



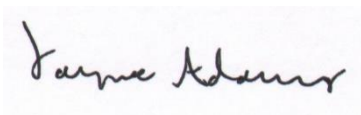
WALTHAMSTOW HALL  
SEVENOAKS

## Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedures

Status:	Statutory
Review cycle:	Annual
SLT Owner:	Bursar
Governing Committee:	Education and Staffing Committee
Held on website:	Yes

***Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.***

Reviewed: September 2024  
Next Review Date: June 2025

Signed: .....  ..... Date: September 2024  
Mrs J Adams  
Chairman of the Governing Body

## **STAFF RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **General**

Walthamstow Hall (“the School”) is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority. This policy has been formulated with regard to requirement of related legislation, notably safeguarding legislation.

The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

All queries on the School’s Application Form and recruitment process must be directed to Human Resources.

An entry will be made on the Single Central Record for all current members of staff at the School, the Governors and all individuals who work in regular contact with children including volunteers, supply staff and those employed as third parties. The Single Central Record is maintained by the HR and Compliance Manager and is available to the Headmistress, Deputy Head (Seniors) and also to the Bursar who is the Data Protection Controller.

The School is a registered charity (1058439), a company limited by guarantee, and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Directors of the charitable company (who are also its members) are the charity Trustees and are the Governors of the School. The Governing Body is a self-appointing body.

All checks will be made in advance of appointment.

### **Aim of the Policy**

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure the appointment of the highest calibre candidate for any particular post, whether teaching or non-teaching.
- Ensure that the selection and appointment process is rigorous, fair and efficient at every stage. We do not discriminate against any candidate on grounds of any protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010. The process may include tasks, observations and interviews as appropriate to the post, to determine between candidates.
- Ensure the present and future safety and well-being of all staff, pupils and others in the School.
- Secure the continued success and development of the School.

To this end those responsible for recruitment will have the appropriate training in safeguarding and child protection including such key issues as safer recruitment and Prevent. Appointment of a Headmistress, Bursar or other senior staff will always include Governor involvement and other appointments may include Governor involvement in the process at the Headmistress’s discretion. The School is committed to providing Continuing Professional Development and INSET Training as required for employees, volunteers and Governors.

Applicants are made aware of the School’s policy and procedures, which are regularly reviewed and which are available on the School’s website and available in printed form if required.

## **Scope of this Policy**

The policy applies to all employees of the School and any contractor or agency worker engaged by the School.

In the case of agency or contract workers, the School sets out our safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the School. Written confirmation is required from the agency or company supplying the workers that it has carried out the appropriate checks, with a copy of that written confirmation retained and a record logged on the School's SCR. At the start of their first day's work for the School, such staff must bring identity documents and their original DBS certificate.

Certain individuals are automatically disqualified from acting in senior management positions within a charity. Whether an individual falls into the category of a senior management position is judged using the following criteria:

- A person who is accountable only to the Governors, and who carries overall responsibility for the day-to-day management and control of the charity. At Walthamstow Hall this would be the Headmistress.
- A person who is accountable only to the Head or the Governors, and who is responsible for the overall management and control of the charity's finances. At the School this would be the Bursar.

Being disqualified means that a person can't take on, or stay in, a senior manager position – even on an interim basis, unless the Charity Commission has removed (or 'waived') the disqualification.

In respect of contractors, unchecked contractors e.g. pest control removing a wasps' nest will under no circumstances be allowed to work unsupervised in School when there are children present.

## **The Procedure**

All appointments are made and administered by the Headmistress or, in her absence, the Deputy Head (Seniors). Whilst other staff may be involved in the process, the Headmistress is responsible for staff appointments. The only exceptions to this are staff recruited by the Bursar or Governors using the same procedure.

The School uses various procedural documents during the recruitment process. Staff are expected to always use these documents, which can be found by enquiry to the Human Resources and Compliance Manager, who holds the most up-to-date versions. The HR and Compliance Manager is also able to assist in the construction of standardised interview questions.

Procedural documents list:

- Standardised Application Form
- Standardised Reference Form
- Employment History Gaps
- Self Declaration Form
- Birth Certificate and ID Check Form
- DUCA Self-Declaration Form
- Overseas Checks Guidance
- Overseas Checks Form for Applicant to Complete
- New Starter HR Checklist
- Headmistress' Checklist (SCR compliance)

Posts may be advertised in the national, and or/local press (as appropriate) and/or on relevant websites and internally. Where appropriate, e.g. where additional teaching hours are not required, posts of responsibility may be advertised internally in the first instance, before being advertised externally should a suitable appointment not be possible from amongst existing staff. On occasions where other appropriate means are used to recruit staff, e.g. medical staff agency, teaching supply agency, requirements with regard to checks and all relevant information required still apply, e.g. Qualifications, Right to Work in the UK, DBS Enhanced disclosure, Barred List, Prohibition from teaching/management, Disqualification from childcare. The Agency supplying details of candidates will be asked to confirm that necessary checks are in place and that the identity of the individual will be verified by the School on arrival.

Following initial enquiries applicants will be provided with:

- i General information about the School, stating its ethos and aims and the requirement of being an employee;
- ii Specific information relating to that post, the qualifications and personal skills and qualities sought;
- iii An Application Form for information required of candidates;

Additional information in the public domain may be supplied to candidates on request.

As well as the Headmistress, other senior staff, such as the Bursar or Governors may be involved in the selection process, as appropriate.

Only candidates who complete the information required on the Application Form will be considered. After an initial selection, based on the Application Form, a short-list of candidates will be selected and invited to attend for interview and further assessments. Precise details of these will be supplied to candidates invited for interview.

Further assessments may include teaching a prepared lesson whilst observed (for all teaching positions) or completing other tasks in controlled conditions e.g. in-tray exercise/ admin typing task. Pupil feedback will comprise part of the process for teachers and other roles with substantial pupil contact; this typically takes the form of a pupil panel supervised by a member of staff involved in the recruitment process. Such pupil panels are given age-appropriate training on interviewing and safer recruitment.

Candidates will be interviewed individually and given every opportunity to ask questions as well as being asked questions.

Candidates may be required to undergo a medical examination to test their fitness to work with children, before any offer of employment is confirmed. All candidates will be required to complete a Pre-Employment Medical Questionnaire prior to employment.

Candidates invited to interview will be required to provide:

- Evidence of identity and any change of name.
- Evidence of qualifications.
- Evidence of valid Enhanced DBS check if possible.
- Evidence of right to work in the UK.
- A completed self-declaration (Criminal Record) form.

Prior to interview the School will seek at least two references, including the candidate's current or most recent employer. The School will always seek, where possible, to source a reference from the last registered child workforce employer. Please note that the School will not accept open references or references from relatives or referees writing solely in the capacity of friends. The School verifies all references by making telephone contact with referees.

After due consideration of all factors, all candidates will be contacted with the outcome of the process as swiftly as possible. The successful candidate is offered the post formally in writing, subject to satisfying the necessary statutory and best practice checks.

Pre-employment checks are completed according to the requirements set out in latest version of KCSIE including section 128 directions for internal promotions to management positions.

All posts offered have conditional criteria and even when an appointment is confirmed, an actual start date will not be set without the appropriate checks being completed to the satisfaction of the School.

No decision on an appointment will be made public until written confirmation of the offer is despatched, written acceptance received and all formalities and requirements satisfactorily completed and recorded.

Once a candidate has accepted a post, a file is established with regard to the Data Protection Act / UK GDPR for that individual. They will be invited to appropriate new staff induction training provided and inducted in the School's policies and procedures.

In addition, staff are given access to the Staff A-Z Handbook which contains guidance and key information.

Staff are included in systems for training, support and feedback once employed and these are regularly audited. For volunteers not engaged in regulated activity, a risk assessment will be completed.

The following statement should be used in all advertisements:

*The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Applicants must undergo child protection screening, including online checks, checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.*

### **Application Form**

The School will only accept applications from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms.

The School will make candidates aware that all posts in the School involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Candidates for employed posts will receive a Job Description/Person Specification for the role applied for.

Checks will be made of previous employment history to ascertain satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment. These checks will then be checked against references and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate.

The successful applicant will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”) check for the position and, where appropriate, a check of the Barred List will be undertaken. Any offer of employment will be conditional on obtaining such satisfactory checks. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the School immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration.

The statutory guidance “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006” applies to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before School and after School clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 and to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

The School takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect their suitability to work with children must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings they may receive.

Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to Human Resources for more details.

The School has a legal duty to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. This is known as the *Prevent Duty*. In line with that duty, Walthamstow Hall seeks to create an environment where radicalising ideologies are challenged and are not permitted to flourish. Candidate responses at interview will be evaluated with regard to this statutory duty.

If the candidate is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, the School will ask their current employer about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the candidate has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure.

If the candidate is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, the School will ask the previous employer about those issues. Where neither the current nor previous employment has involved working with children, the School will still ask the current employer about the candidate’s suitability to work with children. Where the candidate has no previous employment history, the School may request character references which may include references from the candidate's school or university.

All candidates should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal by the School if they have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

### **Invitation to Interview**

The School will shortlist applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. At least two people will carry out the shortlisting exercise, consider any inconsistencies, look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them, and, explore all potential concerns.

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. As recommended in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), those who shortlist the candidates should be involved in the interview process for a consistent approach.

The School will conduct online checks for shortlisted candidates. Shortlisted candidates should also be asked to complete a Self-declaration (Criminal Record) form in relation to their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

The School will obtain references prior to interview, where possible. This allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and can be taken up with the shortlisted candidate at interview.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by the Headmistress/Bursar or another designated senior member of staff. At least one person on the appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training. The Chairman of Governors should chair the panel for the Bursar's/Headmistress's appointment. The interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Chairman as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel. Should the Chairman have a conflict of interest, the Vice Chairman shall decide whether the Chairman should withdraw from the panel.

The interview will be conducted in person, unless there are extra-ordinary reasons for not doing so, all interviews will explore the individual's suitability to work with children including where appropriate, any discussion of information shared by a candidate in their self-declaration form. Where there are justified reasons for an interview not being conducted in person, the preferred candidate must meet the Headmistress/Bursar in person prior to starting work. The School reserves the right to rescind a job offer following that meeting.

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by the candidate from the awarding body.

The School requests that all candidates invited to interview also bring with them:

- A current passport and current driving licence including a photograph and a full birth certificate;
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;
- Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name;
- Where applicable, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

**Please note that originals of the above are necessary. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.**

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

### **Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks**

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

1. Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received);
2. Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK (if not already received);
3. A satisfactory Enhanced DBS check and, if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;
4. A satisfactory online check;
5. For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the historic General Teaching Council for England before its abolition in March 2012. Teaching work is defined in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 to encompass:
  - Planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
  - Delivering and preparing lessons to pupils;
  - Assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
  - Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils;
6. Verification of professional qualifications, including Qualified Teacher Status, where appropriate;
7. Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period
8. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas: Such further checks and confirmations as the School may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.
9. Evidence of satisfactory medical fitness;
10. Confirmation that the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006" **OR** Receipt of a signed Self-Declaration form showing that the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006";
11. For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position as set out above under "Scope of this Policy", receipt of a signed "senior charity manager positions: automatic disqualification declaration" confirming that the candidate is not disqualified from acting in a senior management position for a charity in accordance with the automatic disqualification rules for charities.



12. Where the successful candidate will be taking part in the management of the school, a check will be carried out under section 128 of the Independent Educational Provision in England (Prohibition on Participation in Management) Regulations 2014. This applies to all Governors, all members of the Management Teams and teaching heads of department.

It is the School's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the School in strictest confidence and processed in accordance with the Recruitment Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description/Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, and/or layout of the School.

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

### **References**

The School will seek the references referred to in the section above for shortlisted candidates (including internal applicants) and will approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. References must be received by a senior person with appropriate authority. If the candidate does not wish the School to take up references in advance of the interview, they should notify the School at the time of applying.

The School will ask all referees if the candidate is suitable to work with children. The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials. The School will verify all references. Where references are received electronically, the School will ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

The School will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the Application Form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

An individual may not start work for the School unless two references have been received and verified.

### **Criminal Records Policy**

The School will refer to the current KCSIE in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks.

The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request, or accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>.

There are limited circumstances where the School will accept a check from another educational institution; these are when the new member of staff ("M") has worked in: –

- (a) A school or a maintained school in England in a position which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons;
- (b) A maintained school in England in a position to which M was appointed on or after May 2006 and which did not bring M regularly into contact with children or young persons; or

- (c) An institution within the further education sector in England or in a 16 to 19 Academy in a position which involved the provision of education or which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons,

during a period which ended not more than three months before M's appointment. In these circumstances the School may apply for a disclosure but is not required to do so. A new, separate barred list check will be obtained.

### **DBS Update Service**

Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must give consent to the School to check there have not been changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. A barred list check will still be required.

### **Retention, Security of Records and Data Protection Obligations**

The School will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice and the Recruitment Privacy Notice.

Copies of DBS certificates will not be retained for longer than 6 months (the DBS number is noted on the Single Central Record). The School will comply with its data protection obligations in respect of the processing of criminal records information. More information on this is included in the Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice and the Recruitment Privacy Notice.

This policy supersedes any previous Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedures. This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.