



# WINDERMERE SCHOOL

FOUNDED 1863

## Employment Policy

(Please note: the paragraph numbering on Employment Policies is taken from the Policy number)

## RECRUITMENT POLICY

Windermere School realises it is vital to create a culture of safer recruitment and hence has referred to the following documents when writing this policy: *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children, Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: Statutory Guidance from the DfE (July 2018)*.

**Review Period:** Annual

**Staff Responsibility:** Head/Bursar/Deputy of EYFS.

### Introduction

- 4.1 Windermere School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students in its care. As an employer, Windermere Educational Trust Limited expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- 4.2 At Windermere School we work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- 4.3 All staff have job descriptions which set out their roles and responsibilities.
- 4.4 We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of marital status, age, gender, culture, religious belief, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- 4.5 The School takes its duty of care for all students very seriously. 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.

### Aims and Objectives

- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 This Policy's objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Windermere School.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.8 It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to:

- 4.8.1 Ensure the School has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
  - 4.8.2 Monitor the School's compliance with them.
- 4.9 It is the responsibility of the Head to:
- 4.9.1 Ensure that the School operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the School.
  - 4.9.2 Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
  - 4.9.3 Promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.
- 4.10 In accordance with the School's Staffing Regulations, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility to the Head (teaching staff) and Bursar (support staff) to lead in all appointments. School Governors may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with the Head/Bursar.

### **Recruitment and Vetting Checks**

- 4.11 All new employees (and volunteers) will be subject to the same checks.

### **Application Form**

- 4.12 Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the School's Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms in the absence of good reason.

### **References**

- 4.13 At least two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be 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 will be followed up. Direct contact, either by telephone or face-to-face, will be made with referees, where appropriate, to verify the reference wherever possible.

### **Previous Employment History**

- 4.14 Complete information about previous employment must be provided along with satisfactory explanations for any gaps in employment.

### **Identity Checks**

- 4.15 These will be carried out on all appointments to the School's workforce before an appointment is made. Acceptable proof of identity may include birth certificate, driving licence or passport, combined with evidence of proof of address.

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

- 4.16 All staff at Windermere School require an enhanced DBS Certificate and, therefore, a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee. A DBS check will not be requested more than 3 months before employment is to commence. Where the issuing of a DBS Certificate is delayed, a new employee may start work with the permission of the Head, following an assessment of risk and within specific guidelines.
- 4.17 DBS checks are submitted electronically. Log-in details will be sent to the successful candidate via email. Assistance with filling in the form can be given if necessary. From

17 June 2013, individuals have been able to choose to subscribe to the DBS's Update Service (£13 per year). This allows them to keep their certificate up to date, so that they can take it with them from role to role, within the same workforce. As a consequence of this change, the School will no longer receive a copy of an individual's DBS Certificate and will insist that the original criminal record certificate is seen before engaging individuals who have opted for the update service. With the prior agreement of the Bursar, the cost of subscribing to the update service will be reimbursed for personnel who are employed on an irregular basis, e.g., Relief Drivers and Invigilators, on production of proof of payment.

- 4.18 It is the School's Policy to re-check staff DBS Certificates for any employee who changes their role to one of greater pastoral responsibility.
- 4.19 Members of staff at Windermere School are aware of their obligation to inform the Head or Bursar of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

### **The Barred List and Prohibited Orders**

- 4.20 A check of eligible personnel against the Barred List can be undertaken by the Central Register Assistant at any stage of the recruitment process.
- 4.21 Qualified Teacher Status is not a requirement for teachers in the independent sector, but a check will be made to confirm that anyone employed to carry out teaching work (as defined in *The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012*) is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.
- 4.22 A check for a section 128 direction, which prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, will also be carried out where relevant.

### **Medical Fitness**

- 4.23 All applicants must certify that they know of no reason on the grounds of physical or mental health why they should not work with children. Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All new employees are required to complete a health questionnaire and, where appropriate, a doctor's medical report may be required.

### **Qualification Requirements**

- 4.24 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.

### **Overseas Checks**

- 4.25 All new appointments, where persons have lived outside the UK, are subject to additional checks as deemed necessary. In particular, new employees who have lived abroad in the last 5 years must provide a Police Clearance Certificate from the relevant country. If the applicant has returned to the UK without proof of good conduct while overseas, this must be requested from the authorities in the relevant country and the School must see the certificate of posting the application and the official certificate as soon as it arrives. If this is not possible, the School will make further enquiries with the applicant's referees.

### **Right to Work**

- 4.26 If the new employee does not have a British passport as evidence of their right to work in Britain, then they must provide other documents as listed on the UK Border Agency website.
- 4.27 **In addition to the above and as part of a broader approach to best practice in safer recruitment the School will, whenever possible, ensure the following procedures are followed.**
- 4.27.1 The 'person specification' will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.
- 4.27.2 Other than in exceptional circumstances, face-to-face interviews will form part of the recruitment process.
- 4.27.3 Windermere School will also consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the School might want to explore with the applicant at interview.”

### **Advertising**

- 4.28 When the title of the vacant role has been agreed, the Head's PA can draw up a draft advertisement. Once the wording, title and other information has been set, these can then be advertised where agreed and an application pack prepared.
- 4.29 Advertisements must *always* state *'Windermere School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service'*.
- 4.30 In addition, letters of appointment must also refer to any part of the recruitment procedure, which is outstanding, e.g., *'This appointment is subject to receipt of an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service, completion of a Medical Questionnaire, evidence of your qualifications, and the receipt of any outstanding references'*.
- 4.31 Email, website and telephone details should be included as methods for potential applicants to request or download an application pack.

### **Application Packs**

- 4.32 An application pack should contain the following:
- 4.32.1 Application Form
- 4.32.2 Job Description
- 4.32.3 Person Specification – if available
- 4.32.4 Child Protection Policy Statement
- 4.32.5 Explanatory Notes on the Application and Recruitment Process
- 4.32.6 The School's Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders
- 4.32.7 A Self Disclosure Form which should be submitted in a sealed envelope with the application form after completion.

## **Assessing Applications and Shortlisting**

- 4.33 An applicant's curriculum vitae will not be accepted without the accompanying completed application form.
- 4.34 Incomplete application forms, or application forms which have not been signed, will not be accepted.
- 4.35 In these situations, it may be possible to contact the applicant to ask them to complete an application form fully.
- 4.36 The shortlisting panel should agree on which applicants to invite for interview. At this stage, letters or emails to unsuccessful applicants could be sent if applicable.
- 4.37 References should be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal applicants, before interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview (KCSIE 2023).

## **Inviting for interview**

- 4.38 The invitation to interview will include instructions on how to find the School and what candidates can expect to take place at the interview, including a reminder that the Panel will explore the candidate's suitability to work with children. Details of any tests or teaching assessment will also be explained.
- 4.39 Interviewees will be asked to bring the following documents with them:
  - 4.39.1 Relevant qualifications;
  - 4.39.2 Documents as proof of identity (usually driving licence, passport and a bank statement or utility bill not more than 3 months old).
  - 4.39.3 Overseas Police Clearance Certificates if applicable (if the applicant has lived abroad for a period of time during the previous 5 years).
  - 4.39.4 Evidence of the candidate's right to work in Britain – usually a passport will prove this.
- 4.40 These documents will be photocopied, and the copies later shredded if the applicant is unsuccessful.
- 4.41 Where the applicant lives abroad, Teams interviews can be arranged at a mutually convenient time, close to the other interviews to make a comparison easier.
- 4.42 International candidates can be asked to provide certified scanned copies of their qualifications and ID documents. Their current Head, or other person with similar responsibility, can sign and certify that these documents are true copies of the original documents. If the applicant is appointed to the position, they must then provide the originals of these documents as soon as possible.

## **Expenses**

- 4.43 Interview expenses will be reimbursed for UK applicants up to the equivalent of the cost of second-class rail and one night's accommodation (if required). The maximum claim is £150 per interview and is payable by cheque or BACs on the production of receipts.

## **Interviewing**

- 4.44 At least one member of the Interview Panel should have completed on-line Safer Recruitment Training. This training was previously offered by CWDC and the Department for Education but is now (April 2015) provided by the NSPCC <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/safer-recruitment-education-course/>
- 4.45 The Interview Panel should agree a list of questions, including questions relating to safeguarding.
- 4.46 Any points raised from the returned references can be discussed at interview.
- 4.47 Any disclosed criminal convictions can also be discussed at interview if appropriate.
- 4.48 At the end, there should be an opportunity for the interviewee to ask questions.
- 4.49 Notes should be taken by the interviewers during the meeting which can be used as a basis for discussion later and these will be kept on the successful applicant's file.
- 4.50 All candidates should be informed of the outcome as soon as possible. The successful candidate will be issued with a contract of employment of employment, subject to suitable references, medical and DBS checks etc.

## **References**

- 4.51 If applicable, any outstanding references should continue to be followed up, including checks with the previous employer.
- 4.52 Where appropriate, references should be validated verbally, via the telephone, and a note made on the document with initials, date and any further comments made.
- 4.53 Any inconsistencies raised by references should be discussed during the interview.

## **Induction**

- 4.54 All new staff undertake Safeguarding training with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL); existing staff attend annual 'refresher' sessions. All staff new to the School follow an appropriate Induction Programme.

## **Contract of Employment**

- 4.55 The Contract of Employment will be issued before the first day of work.

## **Disqualification from Childcare under the Childcare Act 2006 (EYFS and Under-8s Childcare)**

- 4.56 Windermere School will not knowingly employ people in childcare who are disqualified, including by association, or allow them to manage such childcare directly.
- 4.57 All current and prospective staff are informed of the legislation, including that they may be disqualified "by association", and are asked to complete a self-disclosure form on appointment and annually.

## Safe Recruitment of Staff for Posts within the EYFS

- 4.58 In addition to the above, we inform Ofsted of any changes in the person responsible for our Early Years provision.

## Recruitment of Students on Placement for Teacher Training or Childcare Qualifications in the EYFS

### Policy Statement

- 4.59 We recognise that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education provided by our Early Years Department. As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking Early Years qualifications and training.
- 4.60 We aim to provide for students on placement with us experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.

### Procedures

- 4.61 We require students on qualification courses to meet the 'suitable person' requirements of Ofsted and have DBS checks carried out.
- 4.62 Students undertaking qualification courses who are placed in our setting on a short-term basis are not counted in our staffing ratios.
- 4.63 We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers both trainees and voluntary helpers.
- 4.64 We require students to keep to our confidentiality policy.
- 4.65 We cooperate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
- 4.66 We provide students, before the first session of their placement, with a short induction on how our setting is managed, how our sessions are organised and our policies and procedures.
- 4.67 Students meet with the Head, Head of Junior School or Head of Early Years prior to starting their first placement session.
- 4.68 Our Student Liaison member of Staff in the EYFS is **Miss Jo Pink**.
- 4.69 We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- 4.70 All students in their first week of placement undergo a Fire and Safety briefing including how to exit the building safely in the event of an emergency.
- 4.71 We make the needs of the children paramount by not admitting students in numbers that hinder the essential work of the setting or compromise our standard of provision.

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