



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

St Richard's is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The School is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment for all its members of staff. The School recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment. The school understands that it is a criminal offence to employ a person who has been barred to work in a school.

The aims of the School's recruitment policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds, including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the DfES in 'Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings' and the Code of Practice published by the CRB;
- To ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

All applicants for employment will be required to complete the Application Form. Incomplete Application Forms will be returned to the applicant. A CV will not be accepted in place of the completed Application Form (Form RP1). The School recognises that a CV can be used to highlight the 'good bits' and play down things which somebody wants to hide.

The applicant may then be invited to attend a Formal Interview at which his/ her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

The references of all short-listed candidates will be taken up (see below).

All short-listed candidates will be interviewed by the Headmaster and, if relevant, other members of staff. At least one of the interviewers will hold The Children's Workforce Development Council in Safer Recruitment in Education Certificate. Currently held by the Headmaster, Mr Nathan Cheesman, and the Bursar, Mrs Jo Howells, these certificates were awarded on 26th March, 2010, and are valid for five years. For a senior post (Deputy Head or above), the panel will include the Headmaster and at least one member of the Board of Governors. It is normal practice to include members of each sex on the interviewing panel. An interviewing panel will include someone versed in Child Protection Procedures.

Short-listed candidates may be required to undertake a 'practical interview' ie to teach a lesson, participate in activities with the pupils, or participate in activities relevant to the vacancy applied for.

A formal Offer of Employment in the form of a letter of appointment for the post is sent to the chosen candidate, along with a statement of terms and conditions of employment.

These will include:

- Job title
- Salary
- Starting date
- Term of employment
- Period of notice

The applicant will be required to sign and date a copy of the letter of appointment showing acceptance of the job and the related conditions.

Any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- the receipt of two references, one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer, which the School considers satisfactory (see below); and
- the receipt of an Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB with which the School is satisfied (see below).

If the offer is accepted and the above conditions are satisfied, the applicant will be issued with a Contract of Employment as confirmation of employment. The Contract of Employment will prevail over the offer letter.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

The School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees:

All applicants who are invited to an Interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, address and qualifications:

1. Current driving licence (with photo) or passport or full birth certificate;
2. Two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address;
3. Documentation confirming their National Insurance number (P45, P60 or NI card);
4. Documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their Application Form. (Candidate verifier can be used to check qualifications (0115 901 6004) but there is a fee.)
5. Where an applicant has changed his/ her name, documentary evidence of this change.

All offers of employment are subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/ most recent employer does not/ did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend. The School will not rely on references/ testimonials supplied by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a Job Description for the role for which the applicant has applied.

If the referee is a current/ previous employer, they will be asked to confirm the following:

- The applicant's dates of employment, salary, job titles, duties, reason for leaving, sickness and disciplinary record;
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.

The School will compare all references with any information given on the Application Form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed. In this regard, the School will ask the applicant and referees for certain pieces of information:

- Details of any disciplinary offences related to children, even if time-expired.
- If the applicant has been the subject of Child Protection concerns.
- Details of the outcome of Child Protection enquiry/ disciplinary procedure.

Any person who has supplied a reference for an applicant will receive a telephone call to confirm that he/she wrote the reference and to ask whether there are any other relevant facts, which he/she would like to add. A written note of this telephone conversation is recorded in the applicant's file.

CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU DISCLOSURE CERTIFICATE

The School applies for criminal record certificates from the Criminal Records Bureau in respect of all prospective staff members, whether full-time, part-time or peripatetic, volunteers and Governors. The School requires the advanced level of disclosure ie Enhanced Disclosure, which may include non-conviction information from local police records.

As the number of applications for CRB Certificates is less than fifty per annum, St Richard's is not registered to make the applications direct and uses the services of an umbrella organisation (Moor Park School). Due to the Data Protection issues involved, Moor Park School is only permitted to inform St Richard's if an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate has been issued or not. If, for some reason, a Certificate has not been issued and/or convictions or non-conviction information has been highlighted, Moor Park is not permitted to disclose the reasons for non-issue and/or said information. The School must consult the applicant to ascertain whether any such information has a direct bearing on his/her suitability for the position applied for and make a judgement whether to proceed with the applicant or not.

POLICY ON RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar him/ her from employment with the School.

In view of the fact that all positions within the School will amount to regulated positions within the meaning of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000), all applicants must declare all previous convictions, including those which would be normally considered 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

It is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DfES and the Department of Health of individuals who are considered unsuitable for work with children or anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being charged or convicted with certain offences against children (murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other acts of violence).

If the School receives an application from a disqualified person or is provided with false information in an application or has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, it will report the matter to the Police/the Criminal Records Bureau and/or the DfE Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit.

In the event that relevant information is volunteered or obtained during the recruitment process in relation to a previous conviction or similar, the School will carry out a risk assessment which will consider:

- Whether the conviction or other matter is relevant to the position;
- The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- The length of time since it 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 explanations 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 one of the following:

- Against adults: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence;
- Against children or adults: 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 and/or disqualified from driving for a period within the last 10 years.

On completion of the risk assessment, it will be signed by the Headmaster and/ or Bursar before the position is offered. If the applicant wishes to dispute information contained in a Disclosure the School will, where practicable, defer a final decision about appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the Disclosure information.

Supply Workers: The School expects supply/ temporary worker agencies that are used by the School to register with the CRB on their own account. Proof of registration will be required before the School will commission services from any such organisation.

DISPOSAL OF INFORMATION

The School will confidentially shred and dispose of all information provided in support of the Enhanced CRB Disclosure; said information will not be accessible by anyone save the Bursar who checks all CRB Enhanced Disclosure applications before sending them to Moor Park School.

Thereafter, the School will keep a record of the date of an Enhanced Disclosure, the name of the subject, the position in question, the unique number issued by the CRB and the recruitment decision taken.

RETENTION OF OTHER RECORDS

If an applicant is appointed, the School will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after 6 months, unless the applicant specifically requests the school to keep his/ her details on file.

ADVERTISEMENT POLICY

Prior to the commencement of any recruitment exercise, a Job Description (and perhaps a Person Specification) should be prepared for the vacant role.

A detailed timetable for the recruitment process, including the placing of the advertisement and details of the personnel to be involved, should be drawn up and approved by the Headmaster before the vacancy is advertised. No advertisements should be published, internally or externally, until approved by the Headmaster.

Inappropriate or poorly worded advertisements can give rise to legal claims against the School. Anyone placing an advertisement in breach of this policy will be subject to the School's disciplinary procedure.

Advertisements should not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age. This also includes discrimination on the basis of marital status/ civil partnership status/ gender reassignment/ pregnancy. Discrimination can also be by virtue of being part time or fixed time.

Avoid the following terms:

Full time (say 'full time equivalent'); headmaster; nursing sister; cleaning lady; groundsman; 'fit and healthy'; husband and wife team; 'young and dynamic';

'experienced' – unless it is a genuine requirement that somebody has a specific body of experience (as opposed to age-related).

To ensure compliance with DfES recommendations and guidance in 'Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings' (January 2007), all advertisements must carry the following details:

- 'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'
- 'The successful applicant will be subject to a CRB check.'

GUIDANCE FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Best practice suggests that:

1. There should be a well-prepared panel with allocated but flexible roles;
2. All the candidates' documentary evidence of identity/ qualifications has been seen and, where possible, verified;
3. The candidate is comfortable;
4. The panel should not be over-influenced by first impressions;
5. A range of questioning styles is used:
 - Open questions, beginning 'how', 'what', 'tell me about', 'What particularly attracted you to the job?' 'What are your main areas for development?'
 - Closed questions, requiring a specific piece of information;
 - Probing questions, asking for further detail;
 - Reflective questions, eg 'You seem to feel that...', to show empathy
 - Competence-based questions rather than hypothetical questions: 'Tell me how you dealt with a situation where....' rather than 'What would you do if...?'
6. Leading questions are avoided; Avoid questions which older candidates or candidates of a particular gender would find harder to answer (see discrimination, below);
7. Detailed notes are taken, remembering that candidates may see them one day;
8. The candidate's behaviour should be observed but try to reserve judgement until the end of the interview;
9. An agreed objective and consistent scoring system is used;
10. The panel listens carefully and actively:
 - Listen with ears, eyes and mind;
 - Indicate you are listening;
 - Silence is a powerful listening tool;
 - Test your interpretation and comprehension;
 - Encourage with comments and questions;
 - Niceties are important.

AVOIDING DISCRIMINATION

Job applicants are protected by law from discrimination on the grounds of sex, race/colour/ethnicity/nationality, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. To avoid accusations of discrimination, interviewers should:

- Keep notes evidencing the objective reasons for not shortlisting an applicant or offering the job.
- Ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for a candidate with a known disability.
- Avoid inappropriate or intrusive questions (NB it is not alright to ask someone something, just because every other applicant was asked the same question.)

- Only elicit information relevant to assess whether the candidate fulfils the job description – even during the pre-interview ‘small talk’. Useful questions may be: ‘Tell me what’s important to you’, ‘Tell me what motivates you to get out of bed in the morning’, ‘Tell me about your greatest achievement’, ‘What would you like to achieve in the next 12 months/ 2 years?’

ENSURING SAFE APPOINTMENTS

The measures listed above are designed to encourage safer recruitment. Nonetheless, interviewers should be vigilant throughout the whole process of selection. They should also use the interview as an opportunity to show how important child protection is at St Richard’s. On reading the CV, the panel should work out the ‘discrepancies’ which must be checked in the interview. For example:

1. ‘years’ given instead of precise dates;
2. Gaps in information;
3. Repeated changes in employment;
4. Over-achievement or over paying;
5. Evasiveness about whereabouts/ circumstances when questioned;
6. Invented information/courses/qualifications – check!
7. ‘odd’ attitudes/ language about children.
8. Check the candidate’s identity with the documentation which has been requested (above).
9. Find out what you can about:
 - The candidate’s motivation to work with young people;
 - His/her ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
 - His/her emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours and attitudes and approach to the use of authority and the maintenance of discipline. (It is alright to ask: ‘How well do you deal with stress?’)
10. Take the opportunity to test his/ her knowledge of Safeguarding issues, eg what has he/she done to safeguard children on trips; to protect children from bullying?
11. Ask if he/she has anything he/she wishes to declare given the requirement for the CRB check and the questions which will be (have been) asked of his/ her referees.
12. NB In order to be sure that you can be vigilant in this manner, there must be a panel interview.

Full guidance on how to conduct a safe interview is given in the DfES guidance: ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, paragraph 3.4.3’ (January 2007).

After the interview, the panel’s notes should be passed to the person overseeing the recruitment process so that they can be stored for future reference. Notes should be retained for six months for unsuccessful applicants.

Care should be taken with the letter sent to rejected candidates and with the reasons given for why they were rejected. Cases have been brought where candidates have been given different

responses to the same application (which they had made under different names). The safest policy is not to provide feedback.

INTERNAL APPOINTMENTS

Applications for externally advertised posts are encouraged from internal candidates. Equal consideration is given to internal candidates when short-lists are drawn up. For senior posts advertised within the School, the appointments procedure follows a similar pattern to that for external recruitment but minor internal appointments may well be made without recourse to the interview procedure.

INDUCTION

All new staff members are expected to attend a programme of induction organised by the Headmaster.

REQUEST FOR REFERENCES

A reference can be provided in a personal capacity or on behalf of the employer as a 'School reference'. The School is legally responsible for what is in the latter.

The School does not legally have to provide a copy of the reference written (Data Protection Act, 1998, paragraph 1, schedule 7). If a member of staff asks to see his/ her reference from a previous School, a decision will be made as to whether this is reasonable (with advice sought from the previous School if necessary). A decision will be reached as to whether it is more important to treat the reference as a confidential document or to allow the member of staff to see what has been said about them.

REFERENCE POLICY

Only the Headmaster or Bursar can give a reference on behalf of the School. References will always be given in written form, using the Reference proforma provided by the School/employer requesting the reference or the St Richard's proforma. Certain disclaimers should be included in every Reference:

'Strictly Private and Confidential'
'For Addressee Only'

Oral references should not generally be provided, as they may be used in a claim if a member of staff does not get a job. If they are given, notes should be kept of what was said.

September 2010