

# Blackfen School for Girls



## Safer Recruitment Policy

Head Teacher: Mr M Brown

Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

	Date	Name	Signature
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Review Period	Annually		
Lead Person	Head Teacher	Matthew Brown	
Prepared by	Head Teacher	Matthew Brown	
Approved by	Chair of Governors	Stuart Fitz-Gerald	

# **Blackfen School for Girls**

## **Rationale**

Children have the right to be protected from harm. Our safer recruitment policy and procedures ensures that this happens.

## **Statement of intent**

Blackfen school is committed to safer recruitment practices and procedures.

These practices help make sure our staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people. It is a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to keep children safe from harm.

Safer recruitment is a continuing process of improvement for every school, club, business or organisation whose work or services involve contact with children.

## **Procedures**

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

## **Pre-interview**

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

All applications for positions will be checked by the HR Officer who will highlight any concerns or gaps. References (2) will be sought for all applicants.

We also obtain a completed Self-Disclosure From: Regulated Activity from all candidates.

## **Seeking references and checking employment history**

We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references.
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees.
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations.
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed.
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children.
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate.
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed.

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## Interview and selection

The Head Teacher (or someone deputising who is safer recruitment trained) will check through the application and will highlight any concerns to seek clarification about.

All interviews are conducted by at least two members of staff. At least one member of staff on the interview panel must be trained in safer recruitment.

When interviewing candidates, we will:

Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this.

Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children.

Record all information considered and decisions made.

## Pre-appointment vetting checks

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

## New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity.
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available.
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards.
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher.
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
  - For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants.
  - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach.
- Check that candidates taking up a management position\* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.

\* Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

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We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek 2 references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview (unless the candidate states that they do not want this to happen). We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

## **Existing staff**

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is. We will do this if instructed e.g. by LADO or other external agency.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- we believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct (see DfE guidance); or
- the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

## **Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

## **Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity.
- an enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children.

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We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

## **Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

## **Volunteers**

We will:

- never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity.
- obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity.
- carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.

## **Governors**

All governors (this includes trustees, local governors and members] will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information.

The chair of the Governing body will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- a section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008);
- identity;
- right to work in the UK; and
- other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK.

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## **Staff working in alternative provision settings**

Where we place a student with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

## **Adults who supervise students on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a student under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

## **Responsibilities**

**HR Officer** – for carrying out the relevant checks and for keeping the SCR up to date.

**Named governor** – for carrying out a check on the SCR every term.

**External adviser** – for working with the HR Officer and the Governor to carry out checks at end of every term.

**Head Teacher** – for ensuring that all interview panels have at least one person who is safer recruitment trained.

**HR Officer** – ensuring that there is a register of staff and governors who are trained in safer recruitment including information about when the training was completed and who the training provider was.

**HR Officer** – ensuring that all staff and governors who are trained in safer recruitment update their training at least once every three years.

## **Links with other policies and legislation**

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (2023)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1 2023)