

Meadlands Primary School



Safer Recruitment Policy

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Contents

Part 1 Introduction

1. Associated documents
2. Introduction & Purpose

Part 2 The safer recruitment process

3. Application Packs
4. Scrutinising Applications
5. Shortlisting
6. Self-Disclosure
7. References
8. Temporary Staff, Volunteers & Overseas Candidates

Part 3 Making the right decisions

9. Interviews
10. Pre-Appointment Checklist
11. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks
12. Teacher Prohibition Orders
13. Dealing with convictions

Part 4 Induction

14. Risk Assessments
15. Withdrawing the Offer
16. Induction & Probationary Period
17. Monitoring Systems
18. Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing, Managing Allegations
19. Single Central Record

Part 5 Forms

20. Meadlands Standard Reference Form
21. Shortlisting Form
22. Flow chart

Part 1 Introduction

1. Associated Documents

Statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2018)* states that schools and further education institutions, including academies and independent schools, should have in place a number of arrangements as part of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. At Meadlands it is the expectation that these arrangements include:

- A culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings
- Safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children (this includes teaching and non-teaching staff, premises staff and volunteers)
- Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training (including a mandatory induction)
- Clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children and young people. This policy reinforces the Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing policies which all employees are expected to be familiar with. All successful candidates for paid or volunteer employment will be made aware of the policies when their placement commences.

2. Introduction & Purpose

This policy provides guidance in the recruitment of staff and/or volunteers to work with children to ensure they meet their obligations under safeguarding and attain a safer, more robust recruitment process.

Safeguarding seeks to ensure children and young people are protected from harm. As the Bichard Inquiry Report points out:

'...for those agencies whose job it is to protect children and vulnerable people, the harsh reality is that if a sufficiently devious person is determined to seek out opportunities to work their evil, no one can guarantee that they will be stopped. Our task is to make it as difficult as possible for them to succeed...'

It is therefore vital that we understand there is a risk that abuse could happen at Meadlands and there is a need for a culture of openness, transparency and vigilance to be created. Additionally, those who raise concerns should be left in no doubt that support in raising concerns will be offered and the commitment to take action is assured.

Based on TRA & NCTL data and the DBS reports, it is estimated that in a typical year:

- schools make up a 1/3 of all LADO referrals
- About 40% of all allegations are for physical abuse and 36% sexual abuse
- Varied significantly across different regions but 12 – 24% relate to emotional abuse or neglect
- Where it is recorded as a separate category, 9% of allegations relate to conduct outside the workplace

Teachers that have breached the Teaching Standards are referred to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) (previously known as the National College of Teaching & Leadership), usually by the employer on dismissal or by the DBS if a referral for discretionary barring is considered relevant to the TRA procedures. In July 2020 the TRA reported to HM Government that in its second operational year (2019-20):

- 900 referrals for teacher misconduct made to TRA in 2019-20
- 488 of these cases were investigated as alleged serious misconduct
- Professional conduct panel (PCP) hearings led to 63 prohibition orders
- TRA also imposed 56 interim prohibition orders pending the PCP
- 288 referrals were recorded as 'no further action' – either they did not meet the threshold or did not fall within TRA jurisdiction.

This information is shared here to underline the importance and necessity of following the correct protocol during the recruitment process.

Part 2 The Safer Recruitment Process

At Meadlands in order to ensure the safest possible approach to recruitment, our approach will follow these steps:

- Set time aside for the recruitment panel to plan and structure the process.
- Have clear job, role and person specifications, setting down the boundaries and expectations of the role including a statement of responsibility and requirements for safeguarding.
- Clear messages about safeguarding should be sent to candidates from the outset (see statement above).
- A statement about commitment to safeguarding should be incorporated in any job advert.
- The official AfC application form will only be accepted: Application forms must be used. CVs will not be accepted, CV's only contain information applicants want you to know, which may exclude other relevant information.
- Obtain references before interview wherever possible; include specific enquiries about the applicant's background in relation to safeguarding and ensure references are given proper weight and consideration in the selection process. At Meadlands we will always call references for verification or written documents
- At a minimum, the selection process should involve a face-to-face interview and where possible another tool (role play, presentation, teaching a lesson, participating in activities with children under observation etc.)
- At interview, use probing questions into motives, attitudes and behaviours, not just skills and experience, and questions that cover safeguarding issues as well as other role-related areas.
- Seek information about relevant criminal history and use it appropriately.
- Ensure there is an ongoing culture of vigilance in the organisation.
- Run appropriate social media checks.

3. Application packs

The application pack for all jobs (paid or otherwise) must contain a safeguarding statement. Our safeguarding statement is: *'Meadlands Primary School and Nursery, acknowledges our duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and Ofsted requirements.'*

Application forms must require as a minimum the following information:

- Personal details
- Relevant academic/professional/vocational qualifications, date and awarding body;
- Full chronological history of full or part time employment since leaving secondary school, including:
 - Voluntary work, education and training;
 - Reasons for leaving jobs;
 - Any gaps which must be clearly accounted for;
- Two referees, one of which must be the current or most recent line manager.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to posts which involve working with, or to have access to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults or their records. Therefore any convictions, cautions, bind-overs that would normally be considered 'spent' must be declared when applying for this type of post. Qualification, Education and Professional certificates must be provided.

At Meadlands we use the official AfC application form for all recruitment.

4. Scrutinising applications

When carrying out the short-listing process, it is important to record objective evidence about the extent to which each candidate meets the criteria. At Meadlands we will always have at least 3 people involved in the process of scrutinising applications and short-listing candidates.

Time must be taken to scrutinise applications carefully, returning any forms not fully or properly completed, identifying any gaps in the person's history or any discrepancies or inconsistencies.

The same criteria must be applied from the person specification to each applicant consistently.

We will limit the number of candidates to short list – three or four should be a sufficient number from which to choose the right person. If it is not, there is something wrong with the person specification or the short-listing process. In the unlikely event you have too many applicants who meet all the requirements of the person specification, you may choose a randomised selection process; that way none of them can claim unfair discrimination.

5. Shortlisting

The Head Teacher, along with at least 2 other senior members of staff/Governors, must short list having regard to the extent to which candidates meet the person specification and competencies that were available with the job details. To create the shortlist the interviewing panel must score each applicant against the person specification for the job. Managers must scrutinise applications, identify any inconsistencies and be cautious about missing or vague information. Shortlisting records will be kept for a minimum of 6 months.

6. Self-Disclosure

As an addition to DBS certificates, self-disclosure can play a vital role in the selection process as it gives candidates an opportunity to share relevant information at an early stage, which can then be discussed at interview and/or considered before the DBS certificate comes back. A clear statement

that self-disclosure will be required as part of the recruitment process may also deter unsuitable people from applying for the post.

It is discriminatory to use any self-disclosed information for short-listing. In November 2020, the ICO made clear that under GDPR Act 2018, it is for employers to determine when best to ask for a criminal self-disclosure but that asking all applicants to disclose as part of the application process could be seen as too broad and therefore a breach of data processing principles including minimisation.

We will not use the information disclosed to rule someone out of the running for a post. Fair assessment criteria will always be applied.

As it is only too possible to lie in a self-disclosure, a DBS certificate should still be sought. The two disclosures can then be compared against each other to highlight any issues.

Ministry of Justice and DBS policy & guidance requires employers to:

- explain the effect of the exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and 'protected offences' to applicants
- give applicants an opportunity to seek legal advice prior to completing their self-disclosure and signpost applicants to impartial advice from Nacro and / or Unlock
- give them an opportunity to declare any relevant criminal record they have and to provide a signed statement that their declaration is accurate and complete

At Meadlands, any job application form will state the following:

All posts involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Exceptions Order, 1975 (2013 & 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected'. These are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions can be found on the Ministry of Justice website.

Rather than a disclosure section on the application form (where they can be seen by shortlisters or others), the form will make clear that all short listed applicants will be asked to provide any information about unspent and unprotected criminal records. This will be by letter rather than pre-determined form. This ensures applicants are aware that the prospective employer is entitled to the information and gives them an opportunity to flag up information in a confidential way. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of all unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview. You may be asked for further information about your criminal history during the recruitment process. If your application is successful this self-disclosure information will be checked against information from the Disclosure and Barring Services before your appointment is confirmed.

Once short-listing has taken place, the disclosed information can then be considered. Information regarding unspent cautions and convictions plus any offences that would not be filtered can then be discussed with the candidate (at interview or in a separate suitability meeting) as part of assessing whether the information is relevant to suitability to work with children. At point discussion, the applicant will be required to sign the letter/ statement to state that the information given is accurate. This means that if the DBS certificate reveals that the successful candidate has deliberately lied about their criminal background, it is easier for the employer, the police and/or the regulatory agency to take action against the person.

Note: Even if someone makes a self-disclosure, this does not remove the need to get a DBS certificate.

At interview all applicants will be asked to confirm the following and sign their application forms again:

Declaration

I can confirm that the above information is complete and accurate and I understand that any offer of employment is subject to

- a) references which are satisfactory to the school and
 - b) a satisfactory enhanced DBS certificate and check of the Barred list where relevant and
 - c) the entries on this form proving to be complete and accurate and
 - d) a satisfactory medical report if appropriate
- I conform that I have not been disqualified from working with children, cautioned or sanctioned in this regards.
- Signature. Date.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its amendments, criminal convictions normally become spent after a period of time. The length of the period is related to the sentence imposed for the offence and the age of the offender. There are exceptions to this. Until recently, a person was required to declare certain criminal convictions and cautions when asked to do so even if the conviction / caution would be regarded as spent in other circumstances. One of those situations was when applying for work with children, whether paid or voluntary. However, since May 2013 individuals do not have to disclose certain old or minor offences (referred to as protected offences) and employers must no longer request applicants to do so. The filtering rules were amended again in November 2020 – see flowchart end of policy

7. References

References are a vital part of the recruitment process and the following procedures must be taken:

- All requests for references should enclose a copy of the job description and person specification.
- The referee's opinion should be sought about how the person meets the requirements of the specification and his or her capacity to carry out the duties set out in the job description. Every request should also ask the referee to state whether they are aware of anything that might give rise for concern about the person's suitability to work with children and, if so, to provide details. Those questions are in addition to the normal questions to an employer about details of a person's salary, duties etc.
- Requests for references in connection with current or previous work with children should ask about concerns in respect of suitability, but also specifically about whether the person has been the subject of allegations about their behaviour towards children. If this is the case, there should be a request for a comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved and a note of any action taken and decisions reached.
- Referees should not be asked about the candidate's criminal record. However, the referee should also ask for details of any disciplinary action the person may have been subject to in relation to behaviour involving children, including any in which any sanctions imposed are expired.
- If an applicant has worked with children previously, whether on a paid or voluntary basis, at least one reference should be obtained from the person or organisation that employed the applicant in work with children, even if that is not the applicant's current or most recent employer.
- Requests made to the person's current employer should also seek specific confirmation of the details and responsibilities of the person's current post as he or she has described them in their application.

If a person's employer is reluctant to provide more than an institutional reference that is, confirming details of a person's salary, duties etc. as sometimes is the case where references are provided by the HR department of a large organisation, a reference should also be sought from the individual's direct manager or supervisor. 'Keeping children safe in education' 2020 says: "Employers should not rely on open references, for example in the form of 'to whom it may concern' testimonials.

Where electronic references are received employers should ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

References will be sought before interview. Very careful consideration will need to be given to any request by an applicant to delay seeking references until it is known whether he or she is to be offered the post.

Scrutinising references

It is very important to read references carefully and thoroughly to make sure that the referee has answered all the questions and that there are no vague or ambiguous statements. It is also vital to compare the information about the applicant provided by the referee with the information the applicant has given about him or herself and his or her experience and background. The referee will always be contacted to verify who they are and to provide further clarification as appropriate, for example if the answers are vague or if insufficient information is provided.

NOTE As a result of the Equality Act 2010, it is no longer appropriate to ask referees for information relating to absence or sickness record until after the preferred candidate has been selected unless the post has an exception.

8. Temporary Staff, Volunteers and Overseas Candidates

We may be in a position where supply or temporary staff need to be used. In such a case we must still be satisfied that the prospective worker has undergone the necessary reference and criminal record checks. We insist that the agency fully vets all staff before they are put forward for an assignment into that contractual agreement. If that contractual assurance is not in place we ensure we carry out reference checks and DBS checks on temporary staff in the same way we do on permanent staff.

Overseas Candidates are required to ensure they are eligible to work in the UK. On occasion we may choose to pay for work permits if appropriate.

With references we will always ensure sources are reliable, employment history is break-free or explained, and supplementary references must be obtained in order to produce a proper historical work/training history.

The Head Teacher must take care to ensure sufficient breadth and depth of information is available to make a safe decision. For further guidance on DBS checks for overseas applicants please refer to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

References will be sought for voluntary posts as for paid employment. A similar process will be followed when seeking volunteers for the kinds of posts that require a formal recruitment process.

Addendum: School cannot support a visa application for a third party e.g. a parent requesting a supporting letter for a nanny being employed directly by a family. Without being able to make the same checks as those for a prospective employee it would not be appropriate for us to do so.

Part 3: Making the Right Decision

9. Interviews

Prior to interview the candidates will be invited to visit the working environment as part of the process, this is encouraged. All candidates must be afforded this same opportunity.

The interview panel for any recruitment will consist of *at least* two senior members of staff and *at least* one of whom has received safer recruitment training.

The interview must consist of:

- Introductions;
- The interview questions and responses recorded and scored. The Head teacher must consider the content and number of questions, the evidence looked for in the answer, who will ask each question and what weighting (if any) will need to be decided;
- Questions will include scenarios and request for examples – not simple knowledge of systems
- The assessment criteria and method of assessment (including presentations) which must be considered based on the requirements of the person specification
- Candidates will have the opportunity to ask questions and find out about the job and their prospective employer.
- The panel will probe gaps/frequent changes in employment and note any vagueness/areas of concern.
- The panel must take the opportunity to investigate gaps in the employment history and/or any disclosures of criminal history.
- Closing the interview, the panel will explain the next stage in the process, i.e. informing the candidate of the outcome and when
- We will ensure identification and qualifications have been verified as original documents and that they are bona fide and take photocopies;
- We will confirm the process for obtaining a medical fitness check and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, where appropriate.

The Head Teacher must make it clear any offer of employment to a candidate would be subject to these being satisfactory. Please refer to Pre-Appointment Checklist below. Where ever appropriate, the recruitment and selection process should not just consist of an interview. A variety of selection and/or presentation processes can be adopted. The interview should be scored and documents retained for 6 months after the interview.

10. Pre-Appointment Checklist

For every candidate interviewed, we will complete an original document inspection. This ensures compliance with Asylum and Immigration legislation to ensure a candidates eligibility to work, and also provides sufficient information for a DBS check to be completed.

At least 3 documents must be inspected for the DBS form. The following must be checked:

- Verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website;
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity); this must be obtained from the candidate before, or as soon as practicable after, the person's appointment.
- Obtain a separate barred list and prohibited list check (if required) if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, should follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- On top of the required pre-employment checks, if the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK, we will make any further checks considered 'appropriate'. These checks can help you consider any relevant events outside of the UK that would affect their suitability for employment. This is set out in paragraph 172 of the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). The headteacher decides what's 'appropriate' therefore it is the head teacher's discretion to decide whether further checks are necessary, based on individual circumstances. This decision should be based on factors such as the:

- Amount of information disclosed in the DBS check, and
 - Length of time the individual has been in or out of the UK
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate

It may be prudent to google the candidate to see what this produces and what their internet footprint looks like.

11. Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) Checks

DBS checks must be carried out on positions that involve regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults/vulnerable groups including volunteers and a risk assessment must be conducted for volunteers to determine whether they need an enhanced check.

At Meadlands a list of categories that represent the professions, offices, employments, work and occupations that are known as the exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 are available by clicking here [DBS website](#).

Regulated work is defined as *unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/ guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children; ii. work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: e.g. schools, children's homes, childcare premises. Such work requires an enhanced DBS.*

Unregulated work is defined as work supervised by another. This will be someone in a more senior position who holds an enhanced DBS, (such as staff member and volunteer). **Such work requires a standard DBS.**

Head Teachers must ensure when completing 'Section X' of the DBS form (Evidence of identity seen by the employer/volunteering organisation/registered body) that original documents are provided. Under KCSIE, the School Staffing Regs 2009 and Independent School Regs 2014, the school must see the original paper certificate. Furthermore, under the DBS code of practice, RBs / UBs are not permitted to provide these digital snapshots or assurances. Further guidance on acceptable documentation is available on the [DBS website](#).

To minimise the risk of unsuitable people being appointed, schools & FE colleges should wait for sight of the original (paper) DBS certificate for ALL new appointments in regulated activity with children. Where there is a pressing need to start someone before the certificate is received, the school or college should request a stand-alone barred list check via TRA. If there is a name match, the school must not let the individual start until the situation has been clarified and the paper certificate received.

Currently DBS checks must only be submitted for the candidate selected for appointment.

At Meadlands, we always undertake DBS checks on all new staff appointments.

Maternity Leave or Sick Leave do not count as a break in service.

Employees must be made aware of their obligation to inform their manager of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place. At Meadlands we renew DBS checks every 5 years.

12. Teacher prohibition orders

Teacher prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting. A check of any prohibition can be carried out using the DfE Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

Teacher prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel. Prohibition orders last for life. Pending such consideration, the Secretary of State may issue an interim prohibition order if it is considered to be in the public interest to do so.

13. Dealing with convictions

If a DBS is returned with details of convictions, Meadlands will seek advice from HR services. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and also:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- How long ago the offence occurred;
- One-off or history of offences;
- Circumstances surrounding the offence;
- Changes in circumstances;
- Country in which the offence occurred;
- Decriminalisation and remorse.

Retaining information provided by the DBS

On receipt of a DBS and record of a conviction; the Headteacher will request further information from the applicant. This information and subsequent meeting will be attended by the Headteacher and SBM, a record of this meeting will be retained on the SCR: The information recorded must be:

Record of meeting	Information on decisions made	Reference number	Date of issue	Standard or Enhanced check

Information must be readily available for inspectors, to ensure the correct recruitment procedures are being followed. Details of discussions with staff about criminal or other declarations must be retained on personal files.

At Meadlands these records are stored and filed along with the SCR.

Vetting and Barring Scheme

The Barred List Check is not automatically completed as part of a DBS check, this is a separate check which must be completed for all people working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. We will carry out an online check that a prospective employee is a member of the scheme and hence not barred and therefore able to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The scheme will be based on two barred lists:

- People barred from working with children and/or young people;
- People barred from working with vulnerable adults.

Individuals will be barred either automatically if they are convicted or cautioned for certain offences or following a decision by the DBS. Further information is available from the [Disclosure and Barring Service \(GOV.UK\) website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service).

Please note that from the 1st April 2021, stand-alone checks of the children's barred list will be administered by the TRA on behalf of the DfE.

Part 4: Induction

14. Risk Assessments – Starting staff before checks are complete

Where there are gaps in information, concerns or matters of judgement, the Head Teacher will undertake a risk assessment to determine whether the appointment should proceed or the offer is

withdrawn. Consideration will be given to the information available and whether further information/advice is required, whether the safety risk is small or can be mitigated by temporary work restrictions.

Advice from HR must be sought on potential employment rights matters (for example; where a temporary contract may be considered).

The Head Teacher will be held accountable for this decision and must 'sign off' the documentation to clear the appointment for processing. Where concerns arise these need to be discussed with HR before any appointment is confirmed.

15. Withdrawing the Offer

Once an offer of employment has been made it can be rescinded providing the checks outlined in any offer letter are not satisfactory. This is superseded by any legal requirements such as the right to work.

Meadlands will seek advice from AfC HR department before any offer of employment is withdrawn. Where it is appropriate, any concerns must be reported to the designated Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), in accordance with the Whistle Blowing policy.

16. Induction

The introduction of a new member of staff begins at the recruitment stage, when messages about being a 'Safe Organisation' are first given. This must be continued through the selection process and when the new person starts work as part of induction. Staff need to feel confident that they can raise issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children, young people and that they will be listened to and be taken seriously. This is achieved by maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All new staff, regardless of previous experience will have an induction. The induction process will:

- Provide training and information about policies and procedures; including Level 1 and 2 Safeguarding Training
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged;
- Confirm the conduct of staff and standards of behaviour expected and the methods in which issues can be reported;
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities;
- Enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.
- Information about, and written statements of: policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. safeguarding & child protection, anti-bullying, physical restraint, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection and safeguarding procedures. Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and how and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised; and other relevant personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, capability and whistle blowing. Individual supervision, one to one sessions between manager and employee, and appraisal sessions should be diarised. Supervision of this nature will take place half termly.

Probationary Period

All new staff (either paid or volunteer) or staff who change posts in an organisation will be closely monitored with timely performance management measures in place. A new starter should be subject to a probationary period. The probationary process ensures that following an appointment, employees are given the necessary support and guidance to enable them to reach the required standard by the end of the probationary period. The probationary period can also ensure a successful induction of employees into their new role.

Managers are responsible for monitoring their employee's conduct and performance closely and agreeing a strategy to overcome any shortcomings in a formalised setting, if appropriate. See Staff

Appraisal Policy for details about the probationary period and the process for dealing with employees who are unsuccessful in their probationary period. Probationary periods can usually extend up to a maximum of one year, with employment not normally being confirmed until the end of the probation period.

17. Monitoring Systems

Our monitoring systems consist of the following:

- Formal audits of sufficient quality and quantity conducted regularly, allowing ample time for improvements to be made post audit, with results recorded and reported effectively; audits may be led by an advisor from AfC or the Safeguarding Governors.
- Managers monitor the day to day work environment;
- Guidance on safe working practices is provided for each member of staff and includes clarity in relation to such areas as:
 - a) Non-routine events, such as school trips;
 - b) Child injury/illness;
 - c) Internet use;
 - d) The use, supervision and handling of text and photographic media.
- Half termly review and analysis of systems such as CPOMs

Monitoring procedures are reported to the Governing Board.

18. Code of Conduct, Whistle Blowing and Complaints Procedure

The Staff Code of Conduct provides the values and framework within which employees are required to work and summarises what is expected of employees during their employment. We are committed to the highest standards of honesty and accountability based on legal obligations and statutory guidance. It must be a condition of employment that employees read, understand and adhere to their organisations code of conduct. Failure to adhere should lead to action in line with the disciplinary policy and may in some cases lead to legal action. Codes of conduct cannot cover every eventuality and are neither an exclusive nor exhaustive list of acceptable conduct at work. If employees are unsure whether particular conduct or behaviour is acceptable at work, they must seek guidance from their manager.

Candidates and employees may at one time or another have concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these concerns are easily resolved. However, when they are about unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, health and safety risks to the public or to other employees, damage to the environment, possible fraud or corruption, sexual or physical abuse of other staff or children, or any other unethical conduct, it can be difficult to know what to do. Employees should feel confident about raising serious concerns by providing clear avenues through which concerns can be raised, and reassuring those who raise concerns that they will not be victimised. Those who raise concerns will receive a response and be informed about how their concerns are being dealt with.

Managing Allegations Despite best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to children instances the London Child Protection Procedures Manual, Allegations against Staff or Volunteers, who Work with Children Procedure will be applied to situations where allegations of this nature are made. These procedures will be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children and young people, in connection with their employment or voluntary activity has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.

- These behaviours should be considered within the context of the 4 categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, and also include allegations made against staff in their private lives. (All references in this document to members of staff should be interpreted as meaning "all paid or unpaid staff").

Each partner agency within the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Board is to identify a named Designated Safeguarding Lead with overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that the organisation deals with allegations in accordance with the All London Child Protection procedures;
- Resolving any inter agency issues;
- Liaising with the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Board about these matters.

In accordance with the procedures, Achieving for Children has designated an officer to:

- Be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases;
- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations;
- Liaise with the police and other agencies;
- Monitor the progress of cases to ensure we have dealt with this as quickly as possible consistent with the thorough and fair process.

A local authority designated officer (LADO) has also been appointed for schools to help manage the process of abuse against staff and teachers within the school setting. In all cases where there is an allegation against an adult working within the children's workforce, a complex strategy meeting will be convened. This meeting will be chaired by an independent officer who will ensure that the appropriate investigations are carried out whether via the criminal processes or through internal disciplinary procedures; or through a child protection enquiry (Section 47, Children Act 1989). The officer will be responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of these allegations are properly recorded and that due consideration is given to whether a referral needs to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in terms of suitability to continue working with children or vulnerable adults.

It may also be necessary to refer the matter to the relevant professional body of the individual. A decision to do so will be made based on the merits of the case. If the professional body is to be advised of an allegation then the individual must be made aware of that action before doing so. A regular report will be made to the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Board to highlight the numbers of allegations that have been completed in relation to those adults who work with children from each of the Partner Agencies.

Information will be recorded and kept centrally within the Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance Service, in the Local Authority in accordance with Data Protection Act 1998.

Professional Bodies Candidates, employees and volunteers are expected to co-operate with Professional/regulatory bodies. Where professional qualifications are required for a position, managers should ensure that copies of relevant qualifications as outlined in the person specification are retained on the employee's personal file. Where membership of regulatory bodies is required, employees are required to ensure these are kept up to date. Where concerns arise employees have a responsibility to disclose this to their manager and discuss where appropriate, this may include adjustments to a post on a temporary basis.

19. Single Central Records

The SCR is held by the SBM. This is a confidential register and managed by the Headteacher and the SBM; overseen by the Chair of the Governing Board. The register must be easily accessible and available for inspection and is signed off by the CofG termly.

We maintain an electronic record of the checks which have been carried out on:

- All staff employed at the school;
- Supply staff employed by the school;
- Supply staff engaged through an agency
- All others who have regular contact with children at the school including:
 - a) Volunteers;
 - b) Governors who also work as volunteers;
 - c) Others brought into school to provide additional instruction to pupils e.g. sports coaches, artists etc.;
 - d) 'Contractors'.

The SCR must be complete for all persons listed above engaged at the school, all new persons from that date of appointment - irrespective of how long they are actually at the school (i.e. you must include agency supply staff even if they only come once). On ending employment they are removed from the register.

In summary we will ensure that our recruitment process, when recruiting to any safeguarding roles, includes the use of:

- Clear, well defined job descriptions;
- Full and complete application forms from potential candidates;
- "Self - disclosure" forms for the purpose of disclosing convictions early in the recruitment process;
- Full face to face interviews, conducted by staff trained in recruitment and safeguarding awareness;
- Fully recorded document inspections;
- New Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on recruitment; and every subsequent five years;
- A minimum of two checkable references, with one from the most recent employer, obtained directly by the recruiting organisation;
- Medical checks to ensure candidate's ability to undertake the role;
- Checks to ensure overseas candidates are eligible to work in the UK;
- An appropriate and monitored new starter process and well defined induction;
- A clear code of conduct which is communicated to new starters.
- And that the organisations we represent, where we interact with schools:
 - Maintain a record of checks carried out on staff or volunteers who have regular contact with schools.
- And that our organisation has a policy and procedure to enable:
 - Staff to raise any concerns over possible malpractice within the organisation in a safe environment without fear of victimisation;
 - Allegations of abuse against staff to be investigated appropriately and in accordance with current best practice guidance.
- We will encourage staff and volunteers in our organisations to attend any training provided in relation to safe recruitment and actively promote and encourage best practice.

Standard Reference Request Form

Applicant: Post: Division:

1. *Employment Details*

Please confirm dates the applicant was employed by your organisation:

From: _____

To: _____

What was your relationship to the applicant: _____

2. *Attendance Details*

How many days was the applicant absent through sickness in the last two years (or period of employment with you, whichever is more appropriate)? Please comment.

Year	Number of Days Absent	Number of Occasions	Reasons for absence

Please continue overleaf if necessary.

Were any of these absences uncertified or unauthorised? Please comment.

Please comment on the applicant's timekeeping and attendance record whilst employed by you.

3. *Job Related Details*

What job/s has the applicant held during the time you have known them and what were their main duties and responsibilities?

Title of Job

Main Duties

Attached is a job description and person specification for the job which the applicant has applied. Please comment below on the applicant's suitability for this job in terms of experience, knowledge, skills and abilities.

4. *Roles involving work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults*

Does this role involve working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults? YES / NO

If yes, please respond to the sections below, stating details or NONE as appropriate:

- a) Please give details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired and the outcome of those.
- b) Please give details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults or behaviour towards them, and the outcome of those concerns e.g. whether the allegations or concern was investigated, the conclusion reached and how the matter was resolved.
- c) Are you completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults?

Please ring as appropriate: YES / NO

If "NO", please provide specific details of your concerns and the reasons why you believe the person might be unsuitable.

5. **Other Detail**

Has the applicant been the subject of any of your organisation's and/or a relevant professional associations formal disciplinary, capability, unsatisfactory performance or other such procedures, which have not been expunged from the record?

Please ring as appropriate: YES / NO If yes, please comment?

Did the applicant leave of his/her own accord or was he/she dismissed? Please comment?

Would you re-employ the applicant?

YES/NO

If not, please comment:

Are you aware of any reason why the applicant might not be suitable for employment with this School? Please comment:

Name:

Telephone Number:

Job Title:

Organisation:

Signature:

Date:

Organisation Stamp:

Short Listing Example

Name						
Qualification						
Other qualifications						
Grade						
Experience						
Year Groups						
Previous Work						
Expertise						
Interests						
Personal Attributes						
Interview?						

