



Hamwic Education Trust

Recruitment and selection policy for employees and volunteers

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Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Scope and purpose.....	3
3.	Safer recruitment.....	3
4.	Advertising	4
5.	Job description	4
6.	Application form	4
7.	References.....	4
8.	Short-listing	5
9.	Interviews	5
10.	Other selection methods	6
11.	Pre- employment checks	6
12.	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks – new employees and volunteers	7
13.	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - existing employees and volunteers.....	8
14.	Agency staff/PPA agencies/groups etc.....	8
15.	Breaches of the policy	8
16.	Record keeping and data protection	9
17.	Review of policy.....	9
	School specific guidance	9
18.	Delegation of authority.....	9
19.	Equal opportunities.....	9
20.	Vacancy determination and initiating recruitment activity	9
21.	Planning for recruitment.....	10
22.	Advertising vacancies.....	10
23.	Shortlisting and selection processes	10
24.	Outcome of selection processes.....	11
25.	Pre-employment checks	11
26.	Offers of employment.....	12
27.	Retention of recruitment records.....	13

1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to define the school's and Trust's strategic approach to recruitment and selection activity and to establish a consistent framework for the application of these activities.

Recruiting the best people to our schools is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our pupils. Not appointing the right people to our roles can have a negative impact on the performance of our school and Trust.

The school leader is responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit to any post, with the exception of the school leader role where the governing body/board will be responsible.

In carrying out our recruitment processes, we are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our pupils by operating safer recruitment practices in line with the statutory requirements and guidance.

We are also committed to ensuring that throughout our recruitment and selection processes no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

In the very exceptional cases where we are required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement this must be approved by the [board/governing body] who will provide reasons for this requirement.

Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, knowledge, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

If an applicant makes the school aware, at any stage of the recruitment process, that they have a disability then reasonable adjustments must be considered to ensure the applicant is not disadvantaged by the process.

This document is available to all members of school staff and to any prospective applicant.

2. Scope and purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting and appointing any employee to work within our Trust.

Sections 12 and 13 on Disclosure and Barring Service checks also applies to volunteers in our Trust.

3. Safer recruitment

All recruitment must be in line with this policy to ensure that we identify, deter and prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with our pupils.

The recruitment of all applicants and volunteers to our schools must, without exception, follow the processes of safer recruitment. All offers of employment will be subject to us being satisfied that the applicant or volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people.

Any person involved in recruiting to our schools must read the "Keeping children safe in education" guidance (or updated statutory guidance) produced by the DfE and our Trust's child protection policy in addition to documentation surrounding disqualification. These can be obtained from [the office / another place / [position]].

All recruitment must be planned to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.

Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during recruitment must inform the school leader/chair of governors/trust immediately.

All of the checks described in Sections 11, 12 and 13 must be carried out and have been determined as satisfactory before an applicant can start their employment in the school.

4. Advertising

Any vacant position will be advertised via the appropriate channels to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is obtained.

All advertisements will have the following statement about safeguarding children and young people and the requirement to have a DBS check:

‘[Name of school] is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its pupils and expects all those working at the [school] to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. All successful candidates will be subject to disclosure and barring service checks along with other relevant employment checks’.

5. Job description

A job description will be required for all posts which describes the duties and responsibilities of the post. It must be up to date, accurate and specific to the role. The job description must also include a person specification which outlines all of the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and knowledge requirements for the post. All job descriptions are job evaluated by the Trust and can be found on the MoPP at: <https://intranet.hamwic.org/manual-of-personnel-practice-mopp/?top-category=job-descriptions-evaluations>

All job descriptions and person specifications must make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

6. Application form

All applicants are required to fill out our standard application form which can be found at <https://www.hamwic.org/blog/?pid=3&nid=1>

CVs will be accepted but will not replace the application form.

7. References

All offers of employment will be conditional upon receipt of at least two satisfactory written references (2 Pre-interview references and 2 Post-offer references for each post). References will:

- be requested for all shortlisted applicants, including internal applicants;
- include the applicant’s current or most recent employer and where an applicant for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, will include the applicant’s most recent employer as a teacher;
- ask the current employer for details of any capability history in the previous two years, and the reasons for this;
- be directly from the referee;
- not be accepted if they are ‘to whom it may concern’ letters;
- request information on the applicant’s suitability to work with children and young people;
- be requested before the interview; and
- be explored further with the referee and with the applicant during the interview if necessary.

Where it has not been possible to obtain references before the interview any concerns that are subsequently raised will need to be resolved before the appointment is confirmed.

In some cases a referee may, for whatever reason, either refuse or simply not reply to a reference request made by the school. Follow up requests should be made and the candidate should be made aware that a reference cannot be obtained. This gives the candidate the opportunity to chase the referee themselves. If after repeated requests a reference has still not been received, copies of all correspondence (e.g. chase up emails) should be printed and placed on the personnel file. As at least 2 suitable references must be held on file, the candidate should provide details of a suitable alternative referee.

In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, information relating to sickness absence will only be requested after a conditional offer of employment has been made. A reference template can be found on the Manual of Personnel Practice/recruitment/templates

8. Short-listing

Applicants will be short-listed against the requirements of the person specification. The same people should carry out the short-listing and the interviews. The outcome of the short-listing process will be recorded and retained.

The equal opportunities monitoring form must be removed from the application and not provided to the short-listing panel.

The short listing panel are responsible for scrutinising the application forms and identifying any gaps in employment or other areas that may affect an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. A satisfactory explanation for any concerns must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process.

9. Interviews

A face to face interview must take place for all applicants to all posts.

All those involved in interviewing must be appropriately trained. At least one person on the interview panel must have passed the appropriate safer recruitment training. The NSPCC offer online training which can be found at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/safer-recruitment-education>

The purpose of the interview is to assess the merits of each applicant against the job description and person specification to establish their suitability for the post and to work with children and young people.

Interviews should be conducted with a minimum of two interviewers on the panel to enable one interviewer to assess the applicant, observe and make notes whilst the applicant talks to the other interviewer. For school leader recruitment, the interview panel would typically consist of a school leader and governor from the partnership, deputy CEO: education and 3 members of the school Governing Body. The CEO would typically attend on day 2 of the interview process.

Before the interview commences the interview panel should have:

- Prepared appropriate questions for the role;
- prepared appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people;
- identified any areas for further probing, e.g. if a criminal record has been declared or if there are gaps in employment etc.

- agreed assessment criteria which reflects the person specification; and
- decided a structure to the interview and established which member of the panel will ask which questions;
- a set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their response will determine whether that is followed up through further questioning;
- any gaps in employment history or declaration of a criminal record or caution must be explored further during the interview process.

10. Other selection methods

In addition to a face to face interview with the interview panel a variety of other selection methods may be used, such as:

- observation of teaching practice in our school or in the applicant's current school or academy;
- one or more additional panel interviews (for example, a panel made up of pupils from our school);
- a presentation;
- in tray exercises; and
- psychometric testing.

Those responsible for deciding the arrangements for recruitment to a specific post will determine the selection method(s). They will be relevant and appropriate to the role and will be based on the requirements for the particular post as set out in the job description and person specification.

Candidates will be informed in advance if any selection methods are to be used in addition to a face to face interview and what these will be.

11. Pre- employment checks

An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following (checklist can be found in the Manual of Personnel Practice, which can be found at:

<https://intranet.hamwic.org/manual-of-personnel-practice-mopp/?top-category=recruitment:>

- the school being satisfied that any gaps in employment have been sufficiently explained;
- receipt of at least two satisfactory written references (one of which must be their current or most recent employer);
- verification of the applicant's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address;
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness;
- verification of clean driving licence if the role requires the candidate to drive;
- verification of qualifications where relevant;
- verification of professional status where applicable. For teachers, this will include checking that the individual has the required teaching qualification and has successfully completed any statutory induction, if required, through the Teacher Regulation Agency Employer Access Online;
- satisfactory enhanced DBS check (see Section 12);
- for teachers, verification that they are not subject to a prohibition order by checking the Teacher Regulation Agency Employer Access Online;
- a clear children's barred list check (except supervised volunteers);
- verification of right to work in the United Kingdom;

- any further checks where the applicant has lived or work outside of the UK including receipt of criminal record information from overseas;
- confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from providing childcare.

All checks must be confirmed in writing, retained on the personnel file and recorded in the single central record (SCR).

12. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks – new employees and volunteers

The school will carry out DBS checks as follows for new appointments, before the employee or volunteer starts work:

Who?	Definition	Type of check
Employees who will be engaging in regulated activity	<p>As an educational institution which is exclusively or mainly for the provision of full-time education to children, [name of School] is an establishment specified in the relevant legislation. Activity carried out in this establishment will therefore be regulated activity relating to children if it meets the definition in the relevant legislation, including that it is carried out:</p> <p>Frequently (for example once a week or more); or</p> <p>On more than three days in any period of 30 days.</p> <p>Note – personal care of a child because of age, illness or disability including physical help with eating, toileting, washing, bathing or dressing is always regulated activity regardless of how frequently it is carried out.</p>	An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check will always be obtained
Unsupervised volunteers	As above	An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check will always be obtained
Supervised Volunteers	<p>Where an individual is a volunteer (e.g. carrying out activity that is unpaid) they will not be engaging in regulated activity if:</p> <p>They are being supervised by someone that is in regulated activity; and</p> <p>The supervision is regular and day to day (e.g. it is ongoing); and</p> <p>The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children (this may take into account for example, the age, number and vulnerability of children the individual is working with and whether other individuals are helping to look after them)</p>	We are unable by law to obtain a barred list check on a supervised volunteer. We will however obtain an enhanced DBS check (with no barred list check) for supervised volunteers.

In exceptional circumstances a new employee or unsupervised volunteer may be able to start before the enhanced DBS check has been received, but not before the children's barred list check has been completed. The [school] must ensure that appropriate supervision is in place until the DBS check has been received.

DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. All applicants must produce the disclosure as soon as received from the regulatory body. The disclosure will be scrutinised to ensure it is authentic and to detect any fraud. The DBS disclosure number and date of the check must be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR). With the applicants consent the certificate will be photocopied, held for no longer than necessary and processed in line with General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Any applicant who refuses to produce their DBS disclosure will not be able to start work at the [school] and the conditional offer will be withdrawn as satisfactory checks are not in place. Any volunteer who refuses to produce their disclosure will not be able to volunteer in [the school] or within any of our schools.

Information relating to an individual's criminal record will only be shared with the relevant people to enable the [school/trust] to make a decision about their suitability to work with children and young people. It will be held for no longer than is necessary and will be processed in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

13. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - existing employees and volunteers

An enhanced DBS check and a children's barred list check will be carried out for all existing staff and unsupervised volunteers where their contact with children or young people has increased from that at their time of appointment.

An enhanced DBS and children's barred list check may be carried out on any employee or unsupervised volunteer where the [school] has concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children and young people. An enhanced DBS (no barred list check) may be carried out on any supervised volunteer where the [school] has concerns about their suitability to work with children and young people.

DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. The [school] expects all applicants to produce the disclosure as soon as received from the regulatory body. Any existing employee who does not produce their DBS disclosure will be managed through the disciplinary procedure.

All existing employees are required to inform the [school] of any change in their criminal record. This includes convictions, cautions, arrests and police investigations. Action may be taken as a result of any change or any failure to inform the [school] of any change.

Those with financial responsibility may be subject to credit checks.

14. Agency staff/PPA agencies/groups etc.

In the case of agency staff, [the school] must ensure that the arrangement with the agency imposes an obligation on the agency to carry out all recruitment checks as set out in section 10, including DBS and children's barred list checks, that the [school] would otherwise complete for its staff. The [school] must obtain written confirmation from the agency that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. This must be recorded in the single central record (SCR).

15. Breaches of the policy

Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application will be managed through the [school]/trust's complaints policy or grievance policy (for existing employees).

16. Record keeping and data protection

All written records of interviews, application forms and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept by the [school]/trust from date of appointment of successful candidate plus 6 months, unless a longer period can be justified by the school leader. Records will be treated as confidential and kept for no longer than necessary in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

17. Review of policy

This policy is reviewed every 3 years by the Head of HR and shared with the recognised trade unions. The application and outcomes of this policy will be monitored to ensure it is working effectively.

School specific guidance

18. Delegation of authority

In respect of the position of the school leader and deputy headteacher, the responsibility and authority to appoint lies with the governing body/Trust as appropriate. Where such recruitment activity is required the governing body will convene a recruitment and selection panel in accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. Where a panel of governors is convened, the governing body will ensure members of the panel have knowledge and understanding of the school's needs, the appropriate experience and training in recruitment and selection, including safer recruitment training, as well as the confidence in carrying out the process effectively. Unless statutory legislation has been contravened, the governing body will normally endorse the recommendation for appointment made by the selection panel.

In respect of all other posts the governing body has delegated responsibility and authority to appoint to the school leader.

19. Equal opportunities

The governing body is committed to providing equality of opportunity at all stages of the recruitment and selection process and ensuring that candidates are treated fairly and lawfully throughout the process. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation or trade union membership.

Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

20. Vacancy determination and initiating recruitment activity

The governing body is committed to providing equality of opportunity at all stages.

Where a school leader/deputy vacancy arises, the governing body will notify the Trust that such a vacancy exists.

The governing body will review such a leadership vacancy in accordance with the current needs of the school, including the school leader's pay range, job description/person specification and the key tasks the new school leader/deputy will need to address, having regard to school improvement.

Subject to the delegation of authority (where authority to appoint has been delegated to the school leader), where a vacancy relates to any other position within the school's existing staffing structure, it is the school leader's responsibility to determine that a vacancy exists and to review whether any such vacancy is to be filled or reviewed before initiating any recruitment activity.

Where the school leader wishes to create a new position which is in addition to the agreed staffing structure of the school, he or she will present a case for such a position to the full governing body for approval. Once approved, the school leader can initiate recruitment activity.

Where it is decided that the school requires the engagement of a casual worker, the casual worker guidance will be followed

21. Planning for recruitment

Where the recruitment activity concerns school leader or deputy posts, the governing body will ensure that the Trust is advised that the vacancy exists and is to be filled, in accordance with its obligations under the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. The Governing Body will seek advice from the Trust.

Prior to undertaking recruitment activity for vacancies other than the school leader, the school leader will, working with a senior manager as appropriate, ensure that there is a review of the job description and person specification and ensure that this document is an accurate reflection of the role to be filled.

The governing body and/or school leader will make a determination as to whether a role is to be filled on a permanent, fixed-term, temporary or any other basis, taking into account any advice received from managed services.

22. Advertising vacancies

It will be normal practice for all vacancies to be advertised on the Trust website, unless there is a good reason not to do so. Advertisements may be either internally (for example on school noticeboards or on the school intranet site) or externally (such as via the education jobs website), depending on the type of vacancy, the nature of the contract which exists and the current nature of the recruitment market. When advertising externally, the school will ensure that school staff are aware, to allow current members of staff to apply, should they wish to do so.

School leader and deputy headteacher vacancies will be advertised unless the governing body has good reason not to do so. Where the governing body makes a determination not to advertise, it will minute the reason for this decision. The vacancy will be advertised in such a manner as the governing body considers appropriate taking into consideration the best way of reaching the target audience and the level of exposure the advertisement will receive. Advice will normally be sought from the Trust, before deciding not to advertise.

Advertisements will include a safeguarding statement, highlighting the school's commitment to child safeguarding in an effort to deter any unsuitable candidates, an equal opportunities statement and a statement regarding the declaration of convictions, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended), along with the necessary information needed to attract suitable candidates to the post and to the school.

23. Shortlisting and selection processes

The governing body recognises that it is a legislative requirement (School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009) that at least one member of a selection panel must have completed safer

recruitment training. A selection panel will not be convened without at least one panel member having been appropriately trained in safer recruitment.

For school leader recruitment, the interview panel would typically consist of a school leader and governor from the partnership, Deputy CEO: education and 3 members of the school Governing Body. The CEO would typically attend on day 2 of the interview process. For all other posts the panel will normally consist of at least two senior members of staff.

The shortlisting and interview panels will normally be made up of the same members of staff to ensure consistency and fairness.

During the shortlisting process all applications will be assessed equally against the same criteria, without exception or variation. All applications will be carefully scrutinised, with particular care paid to any gaps in employment; repeated and/or regular/frequent changes in employment; and anomalies or discrepancies in information contained within the form. Any such concerns will be taken up with the candidate at interview and will be satisfactorily resolved before any firm offer of employment is made.

For school leader appointments, the governing body, or its appointed selection panel, will notify the Trust of the shortlist for the post. Where the Trust makes representations regarding the shortlist of candidates, the selection panel recognises its statutory obligation to consider those representations and where it has recommended the appointment of the person about whom the representations have been made, the chair of the selection panel will notify the Trust and governing body in writing of the reasons for this decision.

References will be requested prior to interview, to enable the panel to compare the information received against the candidate's application form and their answers at interview, as well as allowing for any discrepancies to be explored at interview. References requested at this stage of the process will exclude requests for health information.

The selection process for shortlisted candidates will, as a minimum, consist of a face to face selection interview with an interview panel, with other selection activities (such as classroom observation; group activities; written work) determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post.

24. Outcome of selection processes

A selection decision will be made based on a fair and thorough assessment of the skills and abilities demonstrated by all the candidates against the requirements of the person specification/job description during the selection process.

Any offer of employment made to the preferred candidate will be made conditionally, in writing, subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

In school leader and deputy headteacher recruitment, the selection panel will make a recommendation to the governing body and the Trust for the appointment of one of the applicants, with the determination of whether to appoint sitting with the governing body and not the selection panel.

25. Pre-employment checks

The governing body recognises its statutory responsibility to carry out pre-employment checks for all new staff as well as to update the Single Central Record prior to new staff commencing employment.

These processes will be undertaken in accordance with the guidance on fitness and suitability for work and overseas criminal records (both of which can be found in the Manual of Personnel Practice via the business manager) with further advice sought from managed services as necessary.

The selection panel will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of prospective employees based on checks and evidence, which may include the following where appropriate: DBS checks, barred list checks, prohibition checks, right to work and identity checks, together with health declaration, references, application forms, interview information and checks of relevant academic and professional qualifications.

The selection panel will assess all information gathered from pre-employment checks as the information is received, in accordance with the fitness and suitability for work guidance. Any unsatisfactory pre-employment checks may lead to the consideration of withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment. Where consideration is being given to withdrawing an offer on the basis of pre-employment checks, advice will be sought from managed services.

The candidate will not normally commence employment until all relevant pre-employment checks have been completed and must not start until at least the candidate's identity and right to work in the UK have been established. In exceptional circumstances, the school leader may determine to allow an individual to commence employment in regulated activity prior to the receipt of a DBS check. In these circumstances, all other checks, including a separate barred list check where appropriate, must have been completed and they will not be left to work unsupervised. A risk assessment will also be carried out to determine whether other safeguarding measures may need to be put in place.

For volunteers the school will undertake the appropriate checks in line with the guidance in the Manual of Personnel Practice.

Individuals who have lived or worked outside of the UK will be subject to the same pre-employment checks as all other staff. In addition, further appropriate checks, such as an overseas police check, will be made as necessary in accordance with the school's guidance on overseas criminal records, in order to sufficiently establish the individual's suitability to be appointed.

For individuals who work at the school via an employment agency, the school will obtain written notification from the agency that the necessary checks that the school would normally otherwise perform have been carried out, prior to engaging the individual. The school will also check that the individual arriving at the school for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

For trainee/student teachers who are salaried by the school, the school will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. For other trainee/student teachers, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks and for the school to ensure that such checks have been undertaken prior to deployment within the school.

26. Offers of employment

Offers made prior to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks must be made on a conditional basis. Conditional offers of employment must only be confirmed once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

Contracts of employment must be given to the individual on or before their first day of work. It is important, therefore, that pre-employment checks are carried out as soon as possible. Where such checks are not completed within this timeframe, and the withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment is being considered, the guidance on fitness and suitability for work will be followed. Guidance can be found at: <https://intranet.hamwic.org/knowledge-base/fitness-and-suitability-for-work-guidance-dealing-with-unsatisfactory-employment-checks-for-new-external-appointments/>

The Trust advise that HR is contacted for support.

27. Retention of recruitment records

For unsuccessful applicants, all paperwork gathered as part of a recruitment exercise will be kept confidentially and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and General Data Protection Regulations 2018 for a period of 6 months after the interview date to ensure that if there are any claims raised, the school is able to rely on its records to justify its judgment and decision. After this period these records will be confidentially disposed of.

For staff appointed to work at the school, information gathered during the recruitment process will be used to form part of the employee's personnel file and, where applicable, will be mandatorily recorded on the school's Single Central Record.

Links to other policies and documents:

- Employee handbook
- Keeping children safe in education guidance
- Code of conduct guidance
- Disciplinary policy
- Grievance policy
- Equal opportunities statement
- Fitness and suitability for work guidance
- Overseas criminal records guidance
- DBS guidance