



# Safer Recruitment Policy & Procedure

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**The purpose of the plan is to:**

- Set out the recruitment and selection procedures which will be followed at Yarrow Heights School.
- Set out the conditions under which offers of employment are made.
- Set out the pre-employment checks of staff that we undertake to safeguard children.

### **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

*Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any employee or applicant and it helps to promote equality at this school.*

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## **1. Aims**

This policy aims to:

- ✓ Set out the recruitment and selection procedures which will be followed at Yarrow Heights School.
- ✓ Set out the conditions under which offers of employment are made.
- ✓ Set out the pre-employment checks of staff that we undertake to safeguard children.

## **2. Legislation and Statutory requirements**

- ✓ Statutory Policies for Schools & Academic Trusts (Jan 2020).
- ✓ Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021).
- ✓ The Equality Act 2010.

## **3. Principles**

3.1 Yarrow Heights School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires that all employees and volunteers demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of our work.

3.2 The appointment of all employees will be based on merit and in accordance with the provisions of employment law, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) and our Equality and Diversity Policy, such that we employ motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in their work.

3.3 The Board of Directors at Yarrow Heights School will ensure that people are treated solely based on their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, trade union membership or any such inappropriate distinction.

3.4 We will comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) regarding DBS and pre-employment checks.

3.5 These procedures will apply to everyone who works in the School including:

- ✓ Staff employed on a permanent basis.
- ✓ Temporary and casual staff.
- ✓ Unpaid volunteers.

- ✓ Those engaged via external organisations such as supply agencies.
- ✓ Contractors and self-employed persons.

3.6 The Board of Directors of Yarrow Heights School has delegated the authority to offer employment on all posts up to Deputy Headteacher to the Headteacher. The Headteacher may not delegate the offer of employment to any other Senior Manager.

3.8 Selection Panels will comprise a minimum of two people. In accordance with the statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment training. All panel members will have undertaken general recruitment or Equality Act training.

#### **4. Definitions**

4.1. “**Headteacher**” also refers to, where appropriate, another Senior Manager delegated to deal with the matter by the Headteacher.

#### **5. The Recruitment Procedure**

##### **5.1 Identifying a Vacancy**

Before any action is initiated, consideration will be given to the necessity of filling the post, the tasks and the skills experience and knowledge required to undertake the role.

##### **5.2 Job Descriptions**

A job description and person specification will be drawn up for all posts. The Job Description provides a framework of expectations and will define the Job Purpose, Duties and Responsibilities, Knowledge, Skills and Experience required. The Person Specification will enable applicants to assess themselves for the role and provides a benchmark for assessing suitability. All Job Descriptions and Person Specifications clearly set out the extent of relationships with pupils and the degree of responsibility for children for each post.

The Job Description and Person Specification will be used throughout the recruitment process to develop the shortlisting and selection criteria.

If a post is public facing and the successful applicant will be required to speak fluent English, this will be set out in the Job Description and Person Specification. A public facing role is where, as a regular and intrinsic part of the role, the person is required to speak to members of the public, whether face to face or by telephone, and is considered “customer facing”. This also includes any posts involving communication with pupils and parents.

The salary for the role will be evaluated and the salary will be advertised.

### **5.3 Advertising**

Yarrow Heights School will consider the most appropriate methods of advertising any vacant posts and the format for the advert will be considered. This may include advertising the post on professional Job Search and social media platforms in addition to other methods e.g., School Notice boards and local or national media.

All vacant posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and to encourage as wide a field as possible to apply. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally to the School. However, there may be circumstances where an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate and sufficient. This will include where.

- ✓ There is a clear career development and progression path being supported.
- ✓ There is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified and experienced internal candidates.
- ✓ The position is for additional responsibilities and not a vacant post.
- ✓ Staff are at risk of redundancy and the role could be considered a suitable alternative.

In these circumstances, the Selection Panel may decide that certain parts of the recruitment process may be omitted but all candidates will be subject to a formal interview, the satisfactory reference requirements, and any other necessary checks.

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Senior Leadership team posts will be advertised in the manner considered appropriate by the Board of Directors. In order to ensure the widest possible field of candidates advertising will usually be national for these roles, unless there is good reason not to do so.

All agency workers and employees working on Fixed Term contracts will be eligible to apply for any vacancies advertised.

### **5.4 Application Form**

The Yarrow Heights School Application Form is used for all vacancies. Alternative application forms will be accepted for disabled applicants, but such applicants must provide all of the information required by the Yarrow Heights School Application Form. CVs will not be accepted without an Application Form for processing.

All parts of the Application Form must be completed, and the form signed by the candidate (an electronic, typed or email signature is acceptable). Incomplete Application Forms will not be accepted and will be returned for completion or checked with the

candidate. Where an applicant is shortlisted, any discrepancies or gaps in employment will be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be made aware that providing false information or deliberate omission of employment history is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or, in summary dismissal if an applicant has been selected and/or employed.

Internal applicants who wish to apply for a new post will be informed whether an Application Form must be completed or whether a letter of application is sufficient.

### **5.5 Shortlisting Applicants**

Shortlisting will take place as soon as possible after the closing date. Shortlisting will be undertaken by the selection panel normally consisting of 2 individuals. The panel will refer to an agreed shortlisting criteria.

### **5.6 Invitation to Interview**

Once the shortlist has been agreed, those candidates will be notified as soon as possible. Invitation to interview will be confirmed in writing. Adequate time will be allowed between invitation and interview to allow candidates sufficient time to prepare.

Full details of the selection process (i.e. details of the interview and any additional selection exercises) will be notified to the candidate in the invite letter. A Recruitment Information Pack will be sent to include the following:

- ✓ Link to the School website.
- ✓ Reference to the Yarrow Heights Policy on Equality and Diversity.
- ✓ Reference to the Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy.
- ✓ Information on DBS and other pre-employment requirements.
- ✓ A statement that canvassing any member of staff, or a member of the Board of Directors of Yarrow Heights School is prohibited.
- ✓ The closing date of applications.
- ✓ An outline of the terms of employment including salary.
- ✓ Reference to the Yarrow Heights School policy on Safer Recruitment Policy & Procedure.

Every effort will be made to accommodate any special requirements/adjustments necessary to enable candidates to participate in the process.

## 5.7 Requesting References

References will be taken up on all short-listed candidates, including internal applicants prior to interview. In line with statutory guidance, references will be scrutinised, and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before any appointment is confirmed.

In exceptional circumstances, where candidates have good reasons not to want referees to be contacted prior to interview, the reasons will be stated in the Yarrow Heights School Application Form. Where it is agreed to defer, referees will be contacted immediately after interview before an offer of employment is confirmed.

References must cover a continuous period of three years covering the current/most recent employer and any previous education experience or work with children, regardless of how long the candidate worked there. All references must be verified by phone.

Types of reference are as follows:

**Employment Reference** - on headed company notepaper and signed by a person with a job title clearly in a senior, supervisory / managerial position to the candidate.

**Academic Reference** - from an attended educational establishment, if relevant to the role applied for e.g., newly qualified Teacher. This must be printed on headed paper and signed by the named person with a job title clearly of an appropriate position, e.g., Course Tutor, Head of Faculty.

**Character Reference** - this may only be provided where there are no employment or academic referees, or where the candidate has held their last job for a significant length of time and a supplementary reference is sought from the same employer. It should be a named person with a professional status e.g. Doctor, Solicitor, Teacher, Lecturer, Senior Executive or other appropriate profession.

## 5.8 Selection Process

The format, style and duration of the selection process is a matter for the Headteacher to agree in consultation with the Head of People and others involved in the process, but the following will apply.

## 5.9 Briefing

All candidates will be given relevant information about Yarrow Heights School to enable them to make further enquiries about the suitability of the post advertised.

## 5.10 Formal Interview

Before the interviews the Selection Panel will agree on the interview format. Where appropriate the process may include activities such as Presentations, Lesson Plans, Simulated Lesson Observations, In Tray exercises or pupil panels. The process will assess the merits of each candidate against the requirements of the job, will explore the candidate's understanding of child safeguarding issues and explore their suitability to work with children. The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions, other than those protected, that the candidate has declared and are relevant to the employment.

## 5.9 Offers of Employment

The choice of candidate to offer will be determined by Panel majority. The Panel may identify a first and reserve candidate. An offer of employment is conditional subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks as follows:

- ✓ Verification of Right to Work in the UK.
- ✓ Evidence that Qualification requirements are met.
- ✓ A satisfactory Enhanced Level DBS Disclosure.
- ✓ A completed Teacher Prohibition Check.
- ✓ A Children's Barred List Check.
- ✓ Pre-employment Medical Screening questionnaire.
- ✓ Receipt of two references covering the previous three years employment AND any prior employment with children.

Where a candidate has made a self disclosure declaration of criminal convictions and/or a positive DBS is received, these will be discussed prior to confirming the appointment in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement (See Appendix 1).

Where the School setting and post are covered by the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations, if the preferred candidate declares information on a Disqualification Declaration Form the school will need to establish whether the information declared meets one of the disqualification criteria, in which case the panel may decide:

- ✓ a) to discontinue the recruitment process in respect of that candidate.
- ✓ b) allow the candidate time to apply for an Ofsted Waiver.

Once all pre-employment checks have been received and confirmed as satisfactory, a firm offer of employment will be made and the contract of employment (or a contract

amendment as applicable) will be issued. The contract/contract amendment will be issued as soon as possible in advance of the proposed start date but in all circumstances no later than the first day of employment.

If the preferred candidate does not accept the post, the panel will consider the option of contacting any reserve candidate(s). This will only be done where these candidates meet the criteria for the role. In this case, if the reserve candidate wishes to proceed to be the preferred candidate a conditional offer will be made subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks as set out above.

The pre-employment checks must be completed before the employee starts work. Exceptions will only be made in circumstances where a risk assessment has been undertaken. No exceptions will be made in the case of the Children's Barred List and Teacher Prohibition checks.

Unsuccessful shortlisted candidates will be advised accordingly. All candidates can request feedback on their interview/selection.

## **6. Personnel File and Single Central Record**

6.1 Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of his/her employment with the School including:

- ✓ Application form – signed by the applicant.
- ✓ Interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in the employment history.
- ✓ References – minimum of two.
- ✓ Proof of identity.
- ✓ Proof of right to work in the UK.
- ✓ Proof of relevant academic qualifications.
- ✓ Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable).
- ✓ Evidence of medical clearance from the pre-employment medical screening questionnaire and subsequent Occupational Health service.
- ✓ Evidence of DBS clearance, barred list and teacher prohibition checks.
- ✓ Offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment.

6.2 All employees have the right to request access to notes written about them during a recruitment process. Applicants who wish to do so should make a Subject Access Request in writing to the Headteacher or Head of People within six months of the date of the interview.

6.3 Yarrow Heights School will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with the “Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) statutory requirement.

## **7. Probation Period**

All new employees will be subject to the satisfactory completion of a six month probationary period (unless their appointment arises from any statutory transfer or they are a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT), in which case they will be subject to a Statutory Induction Period (see Policy on *Newly Qualified Teacher Induction*). During the period of probation new entrants will be expected to establish their suitability to the role.

## **8. Engaging Volunteer Workers**

Yarrow Heights School values the contribution that Volunteers make to its community and recognise the positive impact that they can have on pupils’ learning, experiences and wellbeing.

Volunteers are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults and we will apply the same high standards of safer recruitment principles and processes to Volunteers as we do with employees.

### **8.1 Interviewing Volunteers**

Volunteers will be asked to have a discussion with the Headteacher or another Senior Manager prior to commencing their role. This will be an informal interview but will provide:

- ✓ An opportunity to explain the workings of the School.
- ✓ Time to ask the Volunteer for information needed to make a successful placement including any safeguard checks.
- ✓ An opportunity to explore their suitability to work with children, including their motivation to work with children and their ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries.
- ✓ An opportunity to determine any special health safety and welfare criteria needing to be met.
- ✓ An opportunity for the Volunteer to find out more about the nature of the work.
- ✓ Information to decide how best the Volunteer can contribute using their skills and experience.
- ✓ How much time they want to commit.

## **8.2 Application Forms and Job Descriptions for Volunteers**

Volunteers will be asked to complete a basic application form this provides the information necessary to undertake safeguarding checks and to give a picture of the skills and experience the Volunteers bring to maximise their contribution and the Volunteers own fulfilment in the assigned activities.

Prospective Volunteers will be given the privacy notice (Volunteers) prior to completing an application form.

Volunteers will be given clear and simple Job Descriptions and boundaries of the voluntary activity. At Yarrow Heights school we understand that volunteering does not place the same obligations on an individual in terms of attendance as a paid employee. However, it is very much hoped that Volunteers will fulfil their commitment as agreed between themselves and the school. This includes consistent attendance and undertaking the agreed tasks. Volunteers may be asked to sign a Voluntary Agreement as clarification of the commitment they are making to the school and vice versa.

## **8.3 Agency Staff and Other Workers/Contractors**

It is expected that the same standards of safer recruitment will be applied by external providers of workers or Volunteers to the school. External providers will be required to provide written confirmation that relevant safer recruitment and other relevant pre-employment checks have been undertaken and this will be recorded on the Single Central Record. A copy of the written confirmation will be retained on a central file.

## **9. Roles and responsibilities**

### **9.1 The Board of Directors is responsible for:**

- ✓ Ensuring that there are effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and effective recruitment of all staff and Volunteers and for the engagement of other adults in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements.
- ✓ Monitoring compliance with those policies and procedures.
- ✓ Electing members to sit on any selection panel for the appointment of Headteachers and other senior appointments as required.
- ✓ Approving the appointment of the Headteachers and other Senior Managers.

### **9.2 The Headteacher and Senior Managers involved in recruitment are responsible for:**

- ✓ Applying robust and effective recruitment and selection process in accordance with this procedure and following statutory guidance and legal requirements.

- ✓ Ensuring that safer recruitment practises are in operation and that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, Volunteers and others engaged to work at an appropriate point in the recruitment process.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Board of Directors every year or more frequently if changes to legislation or the needs of the school demands. At each review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.

## **DBS Checks**

All Staff, members of the Board and volunteers are asked to sign to confirm that there is no change to their DBS status on an annual basis. This is recorded on the SCR.

## **11. Links with other policies**

- NQT Induction
- Equality & Diversity

## Appendix 1: Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement

1. Yarrow Heights School is committed to:

- ✓ Safeguarding and promoting the welfare, safety, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people.
- ✓ Promoting equality of opportunity and community cohesion where the diversity of different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued.
- ✓ Promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

We expect all staff volunteers and other workers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good cooperation and the recruitment and retention of competent motivated employees who are suited to and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

2. Yarrow Heights School recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. Selection will be based on merit and ability, assessed against the qualifications, skills and competences required to do the job. We will uphold obligations under law and national collective agreements not to discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, gender reassignment, disability or health, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic origin), religion or belief.
3. Yarrow Heights School will implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the role.
4. Yarrow Heights School will ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. We will monitor the compliance with these measures and require evidence that relevant checks have been undertaken for all workers deployed.
5. The following pre-employment checks will be required where applicable to the role:
- ✓ Receipt of satisfactory references.
  - ✓ Verification of identity.
  - ✓ A satisfactory Enhanced DBS disclosure if undertaking a regulated activity.

- ✓ Verification that you are not barred from working with children.
- ✓ Verification that you are not prohibited from teaching.
- ✓ Verification of medical fitness for the role.
- ✓ Verification of qualifications and of professional status where required.
- ✓ The production of evidence of the right to work in the UK.
- ✓ Verification of successful completion of or exemption from a statutory induction.
- ✓ Verification that you are not subject to a Sec128 direction or that you have provided a disqualification waiver from Ofsted.

**It is illegal for anyone who is barred from working with children to apply for or undertake Regulated Activity.**

6. Yarrow Heights School will maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with the current DfE requirements.
7. All posts and voluntary roles that give substantial unsupervised access to children and young people are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all preferred candidates will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind overs (except for those offences that are subject to filtering by the Police) before their offer of employment being confirmed. When making a recruitment decision Yarrow Heights School will disregard any filtered convictions/ cautions or reprimands which were disclosed in error.
8. Applicants will be required to sign a DBS consent form giving consent for the DBS certificate to be copied and shared within strict guidelines for the purposes of considering suitability for employment and consent for an online status check to be carried out if the applicant subscribes to the DBS update service. Previously issued DBS certificates will only be accepted in certain restricted circumstances or where a candidate subscribes to the DBS update service and the appropriate online status checks have been satisfactory.
9. Yarrow Heights School is committed to ensuring that people who have convictions cautions or reprimands on their record are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position, except in the case of school settings covered by the Childcare Disqualification Regulations (2018) where certain convictions, cautions or warnings will mean an individual is disqualified from working in that setting and will prohibit employment at the school (unless a waiver can be obtained from Ofsted).

10. Positive disclosures will be managed on a case by case basis considering the nature, seriousness and relevance to the role. The following factors will be considered in each case.

- ✓ The seriousness or level of the disclosed information e.g. was it a caution or a conviction.
- ✓ How long ago the incident occurred and whether it was a one-off incident or part of a repeat history and pattern.
- ✓ The circumstances of the offence being committed and any changes in the applicant's personal circumstances since then.
- ✓ The country where the offence or caution occurred.
- ✓ Whether the individual shows or has shown genuine remorse.
- ✓ If the offences were self-disclosed or not (non-disclosure could result in non-confirmation of employment on the grounds of a breach of trust, honesty and openness).

Yarrow Heights operates in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practise in relation to the processing, handling and security of disclosure information.

11. Yarrow Heights School processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its Data Protection policy and GDPR. Data is held securely and accessed and disclosed to individuals only for the purpose of completing the recruitment procedure. On the conclusion of the procedure, data collected will be held in accordance with the Schools retention schedule.

12. A full copy of our Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure is available upon request.