify the identity of individuals supplied by contractors or an agency in accordance with section 4 above and requires the provision of the DBS disclosure certificate before those individuals can commence work at the School. The DBS disclosure certificate must have been obtained not more than three months before the date on which the person is due to begin work at the School unless the person has worked in a school or maintained school in England in a position which brought them regularly into contact with children or young persons during a period which ended not more than three months before the person is due to begin work at the School.

6. VOLUNTEERS

6.1

The School will request an enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List information on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with pupils at or on behalf of the School. The School will request an enhanced DBS disclosure without Children's Barred List information on all volunteers who do not undertake regulated activity. This is likely to be because their volunteering duties are subject to regular, day to day supervision by a fully checked member of staff or by a volunteer who the School has deemed appropriate to supervise and ensure the safety of those pupils in their care.

6.2

Under no circumstances will the School permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with pupils.

6.3

It is the School's policy that a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with the School for three consecutive months or more. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with the School on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits the School to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

6.4

In addition, the School will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to the following):

- Formal or informal information provided by staff, parents and other volunteers;
- Character references from the volunteer's place of work or other relevant sources; and
- An informal safer recruitment interview.

7. GOVERNORS

7.1

Governors are not employees of the School. Prior to their appointment as a Governor, prospective Governors are required to have their ID, right to work in the UK, an enhanced criminal record check and prohibition from management checks completed. Such further checks as the Chair of Governors considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State, will be made on any prospective governor who lives, or has lived outside the UK such that an enhanced criminal record certificate is not sufficient to establish suitability to work in a school.

8. POLICY ON RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

8.1 Background

8.1.1

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record, this will not automatically bar him or her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

8.1.2

In view of the fact that all positions within the School will amount to 'regulated positions' within the meaning of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000), all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions and cautions, including those which would normally be considered 'spent' except those received for an offence committed in the UK if it falls under the definitions as set out in 4.7 above. A failure to disclose such a previous conviction (which should be declared) may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose such a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

8.1.3

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on any lists maintained by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm, or other serious acts of violence.

8.1.4

It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. If the School:

- Receives an application from a barred person;
- Is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- Has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children;

then it will report the matter to the Police, Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Ofsted, the DBS and/or the DfE's Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit (formerly the Teacher's Misconduct Team).

8.2 Assessment Criteria

8.2.1

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- Whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

8.2.2

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any of the following offences:

- Murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm, or other serious acts of violence;
- Serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception, or fraud.

8.2.3

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the Schools' normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception, or fraud.

8.2.4

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's, normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs or using a mobile phone within the last ten years.

8.3 Assessment Procedure

8.3.1

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Bursar and the Headmaster of the School before a position is offered.

8.3.2

Confidential information supplied by an applicant in respect of criminal records will only be read by a member of the Senior Leadership Team if the applicant is shortlisted for interview. Any such information will be retained in accordance with the guidance set out below.

8.3.3

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he or she can do so by contacting the DBS direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the School may, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

8.4 Retention and security of disclosure information

8.4.1

The School's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information.

8.4.2

In particular the School will:

- Store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the School's Senior Leadership Team;
- Not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. Generally, this will be for a maximum of six months. The School will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken;
- Ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding; and
- Prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information.

9. RETENTION OF RECORDS

9.1

The School is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, the School will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity,

right to work in the UK, medical fitness, and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help the School to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g., so that the School may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

9.2

This documentation will be retained by the School for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the School. It will be retained in accordance with the School's retention of records policy after employment terminates.

9.3

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.

9.4

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with School activities.

10. REFERRALS TO THE DBS AND TRA

10.1

This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed. Whilst these are pre-employment checks the School also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS in circumstances where an individual:

- has applied for a position at the School despite being barred from working with children; or
- has been removed by the School from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid); or
- has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child.

10.2

If the individual referred to the DBS is a teacher, the School may also decide to make a referral to the TRA. Further details are set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

11. QUERIES

11.1

If an applicant has any queries relating to the completion of the application form or any other matter, he or she should contact the Bursar or the Headmaster.

12. PERSONNEL FILES

12.1

Personnel files are maintained on staff in accordance with data protection legislation. It is a requirement of *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* that copies of identity document, right to work and qualifications are kept. It is also a requirement of the Immigration (Restrictions on Employment) Order 2007 that employers in England and Wales check and retain copies of passports, or alternatively birth/adoption certificates for people appointed on or after 29 February 2008. The Information Commissioner's Office or Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development can provide further guidance on more general document retention issues. Personnel files will be kept for at least six years after the person has left.

13. SINGLE CENTRAL REGISTER

13.1

A Single Central Register (SCR) is maintained by the School to record centrally whether or not certain checks have been made for staff and if so, the dates of those checks. The School follows the guidelines in the current Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements and any subsequent updates in respect of the information recorded on the SCR for staff, supply staff, Governors, volunteers, and contractors. The SCR is maintained electronically but in a format which can be printed out for the purposes of inspection. For reasons of data protection legislation, the copy provided for inspection purposes should not contain personal data but there must be a means of identifying the staff to facilitate discussion.

13.2

The dates recorded on the SCR are the dates when the School receives the relevant information to inform their recruitment decision. The expectation is that the dates of all checks must therefore precede the start

date of the relevant member of staff, although allowance can be made for delayed criminal record checks where appropriate precautions are taken. For example, if a pre-existing DBS check has been accepted under the three-month rule, the date of the check would be the date that the certificate had been seen, not the date on the certificate.

13.3

The SCR indicates whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- name, role and date employment at the school started;
- employment history checks;
- an identity check;
- a barred list check;
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate;
- a prohibition from teaching check for relevant staff;
- a Section 128 check for relevant staff;
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK including recording checks for teacher sanctions and restrictions;
- professional qualifications check where required;
- right to work in the UK
- date references checked
- date of medical fitness check
- date of self-declaration.

For Supply staff, the SCR also includes whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks as detailed above, obtained the appropriate certificates and references, obtained a declaration of medical fitness, checked the previous employment history and if applicable checked whether the person is disqualified from childcare under the Childcare Act 2006, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member of staff. Agencies may operate the 'three-month rule' so people supplied to work in schools can move from one placement to the next relying on the same criminal record check unless they leave the schools' workforce for three months or more, in which case, a new criminal record check must be obtained before the next school placement. Where the agency has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate before the person is due to begin work at the school which has disclosed any matter or information or any information was provided to the employment business, the school must obtain a copy of the certificate from the agency. In accordance with the Independent Schools regulations, the DBS certificate of supply staff must be seen by a member of staff at The Blue Coat School together with their ID and the details recorded on the Single Central Register.

13.4

The SCR relates to the relevant persons at any time and is kept up to date. Records for former workers are not removed until after the end of the school academic year and at this point, they are archived.

13.6

The SCR is maintained by the HR Administrator. The Bursar, the Headmaster, or the Main Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) sign off recruitment paperwork and check the entry in the SCR prior to a member of staff starting at the school. Periodic checks are made of the SCR and associated files by the Headmaster, Main DSL, Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor. These checks are made at least termly.

14. RELATED POLICIES, MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW

14.1

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other School policies including the policies for Safeguarding and Child Protection, Visiting Speakers, and the Staff Induction.

14.2

The Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it complies with statutory requirements and to ensure that any changes in practices are accurately reflected. It will be presented to the Governors' Governance and Human Resources Committee for approval and to the Health and Safety Committee for information

and general consideration in the Lent Term each year prior to being presented to the Governors. The minutes of these meetings will be presented to the Governors.

APPENDIX I – LIST OF VALID IDENTITY DOCUMENTS

Group 1: primary identity documents

- current valid passport
- biometric residence permit (UK)
- current driving licence photocard - full or provisional (UK / Isle of Man / Channel Islands and EEA)
- birth certificate - issued within 12 months of birth (UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands - including those issued by UK authorities overseas, such as Embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces)
- adoption certificate (UK and Channel Islands)

Group 2a: trusted government documents

- current driving licence photocard - full or provisional (all countries outside the EEA excluding Isle of Man and Channel Islands)
- current driving licence paper version (UK / Isle of Man / Channel Islands and EEA; full or provisional)
- birth certificate - issued after time of birth (UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands)
- marriage / civil partnership certificate (UK and Channel Islands)
- immigration document, visa, or work permit (issued by a country outside the EEA. Valid only for roles whereby the applicant is living and working outside of the UK. Visa / permit must relate to the non-EEA country in which the role is based)
- HM Forces ID card (UK)
- firearms licence (UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man)

All driving licences must be valid.

Group 2b: Financial and social history documents

- mortgage statement (UK or EEA)**
- bank / building society statement (UK and Channel Islands or EEA)*
- bank / building society statement (countries outside the EEA)*
- bank / building society account opening confirmation letter (UK)*
- credit card statement (UK or EEA)*
- financial statement - e.g. pension, endowment, ISA (UK)**
- P45 / P60 statement (UK and Channel Islands)**
- council tax statement (UK and Channel Islands)**
- letter of sponsorship from future employment provider (non-UK / non-EEA only; valid only for applicants residing outside the UK at the time of application; must be valid at time of application)
- utility bill (UK; not mobile telephone bill)*
- benefit statement - e.g. child benefit, pension (UK)*
- a document from central or local government/ government agency / local council giving an entitlement - e.g. from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service, HM Revenue & Customs, Jobcentre, Jobcentre Plus, Social Security (UK and Channel Islands) *
- EEA national ID card (must be valid at time of application)
- Irish passport card (cannot be used with an Irish passport; must be valid at time of application)
- cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo (UK and Channel Islands; must be valid at time of applications)
- letter from Head or College Principal (for 16–19-year-olds in full-time education. This is only used in exceptional circumstances if other documents cannot be provided; must be valid at time of application).

Note

If a document in the list of valid identity documents is:

denoted with * - it should be less than three months old
denoted with ** - it should be less than 12 months old.