

## Safer Recruitment Policy

### Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Silcoates School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The details of the policy are based on the advice and statutory guidance contained in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2023).

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 Safer Recruitment Policy.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff, all references to staff include teaching staff, support staff and volunteers, and should be read as such throughout. Visitors to site are required to follow a signing in protocol at Reception and to wear a visitor's badge at all times. They will be accompanied by a fully vetted member of staff to ensure they are adequately supervised.

### Aims and Objectives

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

The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and seeks to recruit the best applicant for the post. The recruitment and selection process ensures the identification of the person best suited to the post based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit, as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process. Applicants are required to declare any links with the School on the application form.



## Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to:

- Ensure the School has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements;
- Monitor the School's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Head, Bursar, HR Manager and other managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the School operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the School;
- Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document;
- Ensure key staff and Governors involved in the recruitment process have undergone Safer Recruitment training;
- Promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

The Board of Governors has delegated responsibility to the Head (teaching staff) and Bursar (support staff) to lead in all appointments. School governors may be involved in some staff appointments, but the final decision rests with the Head or Bursar.

## Recruitment and Selection Procedure

### Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School advertises all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement makes clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants is treated confidentially in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation in force at the time.

### Application Forms

Silcoates School uses its own application form, and all applicants for employment are required to answer questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role. In addition, all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in their employment history.

The application form includes the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and makes it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. CVs are not accepted.



All applicants are made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

## **Job Descriptions and Person Specifications**

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps. It clearly and accurately sets out the duties and responsibilities of the role.

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.

## **References**

References for short listed applicants are sent for immediately after short listing. If, for any reason, a reference has not been received, an offer of employment may still be made, but it will be clearly stated that it is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory reference. Two professional/character references must be provided. These are always sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies are followed up. The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

## **Interviews**

There is a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the same panel sees all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process explores the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It enables the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria. At least one member of any interview panel is trained in the appropriate Safer Recruitment Procedure. Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions is discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process. In addition, as part of the short-listing process in line with the latest advice from the DfE, the school will carry out a simple internet online search for each candidate called to interview as part of our due diligence. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online. Any information in regard to the online check will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.



## **Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process**

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references which are satisfactory to the school, medical checks, checks on prohibition from teaching or management, copies of qualification, proof of identity and a completed Self Declaration form. A checklist is used to track and audit paperwork obtained, in accordance with best practice for safer recruitment. The checklist is retained on the individual's personnel file.

## **The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to, pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'spent' must be declared when applying for any position at Silcoates School.

## **DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate**

All staff at Silcoates School require an enhanced DBS Certificate, and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

## **Portability of DBS Certificate Checks**

The DBS Code of Practice does not allow for portability of DBS Certificate checks unless the applicant has registered to the DBS Update Service. For the sake of clarity, portability refers to the re-use of a DBS Certificate obtained for a position in one organisation and later used for another position in another.

Silcoates School is committed to adhering to this Code of Practice and does not accept DBS Certificates carried out by another organisation unless they are registered with the DBS Update Service.

## **Dealing with Convictions**

The School operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting takes place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Head or the Bursar, and a decision is made following this meeting.

## **Proof of Identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status**



Anyone appointed to a post at Silcoates School is required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence, etc., as proof of eligibility to work in UK/identity, in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and the DBS Code of Practice Regulations. In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and stated in their application form.

## **Medical Fitness**

The School will confirm the medical fitness of applicants after an offer of employment is made, but before an appointment is confirmed. The School is committed to compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and no job offer will be withdrawn without consultation with the applicant, medical advice and consideration of reasonable adjustments.

## **Staff Disqualification Declaration**

Anyone appointed to a post will be required to complete a form declaring any potential reasons disqualifying them from working with children. All new employees and all existing employees need to complete this form initially and then sign annually to say that nothing has changed.

## **Employer Access Pre-Employment Checks**

The School carries out appropriate Employer Access Pre-employment Checks, in line with the latest advice from the DfE, to ensure all staff meet the appropriate criteria before starting work, including central checks about prohibitions from teaching and prohibitions from management.

## **Overseas Checks**

All new employees who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. The School, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, sponsors all new foreign members of staff.

## **Centralised Register of Members of Staff**

In addition to the various staff records kept in the School and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfE requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by HR.

The Single Central Register (SCR) contains details of the following:

- all employees who are employed to work at the School;
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the School whether employed directly or through an agency;



- all others who have been chosen by the School to work in regular contact with children. This covers volunteers, governors, peripatetic staff and people brought into the School to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, e.g. sports coaches, etc.

## **Record Retention / Data Protection**

Silcoates School retains all interview notes on all applicants for a period of six months, after which time the notes for unsuccessful applicants are destroyed confidentially. The six-month retention period is in accordance with data protection legislation and also allows the School to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal.

If an applicant is successful, all information relevant to their application and appointment will be retained in their personnel file. All information retained on employees is kept in locked and secure cabinets.

## **Ongoing Employment**

Silcoates School recognises that safer recruitment and selection are not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The School therefore provides ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the Professional Development Review process.

## **Induction Programme**

All new employees are given an induction programme which clearly identifies the School's policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy, and makes clear the expectation and codes of conduct which govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

## **Leaving Employment at Silcoates School**

If an employee is asked to leave the School or resigns before such a stage is reached, the School follows the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy with regard to informing the appropriate agencies.

Likewise, any allegations against staff are followed up in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

## **Associated Policies:**

- Recruitment of Governors Policy



The School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the School's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Mr Wainman – Head Mr Vincent – Bursar Mrs Haigh – HR Manager Mr Evans – Deputy Head (Pastoral)		
<b>Date of last review:</b>	April 2023	<b>Date of next review:</b>	April 2024

