

Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy

This policy is a whole school policy including EYFS

A risk assessment has been completed to take into account government guidelines and statutory requirements regarding Covid 19. With this in mind changes to teaching, procedures and resourcing may occur due to identified risks.

1 Introduction

The school adopts rigorous recruitment and selection procedures that enable it to appoint the best applicant for the post and which help to deter, reject or identify people who are in any way unsuitable to work with children.

This policy supports Springmead School's policies on:

1. Safeguarding & Child Protection (including Staff Code of Conduct)
2. Behaviour Management
3. Anti-Bullying
4. Health and Safety
5. Online Safety
6. First Aid (including management of medical conditions)
7. Equal Opportunities
8. Whistle Blowing
9. Staff Handbook

'Springmead School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this legal and moral responsibility. The school adopts recruitment and selection procedures that enable it to appoint the best applicant for the post and which help to deter, reject or identify people who are in any way unsuitable to work with children'

This statement is included in the following material:

- recruitment websites
- advertisements
- candidate packs
- job descriptions
- person specifications.

Springmead School is committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The School recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment. No job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

This policy refers to staff directly employed by the school. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, staff are defined as: Any person working at the school whether under a contract of employment, under a contract

for services or otherwise than under a contract, but does not include supply staff or volunteers.

At Springmead School we undertake to follow the procedures laid out in this policy for volunteers in regulated activity as well as staff:

- Application form completed
- Interview takes place
- Pre-employment checks as appropriate (see below)
- 2 references to be supplied
- Safeguarding training undertaken

Volunteers undertaking regulated activity cannot start until these steps have been completed.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 2006 and related guidance. This includes the DfE guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2007), the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) Working together to Safeguard Children a guide to inter-agency working 2013 (WTSC) Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 (KCSIE) It also includes any updates

2 Aims

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance as detailed above
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
- To prohibit discrimination in Employment on the grounds of any of the following protected characteristics: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity, race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation, in line with the Equality Act 2010

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

Staff are protected in all aspects of employment, which includes recruitment and selection, employment terms and conditions, promotion, transfers, access to benefits, appraisal, disciplinary, dismissal and post termination (such as providing references).

3 Procedure

When a position becomes available an advert will be placed, which will include the school's statement about our commitment to safeguarding and will make reference to Disclosure and Barring Service requirements. After an advert has been placed, all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms or forms with an electronic signature will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. For roles where literacy is not a prerequisite to successful performance, support to complete an application form will be offered to shortlisted candidates. Curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form. Applicants will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for.

4 Selection for Interview

Where the volume of applicants is high, or the number of top calibre applicants is high, a matrix may be prepared which details the skills and qualities required. Having considered the application in the light of the skills and the qualifications required, applicants may then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. A member of every interview panel will be Safer Recruitment trained. At every interview a safeguarding question is included appropriate to the role.

5 Interview Process

Candidates invited to attend an interview will be asked a range of questions to establish their suitability, motivation and skills for the role, and to ascertain their understanding of Safeguarding. Hypothetical questions will be avoided so that past experiences, positive examples or evidence can be sought and documented. When inviting a candidate to interview a copy of the safeguarding policy is provided. There will be two interviewers and notes will be taken during the interview. Any gaps in employment will be discussed. Candidates will be offered the opportunity to have a tour of the School and may also be set a practical task, relevant to the role they have applied for. Examples of such tests might include teaching a lesson, giving an assembly, preparing documents or working in a team.

Interview candidates are required to bring the following documentation to interview

- 2 forms of photo ID (Eg, Passport and Driving Licence)
- A Utility Bill or Bank statement (Issued within the last 3 months) for proof of address
- Where appropriate documentation indicating a change of name
- Where appropriate documentation regarding proof of entitlement to work in the UK

6 Successful candidates

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 an offer letter, incorporating the School's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most

recent employer) which the School considers satisfactory;

- the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service with which the School is satisfied; and
- the candidate is medically fit to perform the role

If the offer is accepted, and all of the above are satisfactory, the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of employment. Interview notes for the successful candidate will be kept and placed on their personnel file.

7 Pre-employment checks

In accordance with the recommendations of the DFE in "Working together to safeguard children 2016" and "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016" and subsequent updates, the School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees. Checks that are carried out are listed below;

- Identity check
- Right to Work
- Enhanced DBS check
- Barred List
- Prohibition from Teaching/Management, where relevant
- EAA Check
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act
- Overseas Check, where relevant
- Social Media Check
- Medical Fitness
- Qualifications, where relevant
- References
- OFSTED suitability checks

Verification of identity and address

All applicants who are invited to an Interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, address and qualifications:-

- current driving licence (both paper counterpart and plastic card with photograph unless an older version) and passport or full birth certificate; and
- two utility bills or bank statements (from different sources) showing their name and the same current home address; and
- documentation confirming their National Insurance Number (P45, P60, National Insurance Card);
- Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

Right to Work

All applicants' identification will be checked to ensure their documentation gives the right to work in the UK, through residency or permit to work. The names, date of birth and photos must be the same across the documentation.

Disclosure, Barring, Prohibition and EEA Checks

Due to the nature of the work, the School requires an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Scheme in respect of all prospective staff members, governors and volunteers. All positions at the school require an enhanced disclosure due to the contact with children, including regularly caring for, training, teaching, supervising or being in sole charge children.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

The School would expect supply/temporary worker agencies/contractors that are used by the School to register with the DBS on their own account and to follow their policy or their own comparable policy. Proof of registration will be required before the School will commission services from any such organisation.

If there is a delay in the time it is going to take to obtain the DBS check, consideration will be given as to whether the candidate may be allowed to start, where there is a need to have them in School. A risk assessment will be completed accordingly and this will be reviewed fortnightly until the DBS check comes through.

A list of relevant offences can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs

Prohibition Checks (formerly List 99 or barred list checks)

The School follows the new prohibition from teaching for EU staff using the Employer Access (EA) online service introduced in January 2016.

Disqualification Checks

The supplementary DFE advice states Springmead School may not employ people to work in these settings or allow them to be directly concerned in their management, if they or others in their households are 'disqualified'. The grounds for disqualification are not only that a person is barred from working with children (included on the children's barred list) but also include, in summary, that:

- They have been cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home or abroad
- Other orders have been made against them relating to their care of children
- They have had their registration cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering
- They are living in the same household where another person who is disqualified lives.

All applicants for jobs will be asked to complete the 'self-declaration form'. Information given on this form may make some candidates ineligible for appointment. Failure to give accurate information would invoke the staff disciplinary procedures.

Overseas Checks

All people who have worked (either as a volunteer or in a paid capacity) or lived outside the UK will be asked to complete Overseas Police Checks, or obtain a Certificate of Good

Conduct (as supplied by some countries) prior to starting work at the School for each of the countries concerned, at their own expense.

Social Media Checks

The school will carry out checks to establish the digital footprint of an applicant. It should be noted however that online searches must be treated with caution as many people have the same or similar names.

Medical Fitness

All applicants are required to complete a medical questionnaire. The Code of Conduct states 'If staff are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they must seek medical advice. Staff must advise HR if their medication or condition impairs their ability to be in sole charge of children or fulfil their duties. Line Managers and Heads of Department must ensure that staff only work directly with children, if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly. Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored, and out of reach of children at all times.'

Qualifications

The School needs to have sight of original qualification documents, for copies to be taken and placed on employee files.

References

References will be taken up on short listed candidates for teaching posts prior to interview. All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend. All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role which the applicant has applied for. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following: -

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.

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.

The School will compare all references with any information given on the application

form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed. Referees may be contacted by phone to establish that they did provide the reference. References which provide only confirmation and dates of appointment will be discounted. If it is not possible to obtain an overseas check a further reference may be sought.

Arrangements for peripatetic staff and contractors who work in school

We carry out pre-employment checks for all contractors who work with children and self-employed peripatetic staff.

8 Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar him/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.

The school complies with the provision set out in the DBS code of practice, a copy of which can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice

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 Courts Services Act 2000), all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered "spent" under the (The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2016). A failure to disclose a previous conviction 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 a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence. Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the 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. It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. If the School;

- receives an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

it will report the matter to the Police, Ofsted, DBS and/or the DFE

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. 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 the following offences:-

- against adults: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence;
- against children or adults: serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School's 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. If the post involves driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last 10 years.

9 Assessment procedure

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 Headteacher or Proprietor before a position is offered. If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/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 will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

10 Retention and security of disclosure information

The School's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information. In particular, the School will:-

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in a locked room, in a non-portable filing cabinet, access to which will be restricted to the Senior Management Team.
- It is the school policy to retain disclosure information for all applicants. They can request in writing that this information be destroyed, this needs to be addressed to the Headteacher and Proprietor
- ensure that any out of date/ un-needed disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding;
- recheck staff regularly as per regulatory requirements September 2014. For the purposes of clarity, from September 2014 the school defines regularly as being no

less than every five years. A copy of the DBS code of practice is available on their website.

- Retention of records If an applicant is appointed, the School will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments and interview notes) on their personnel file.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months unless the applicant specifically requests the School to keep their details on file.

11 Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter they should contact the School Admin Office.

12 Induction

Employees undergo a thorough induction, including the following:

- introduction to colleagues and staff
- tour of the premises
- the school's procedures for child protection and safeguarding (and safe-guarding code of conduct); informing every new employee of the requirement for the school to have a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and who that member of staff is.
- Read Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 1, September 2020
- Read Keeping Children Safe In Education Annex A(leaders and those working directly with children)
- read relevant policies: Health and Safety (including Fire and First Aid), Online safety, Equal Opportunities, and the Employee Handbook.
- instructed in procedures: absence and time recording, door code, where to keep coats, bags and phones, the staff noticeboard, routines, and who to speak to if they have any problems/concerns.

A Safe To Start induction form is maintained by the Administrator and filed in the employee's personnel folder once all procedures have been completed

13 Monitoring and review

This policy is the Headteacher's ongoing responsibility along with reviewing its effectiveness in consultation with the staff. It is reviewed every 2 years, unless there is a change of legislation in the meantime.

Signed Headteacher: *Sally Cox*

Date: 4.8.21