

Horizons Independent School

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Procedure/Guidance

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Reviewed by: RBoulton

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The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees of Horizons Independent School.

References:

- ISI Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements September 2021
- DfE Statutory Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', September 2021: Keeping Children Safe in Education

Statement of Intent

Horizons Independent School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its care. As an employer, we expect 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 2021), the Children Act 1989, updated 2004, The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Horizons Independent School takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, we are committed to a thorough and consistent Safer 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 externally and will always be advertised internally. Horizons Independent School's safeguarding statement is included in all job advertisements.

Application Form: The application form plays an important part of our selection process and all applicants should complete it in full. A Curriculum Vitae may not be accepted. The application form requires the applicant's:

- full name;
- any previous name;
- right to work in the UK;
- full education and qualifications, employment, voluntary and other history to the month and year. Reasons for leaving all previous posts are requested;
- details of two referees which must include the current or most recent employer and the most recent place the candidate worked with children (if applicable);

Candidates are required to disclose an offense in line with current legislation. The candidate must provide details of the offense to either Nicola Griffiths or Roger Boulton.

Job Description and Person Specification: This contains the Horizons Independent 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. An initial shortlist is drawn up.

Horizons Independent School will shortlist applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role.

Interview: Shortlisted applicants are invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. Formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people.

Attending Interview: Candidates who are invited to interview are asked if they require any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Equal Opportunities: Horizons Independent 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, or 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: Horizons Independent School requests candidates invited to interview to bring the following original documents with them, which will be checked for validity and photocopied.

1. Current passport or current driving licence including a photograph;
2. Birth certificate (or current driving licence including a photograph if not above);
3. Documents proving National Insurance (NI) number and birth certificate must be provided if they do not have a passport;
4. Proof of current address showing the candidate's current name;
5. Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name (e.g., marriage certificate; adoption certificate or deed poll);
6. Proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK;

7. Any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g., 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.

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

- ID Checks, including Proof of Right to Work in the UK as listed above;
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure;
- Barred List check;
- References;
- Full education and employment history;
- Prohibition from Teaching Check;
- Prohibition from Management Check;
- Section 128 checks for those in leadership or management positions
- 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 and NI. Applicants who are unable to bring these to interview must do so before taking up appointment.

References: Two professional references must be provided. These references should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee, where possible in writing, and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support the appointment decision. Where possible references will always be sought prior to the main 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. Horizons Independent 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.

DBS Disclosure: An enhanced DBS disclosure is required for all new appointments to the school and must be obtained 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.

Qualification Requirements: Candidates must demonstrate they have obtained any academic or vocational qualifications legally required for the post and/or declared 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.

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, where there is a concern which is above our medical understanding, have an Occupational Health medical prior to taking up the post.

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, an additional check is required to ensure they are not prohibited under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Radicalisation Check: Horizons Independent 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

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

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

Criminal Records Policy: Horizons Independent School will refer to the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Horizons Independent School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request.

Disclosure and Barring Service Update Service: Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must provide the original DBS and give written consent to the school to make the required online check, which will show whether there have been changes to the disclosure status since the issue of a disclosure certificate.

If disclosure is delayed: A short period of work is allowed under controlled conditions, at the discretion of the directors. If an enhanced disclosure is delayed, the directors 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
- All other relevant checks (including any appropriate prohibition checks) have been satisfactorily completed;
- Provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;
- With appropriate safeguards taken (for example under supervision);
- Safeguards reviewed at least every two weeks;
- The person in question is informed what these safeguards are and has signed the supervision agreements;
- Safeguarding training is provided; and,
- A note is added to the single central register with evidence of the measures put in place held on the person's file.

Retention and Security of Records: Horizons Independent 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. We will not keep copies of DBS.

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 and Child Protection leaflet. 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.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders: Horizons Independent School will not unfairly discriminate against any candidate for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. Horizons Independent 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. 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 Horizons Independent 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 us 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 Horizons Independent School. We will report the matter to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service if:

- we receive an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- Horizons Independent 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, we 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 Horizons Independent 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 our 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 Horizons Independent School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving.