
RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCESS



BENENDEN

References:

- ISI Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements September 2017
- DfE Statutory Guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2018](#)

Statement of Intent

Benenden School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its care. As an employer, the school requires all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The recruitment of all employees and volunteers (including those on a permanent and/or temporary basis) must comply with the Government's statutory guidance which includes "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2018), the Children Act 2004, The Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2014 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The school takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, the school is committed to a thorough and consistent Recruitment Policy.

Purpose

The aim of the Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

Recruitment and vetting checks

Recruitment Process

Advertising: Vacant posts will normally be advertised. Adverts must be organised by the relevant SMT member and by the Head of Department. The Headmistress will agree all advertisements before they are placed, unless delegated to the Director of Finance and Operations. The School's safeguarding statement is included in all job advertisements.

Recruitment Team: When a position becomes vacant a Recruitment Team will be formed, which will undertake procedures to ensure a safe and successful appointment. At least one member of the team must have undertaken safer recruitment training. Those who may appoint positions are the Senior Management Team and the Domestic Bursar and Director of Estates, the latter two with the Director of Finance and Operations agreement.

Application Form: The application form plays an important part of the school's selection process and all applicants must complete it in full. CV's alone are not acceptable. The application form requires the applicant's:

- full name
- any previous name
- full education, employment, voluntary and other history with no gaps. Reasons for leaving all previous posts are requested
- details of two referees including the current or most recent employer
- completion of the personal declaration for safeguarding children.

Candidates are required to disclose an offence in line with current legislation. The candidate must forward detail of the offence in a sealed envelope to the Head of HR who will only disclose this to the Headmistress and / or Director of Finance and Operations.

HR will distribute applications, minus any disclosure, to the shortlisting panel.

Job Description and Person Specification: This contains the school's safeguarding statement. The job description lists the main responsibilities and duties of the position, which the successful applicant will undertake. The person specification describes the skills, experience and qualifications the school is looking for.

Shortlisting: All application forms received will be carefully read and considered independently by a minimum of two persons from the Recruitment Selection Panel. A shortlist is drawn up which is given to the HR department.

Interview: The School will shortlist applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by the Headmistress or Director of Finance and Operations or another designated senior member of staff. The Chair of Governors should chair the panel for the Headmistress's and Director of Finance and Operations appointments.

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 Chair as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel. Should the Chair have a conflict of interest, the next most senior person on the panel shall decide whether the Chair should withdraw from the panel.

HR will also question the detail of any disclosure made (Head of HR only).

Full notes of the interview must be made for all appointments, signed and dated and returned to the HR department.

Equal Opportunities: Benenden School promotes employment practice designed to eliminate discrimination. Therefore, our aim is:

- To ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation;
- All job applicants will be treated equally and fairly in the recruitment process as stated in this policy;
- The successful applicant will be recruited and trained on the basis of ability, experience and skill to undertake the job successfully as defined within the job description and person specification.

Identity Checks: The School requires all candidates invited to interview to bring original documents with them, which will be checked for validity and photocopied by the HR department.

1. Current passport or current driving licence including a photograph;
2. Birth certificate (or current driving licence including a photograph if not above);
3. Proof of address showing the candidate's current name and address, in line with the DBS guidelines, section 2b;
4. Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name (e.g. marriage certificate, civil partnership certificate or deed poll);
5. Where the candidate is not a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area or Switzerland, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK;
6. Any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original of certificates, diplomas etc.). Where originals are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by the candidate from the awarding body.

Please note that the above must be original documents. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.

Attending Interview: Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview are advised in the invitation to interview letter that they should inform the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Skype Interview: On occasion it may be required to hold a Skype interview e.g. should the person be living / working abroad. In these circumstances the panel interview and safeguarding interview will be

held in exactly the same way as those attending in person. Validated ID may be sent by their School or a registered body and originals must be seen before their employment is confirmed.

Vetting checks: In accordance with DfE requirements, a “single central record” of all staff is maintained by HR and requires the following items to be obtained/provided:

- ID Checks, including Proof of Right to Work in the UK
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure
- Barred List Check
- References
- Previous Employment History
- Medical Fitness Assessment
- Check on Professional Qualifications
- Overseas Checks where relevant
- Prohibition from Teaching Check including EEA check where relevant
- Prohibition from Management Check where relevant
- Radicalisation Check

Any member of staff who is found to have engaged an employee without having complied with these requirements will be subject to disciplinary action.

Identity Checks: All successful applicants must bring to their interview proof of identity. Acceptable proofs of identity may include birth certificate, driving licence or passport combined with evidence of proof of address. Applicants who are unable to bring these to interview must do so before an offer of employment is confirmed.

References: Two professional references which are satisfactory to the school must be provided and must be:

- Sought and obtained directly from the referee, who must be a person in authority
- From current employers and the place where they most recently worked with children
- Their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support the appointment decision, including required questions on safeguarding, disciplinary, and radicalisation.
- Where possible references will always be sought prior to interview. Any discrepancies or anomalies obtained via reference must be followed up.
- Direct contact by telephone is required with each referee to verify the reference, always via a main telephone line for a business.
- The School will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the application form. Any inconsistencies must be discussed with the candidate.

Previous Employment History: Complete information about previous employment must be provided along with satisfactory explanations for any gaps in employment. The HR Department will request information from applicants at interview in the event that there are employment gaps on the application form and require any outstanding information be provided in writing.

DBS Disclosure: An enhanced DBS disclosure, with Barred List, is required for all new appointments to the school and must be requested prior to appointment. Individuals will be asked to declare any convictions, cautions or reprimands, warnings or bind-overs that may have been incurred. Applicants and employees wishing to recruit should be aware that it takes, on average, 2 to 6 weeks to complete a Disclosure check.

Medical Fitness: Once a conditional offer of employment has been made the school will require all successful staff to complete a medical questionnaire and declaration and if required, have a medical with the School Medical Officer or an Occupational Health provider prior to taking up the post. Reasonable adjustments will be made where possible.

Qualification Requirements: Candidates must be able to demonstrate they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualifications legally required for the post and claimed in their application. Applicants will be asked to provide these when attending interview. Applicants who are unable to bring these to interview must do so before taking up appointment. Teaching qualifications will be verified via the TRA.

Overseas Checks: All new appointments where persons have lived outside the UK during the last 10 years are subject to additional checks as deemed necessary. The Human Resources department will liaise directly with individuals to discuss what additional checks may be necessary. Please note it is the responsibility of the individual to obtain and provide the information as required. Should a police check not be available from the country, further references should be taken following a risk assessment and agreement with the Headmistress or Director of Finance and Operations.

Prohibition from Teaching and Prohibition from Management Checks: Anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching. For those engaged in management roles and in the position of governor, an additional check is required to ensure they are not prohibited under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. Including an EEA check where relevant.

Radicalisation Check: The School has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a [Prevent duty risk assessment](#) which follows guidance from the Department for Education.

Conditional Offer of Appointment: A conditional contract of employment will be issued. The offer letter will confirm employment is subject to:

- Satisfactory references;
- Satisfactory Enhanced DBS with Barred List check;
- Medical fitness for the intended role;
- Receipt of all information required for the Single Central Register.

Criminal Records Policy: The School will refer to the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request, or accessed at [dbs-code-of-practice](#).

Disclosure and Barring Service Update Service: Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must give written consent to the school to check there have not been changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. A barred list check will also be made by the HR department.

If disclosure is delayed: A short period of work is allowed under controlled conditions, at the Headmistresses' discretion, and following a risk assessment. However, if an 'enhanced disclosure' is delayed, the Headmistress may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- Without confirming the appointment;
- After a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person will be working in regulated activity, and;
- all other relevant checks (including any appropriate prohibition checks) having been completed satisfactorily;
- The person in question is informed what these safeguards are and has signed the supervision agreements along with their Line Manager and relevant Senior Management Team member;
- Provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;
- Safeguards reviewed at least every two weeks by the Head of HR, member of staff and their Line Manager and referred to the Headmistress / Director of Finance and Operations as necessary;

- A note is added to the single central register and evidence kept of the measures put in place.

Retention and Security of Records: 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 the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and the School's Staff Data Protection Policy 2018. Copies of DBS certificates will not be retained for longer than 6 months.

Boarding Houses:

Boarding House inhabitants, spouses, partners and children over the age of 16 who live within a boarding house must have an Enhanced DBS check. In addition, all adults and children over the age of 16 must sign a copy of the [Living in Boarding Accommodation Agreement](#) to confirm that they will comply with this in full.

Existing Staff: Staff currently employed by the school but appointed to a new post, do not require a new DBS check, as already in regulated activity. References will be taken and will have a formal panel interview. Should they be moving into a management or leadership position then a section 128 check will also be made.

Child Protection: All staff must understand and commit to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children when carrying out their duties. All new staff will be issued with a copy of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education document, the School's Safeguarding Policy, Child Protection leaflet and Staff Code of Conduct policy. New staff must sign to state they have read and understood these documents. Staff must undertake Child Protection training as part of their induction. Child Protection training sessions will be held regularly within the school, for all staff and regular safeguarding and child protection updates issued, as required but at least annually.

Volunteers: If in regulated activity they will be cleared fully as per employees. If not in regulated activity a risk assessment will be made and checks made in line with this.

Supply, Agency and Third Party Staff: All staff under this category will be recruited in line with Appendix A of this policy.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders: The School will not unfairly discriminate against any candidate for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an individual has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

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

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the Disclosure and Barring Service of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. The School will report the matter to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service if:

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

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;

- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving.

All staff must comply with this policy. Any breach will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

Ratified by the Council Safeguarding and Pastoral Care Committee 30 April 2018
JCC Updated 3 September 2018

Appendix A: Recruitment of Supply, Agency and Third Party Staff

A. Supply Agency and Third Party

Certain firms are contracted to supply occasional workers for the School on an irregular basis. These are:

1. Supply teachers
2. Supply administrative workers
3. Visiting Professionals

All the above are recruited in line with ISI guidelines

Not In Regulated Activity

- A risk assessment to determine which checks are necessary is made and they are accompanied at all times.

In Regulated Activity

Supply, Agency and Third Party Staff:

- Sign a suppliers' agreement with the School (the PA to the Director of Finance and Operations organises this) stating that the requisite recruitment checks for their named staff are in place (which also meet ISI guidelines)
- Have enhanced DBS checked their own staff, with Barred List where relevant. The School sees the original DBS certificate and verifies the identity of the person through photo I.D. and interviews them
- Are added to the Single Central Register
- Are given a blue lanyard to identify them as cleared staff
- Must sign in and out of the School Office when they come into School
- May work unsupervised

Visiting Professionals and other Service Providers – regularly on site:

- Sign a suppliers' agreement with the School (the PA to the Director of Finance and Operations organises this) stating that the requisite recruitment checks for their staff are in place (which also meet ISI guidelines)
- Have enhanced DBS checked their own staff, with Barred List where relevant. The School sees the original DBS certificate and, verifies the identity of the person through photo I.D. and interviews them
- Are added to the Single Central Register
- Are given a blue lanyard to identify them as staff
- Must sign in and out of the School Office when they come into School
- May work unsupervised

Contractors

Contractors will be cleared in line with the [contractors and suppliers' clearance policy](#).