

St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre

Safer Recruitment Policy



Approved by:	Full Governors 28/11/24	Written: September 2024
Next review due by:	September 2025	

Introduction

- 1.1. This policy provides a consistent approach to recruitment and selection, enabling this us to recruit the right individuals – using the right mechanisms and processes to recruit safely, and at the same time deterring those who may be unsuitable to work with children or young people.
- 1.2. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care and the School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- 1.3. We will ensure that we meet our commitment to safeguarding by carrying out all necessary preemployment checks.

2. Scope of policy

3. This policy covers recruitment to permanent and temporary roles within this organisation. The safer recruitment principles of the policy should also be applied to the appointment and vetting of volunteers to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

4. Statutory requirements

- 4.1. We adhere to all statutory requirements as set out in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document – part 3, of which forms the basis of this policy [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#).
- 4.2. Statutory requirements also fall under sections 175 of the Education Act 2002.

5. Preparing to recruit

- 5.1. Anyone within the School involved in the recruitment and selection of staff is responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.
- 5.2. The job description and person specification are essential tools and will be used throughout the recruitment and selection process. These will be reviewed prior to commencing any recruitment activity and specifically in relation to safeguarding, they will include reference to the extent of contact with children, the post holders responsibility for promoting and safeguarding children, and whether the post requires a DBS check and at what level.
- 5.3. The interview panel will be identified ensuring that all members have completed Safer Recruitment Training prior to the commencement of the recruitment activity and that at least two members of the panel will also undertake shortlisting.
- 5.4. Appropriate selection methods will be agreed and will always include an interview.

5.5. The recruitment timetable will also be confirmed to ensure sufficient time is allowed for this process and this incorporates the time required for pre employment checks to be undertaken prior to commencement in post.

See Appendix 1: Features of a safer recruitment process

See Appendix 2: Recruitment and selection checklist

6. Advertising

6.1. Any advert will include a statement about the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our pupils, and again will make reference to the successful candidate undertaking a DBS check at the appropriate level, if this is a requirement of the role. A link to/a copy of the schools relevant Safeguarding Policies will also be included on the advert, including this Safer Recruitment Policy.

See Appendix 3: Wording to be used in an advertisement.

7. The application process

7.1. All applicants will complete the School's standard application form – CV's are not accepted.

7.2. This application form should include the following information;

- personal details, current and former names, and current address;
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment/education;
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- details of two referees (one referee should be the applicants current or most recent Employer/Line Manager (not a friend) and;
- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

7.3. The application form/pack will not ask them to declare any cautions and convictions at this stage of the recruitment process but will make it clear they will be required to do so if they are shortlisted.

7.4. The application form/pack will also make it clear that an online check will be undertaken should they be shortlisted.

7.5. All completed application forms will be required to be signed (with a wet signature) and dated by the candidate prior to any conditional offer being made.

7.6. The following statement should be used on application forms:

The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013, 2020 & 2023) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account.

Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Ministry of Justice website.

Rather than a disclosure section on application forms (where they can be seen by shortlisters or others), KCSIE 2023 states that only shortlisted applicants should be asked to provide any information about unspent and unprotected criminal records.

8. The shortlisting process

- 8.1. When carrying out the short-listing process, it is important to record objective evidence about the extent to which each candidate meets the criteria.
- 8.2. Have at least two people involved in the process of scrutinising applications and short-listing candidates. This makes the process more objective and helps to avoid subjective judgements; it is also much less likely that something will be missed if two people separately scrutinise the applications;
- 8.3. The people involved in shortlisting should also be involved in the interviews.
- 8.4. Take time to scrutinise applications carefully, returning any forms not fully or properly completed, identifying any gaps in the person's history or any discrepancies or inconsistencies;
- 8.5. Apply the same criteria from the person specification to each applicant consistently.
- 8.6. The shortlisting assessment will be documented to ensure that there is a record should there be a challenge from any candidate. These records, alongwith the application form will be held for a period of 6 months before being destroyed (excluding that for the appointed candidate). These will be stored electronically by the Business Manager due to GDPR regulations.
- 8.7. In addition, applications will be reviewed to ensure there are no discrepancies, to enable identification of any gaps in employment history or education, or repeated changes of employment in short periods of time. For those that are still shortlisted these queries will be documented in preparation for questioning the candidate at interview.

9. Preparation for Interview

- 9.1. All shortlisted candidates will be required to complete the self-disclosure form prior to any interview. The purpose of self-declaration is to enable candidates to have the opportunity to share relevant information prior to the interview and allow this to be discussed during the interview. This will not take away the requirement to apply for a DBS check should a conditional offer of employment be made. This form will include questions related to the following;

- Cautions and convictions (where these are not protected offences)
- Whether they are on the Childrens Barred List
- Prohibition from Teaching
- Overseas information
- Childcare Disqualification

9.2. Where a shortlisted candidate discloses something which would make it unlawful for us to employ them the offer of an interview may be withdrawn.

9.3. Online checks:

- An online check will also be undertaken of all shortlisted candidates prior to interview.
- This will be undertaken by a member of staff who is not a member of the interview panel and who will not be an immediate colleague of the candidate. The Business Manager will undertake this role.
- This will be a check of the full name (including any previous surnames) via an internet search, this will not be a social media search.
- Should any concerning information be found via this search the person undertaking the check will share this information with the chair of the interview panel, only if this is relevant to their suitability to work with children. They will seek appropriate advice from HR if they are unsure before sharing this information with any interview panel member.
- A record that this check has been undertaken and any action that was taken as a result will be referenced on the employee file should they be appointed. This information would be discussed with the candidate at interview and any response recorded as part of the recruitment process.

9.4. References

- At least two references will be obtained prior to interview, where authority has been given by the candidate.
- One of these references should be from the current or most recent Employer.
- References will be requested directly from the referee. We will not accept open references i.e. 'to whom it may concern'.
- Standard reference proforma's will be used when requesting references to ensure consistency. This will ask the referee if they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide facts regarding any substantiated safeguarding allegations.
- References will be followed up and verified by the School to ensure they are legitimate and from the said source, usually via a phone call.
- References will be scrutinised to ensure the content is accurate (as per the application form) and that there are no anomalies.
- Previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies.
- Any anomalies or discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate either at interview or prior to any appointment is confirmed.

See Appendix 4: for reference request information and form

10. The Selection Process

- We will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post, but will always include a formal interview as part of the process.
- Questions will be based on the job description and person specification, and will be structured and agreed in advance prior to the interview. See appendix 6: for competency questions which could be used in an interview.

- The interview panel will identify and agree any issues they wish to explore with the candidates based on their application form, self disclosure form and references.
- Questions will include the following themes:
 - What attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children;
 - exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role;
 - asking for explanations for any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment frequently.
- Candidates will be asked to discuss the content of their self disclosure form if there is any information contained within it. The disclosure of a conviction/offence will not automatically debar a candidate from being appointable.
- All interview notes will be clearly recorded in written format, along with the decisions made. Candidates can subsequently ask for feedback and for a copy of their interview notes. The information for those candidates who are not appointed will be held securely for a period of 6 months before being destroyed. The name of the interviewer will be recorded on each interview sheet, signed, with the date of the interview.

See Appendix 5: Competency interview questions to address suitable personal behaviours for teaching (including safeguarding children and young people)

11 Offer of Employment

All offers of employment will be made on a conditional 'preferred candidate' basis until the School have completed **all** pre-employment checks.

12 Pre Employment Checks

- a. The following pre employment checks will be undertaken prior to confirming a final offer of employment;
 - Identity Check.
 - Two references, including one from their most recent/current employer
 - An online check has been undertaken.
 - DBS check at the relevant level – in most cases this would be an enhanced DBS including a check on the childrens barred list if the individual is going to be working in regulated activity with children. (see further information below on DBS checks)
 - Occupational Health clearance, particularly for those in teaching posts to confirm Fitness to Teach.
 - Evidence of the individual's right to work in the UK.
 - Verification of professional qualifications to include a check via the DfE Sign in to check QTS status for qualified teachers.
 - Prohibition checks (for teaching staff and those undertaking teaching work (eg: HLTA's and any support member of staff that holds QTS) – this is a check to ensure no prohibition order has been issued by the Secretary of State (via the Teacher Regulation Agency), or any sanction or restriction has been imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before it's abolition in March 2012.
 - A childcare disqualification check (only applicable for those employed to work with children up to the age of 8 and those who manage this provision).

- Overseas checks – this applies to candidates who have worked overseas for 12 months or more in the past 10 years and this is their first role in a school in England. They will require a certificate of good conduct from the country/ies they have resided in.

See Appendix 2: Recruitment and selection checklist and pre-employment checks

13 DBS Checks

- a. There are three main types of DBS check that apply to Education settings:
 - Standard - provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer, regardless of whether they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders 1974. The law allows for certain old and minor offences to be filtered out;
 - Enhanced – same as standard check, plus any approved information held by the police which they feel is relevant and should be disclosed;
 - Enhanced with barred list check – where people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults, this allows an additional check to be made as to whether the person appears on the children’s or adult’s barred list. This is likely to be required for most appointments in schools and colleges with the Adults barred list also being required to be checked for those working with pupils who are vulnerable over the age of 18.
- b. It is illegal to undertake a barred list check on anyone who is not working in regulated activity and therefore we will only check potential staff on the barred list if the definition of regulated activity is met as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education. For Volunteers we will undertake a risk assessment to determine the level of check that would be appropriate depending on the activity they would be undertaking and whether or not they would be supervised.
- c. Staff are not expected to register with the DBS update service, however we will accept checks via the update service for potential new staff with their consent. A copy of the original DBS certificate must be seen before this check can be processed via the Update service.
- d. A paper copy of the DBS certificate will need to be seen by us before any final offer of employment can be made. Where a candidate is currently working for a school within the Borough of Telford & Wrekin Council and the Council have a record of this DBS check a new check will not be required, however the disclosure certificate will need to be seen by us before confirming the offer of employment.
- e. We do not undertake a renewal process for our DBS checks as we have suitable provisions in place to ensure that information that could/would be included on the DBS certificate is provided to us; either via a self disclosure by the employee (this is a contractual requirement) and/or reported to us by third party agencies such as the Police/Safeguarding Services.
- f. When employees move to other roles within the organisation we will assess whether the DBS requirements have changed and undertake a new DBS check if required. For example, they move from a post which was not classified as regulated activity to one that is.

13. Dealing with convictions

13.1 We have a formal vetting process for dealing with matters that are outlined on the DBS certificate. Depending on the severity of this information an initial assessment will be made to determine whether or not they are low, medium or high risk and whether the case needs to be considered at a vetting panel as set out below:

- Potentially Moderate/High Risk
 - any form of violence,
 - any sexual offence,
 - use or possession of drugs or
 - any other offence involving children or vulnerable people
- Low Risk
 - petty theft,
 - motor vehicle/driving offences or
 - other low level crime

13.2 A risk assessment will be completed. Where the assessment determines the matters are low risk this will be signed off by the Headteacher.

13.3 Where the risk is Moderate to High a Vetting Panel will be convened. Documentation will be provided by us to the panel. The panel will be chaired by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Telford & Wrekin Council and an HR representative from Telford & Wrekin Council Local Authority (for all maintained schools, and those that contract HR services from Telford & Wrekin Council). The Headteacher may also attend the this Vetting panel.

13.4 The Vetting Panel will make a recommendation on whether to proceed with this appointment and whether any particular safeguards should be considered as part of this employment. We will comply with the recommendations made by the LADO.

14. Pre DBS Risk Assessments

14.1 No individuals will commence employment until **all** pre-employment checks are received and are deemed satisfactory. However if all satisfactory checks have been received and the only outstanding check is the DBS then the individual may start subject to the completion of a Pre DBS risk assessment.

14.2 These risk assessments can only be undertaken where the following apply;

- a check has been made on the children's barred list via the DfE Sign In Portal
- they have had a previous enhanced DBS (including children's barred list check)
 - undertaken by their current employer and this is from their current
 - address, they have produced an original copy of the disclosure certificate and it is clear
- all other pre-employment checks have been undertaken and are satisfactory.
- there are no unexplained 'gaps' in employment
- Suitable measures such as supervision can be introduced whilst the DBS is awaited

14.3 A pre DBS risk assessment form will be completed and signed by the Headteacher which will give the candidate permission to work within the school whilst the DBS is awaited, subject to any specific safeguards as outlined on the form. A member of the HR Department at Telford & Wrekin Council will also sign this form.

15. Single Central Record (SCR)

- 15.1 We maintain a single central record of all pre-employment checks for **all** staff including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency staff, tutors and third party supply staff as well as Governors. This will be audited on a termly basis by the Headteacher and Governor responsible for Safeguarding. The date of the check will be recorded on the SCR.

See Appendix 6: Single Central Record

16. Induction

- 16.1 All staff who are new to this organisation will receive induction training that will cover safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices as well as the Employee Code of Conduct. They will also be required to read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 16.2 At St. Matthew's we understand the importance of training and ensuring staff are vigilant in their roles to safeguard children. The school uses Ollie training as well as face face training.
- 16.3 2024 KCSiE states:

All staff will receive an induction, so they are aware of our safeguarding systems. This will include the child protection policy, child-on-child abuse policy and procedures, behaviour policy, staff behaviour policy (Code of Conduct), safeguarding response to children who are absent from education and role of the DSL and CSE lead (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies). We will provide copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) or KCSiE to all staff at induction. We will maintain a record of induction.

Staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things, includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring) at induction. This training will be refreshed every three years.

See Appendix 7: Induction checklist for staff

(The Business Manager has a more detailed version to ensure a full induction is carried out)

(Information in this policy has been taken from Telford and Wrekin Human Resources and from Safer Recruitment delegate workbook 2023-2024)

Appendix 1: Features of a safer recruitment process

- Set time aside for planning and structuring the process;
- Have clear job, role and person specifications, setting out the boundaries and expectations of the role including a statement of the successful candidate's responsibility for safeguarding children;
- Clear messages about safeguarding should be sent to candidates from the outset along with copies of the child protection policy and related safeguarding policies / procedures – or provide a link to where these can be found on your website;
- A statement about the organisation's commitment to safeguarding children should be incorporated in any job advert;
- The advert should state whether the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore subject to an enhanced DBS certificate; this is a requirement of the DBS code of practice;
- Advert should also state whether the role is in regulated activity and requires a children's barred list check;
- Applicants should be provided with information about the filtering of criminal offences and advised of the need to complete a self-disclosure if they are invited to interview;
- Use application forms, not CVs;
- Consider undertaking online searches on shortlisted candidates in case there is any publicly available information that would affect their suitability to work with children;
- If online searches are to be undertaken, shortlisted candidates should be informed;
- Obtain references before interview wherever possible; include specific enquiries about the applicant's background in relation to safeguarding and ensure references are given proper weight and consideration in the selection process;
- At a minimum, the selection process should involve a face-to-face interview and where possible another tool (role play, presentation, teaching a lesson, participating in activities with children under observation etc);
- Children may be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way; observing how candidates interact with children (e.g. model lesson, pupil panel, discussion groups or lunch with pupils) is considered to be best practice;
- At interview, use probing questions into motives, attitudes and behaviours, not just skills and experience, and questions that cover safeguarding issues as well as other role-related areas;
- Seek information about relevant criminal history at the right point in the process and use it appropriately;
- Don't place too much emphasis on criminal vetting checks at the cost of other safer recruitment techniques;
- Ensure there is an ongoing culture of vigilance in the organisation.

Appendix 2: Recruitment and selection checklists

Recruitment and selection checklist

Pre-interview	Initials	Date
Planning – timetable decided ; job description, personal specification and other documents to be provided to applicants, reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc.		
Vacancy advertised – (where appropriate) advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy; that is, statement of commitment to safeguard and promoting welfare of children and need for successful applicant to be DBS checked.		
Applications on receipt – scrutinised – any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for shortlisting.		
Interview panel – should be briefed and all members suitably trained in safer recruitment		
Shortlist prepared and interview	Initials	Date
Reference – seeking sought directly from referee on shortlisted candidates; ask recommended specific questions; including reason for leaving and any previous safeguarding allegations/disciplinary action.		
References – on receipt checked against information on application; ensure referee has appropriate authority, scrutinise; any discrepancy/issue of concern noted to take up with referee and/or applicant.		
Invitation to interview – includes all relevant information and instructions		
Online searches – shortlisted candidates only		
Criminal record self disclosure – with explanation or links to filtering rules and spent/unspent and signposts to impartial advice – sent to shortlisted candidates and to be returned prior to interview date		
Interview arrangements – at least 2 interviewers; panel members have authority to appoint; have met and agreed issues and questions/assessment criteria/standards		
Interview – explores applicant's suitability for work with children as well as suitability for the requirements of the post		
Any self-disclosed criminal history or issues of suitability – check information would not be filtered/protected, discuss context with candidate at interview, record what was discussed, seek additional advice if necessary		
Identity and right to work – original documents verified on date of interview		
Birth certificate – is seen wherever possible, in order to identify whether a person has changed their name.		
Qualifications – of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents; copies of documents taken and placed on file		

Conditional offer of appointment – offer of appointment is made on conditional satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks and consideration of a probationary period.		
References – receive and check (if not obtained and scrutinised previously) any issues are clarified with referee and/or candidate. Content confirmed with the referee and electronic references are verified as from a legitimate source.		
Identity and qualifications – if that could not be verified at interview		
Evidence of right to work in the UK – refer to https://www.gov.uk/legalright-work-uk for guidance		
DBS Certificate – Apply for relevant level of DBS, which will be sent back to the applicant. Applicant should then present the original certificate to the		

recruiting manager. The recruiting manager should make a note on the Single Central Record of the date it was seen by them. Any disclosed information relevant to suitability should be compared with the selfdisclosure.		
Barred list check – check the candidate is not barred from taking up the post (this check should only be undertaken for those working in regulated activity, more guidance at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550197/Regulated_activity_in_relation_to_children.pdf).		
Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) – (for teaching posts) the teacher has obtained QTS (for teaching posts in FE colleges) , the teacher has obtained PGCE or Certificate of Education (Cert Ed) or FE Teaching Certificate		
Prohibition – (for teaching posts) the teacher has not been included in the prohibition list, interim prohibition list or subject to GTCE sanctions		
Prohibition from Management – anyone appointed to a management position is not barred from management by the Secretary of State (this includes governors)		
Health – complete an Occupational Health questionnaire		
Disqualification from childcare – (for relevant posts only) go to https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006 for more guidance on who is bound by the disqualification rules.		
Employing individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK – These individuals must undergo the same checks as any other candidate, as well as further checks so that relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Further guidance on overseas criminal checks can be found here : https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants		

Appointment	Initials	Date
Induction – include the following : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate level of safeguarding and child protection training • Name and how to contact the DSL • Online safety and acceptable use agreement • Speak up/Whistleblowing • Pupil behaviour policy • Safe working practice/staff code of conduct • Health and Safety in the workplace • Setting emergency evacuation procedures • Any other relevant CPD 		

Appendix 3: Wording to be used in advertisements

Fluency Duty

- This post has been identified as a customer facing role and therefore the Council is required to fulfil their statutory duty under Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016. As a public body the Council is obliged to ensure members of staff in such roles are able to have a command of spoken English which is sufficient to enable the effective performance of their role.
- This post has been assessed as requiring C1 level under the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR)
- Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognise implicit meaning.
- Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.
- Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.
- Can produce clear, well structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

More information is available at : <http://ecouncil/Fluency/Pages/default.aspx>

This school is committed to safeguarding children and young people. Online checks will be carried out for all candidates invited to interview following the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. The successful candidate will also be subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check along with other pre-employment checks.

Criminal Convictions

The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account.

Should you be shortlisted for interview you will be asked to declare on a separate form whether you have any convictions or cautions that are not "protected" in line with this legislation. Further information on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found in the [DBS filtering guide](#).

Online Checks

In line with the Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, an online check will be undertaken for all shortlisted candidates prior to the interview.

Someone who is not on the interview panel will undertake this search and only share information obtained with the panel should this have potential implications around your suitability to work with children.

The panel may ask you specific questions about any information obtained via this online search if appropriate.

All information given/obtained will be treated as strictly confidential and will be stored securely.

Appendix 4: Reference request information and form

References should be sought for shortlisted candidates and scrutinised prior to interview where possible; this allows any concerns to be clarified with the referee and / or discussed with the candidate at interview. Schools and colleges should:

- have a reference from current or most recent employer
- if not currently working with children but has done so in the past, a reference should be sought from the most recent employer where the role involved working with children
- the referee should be a senior person with relevant authority – in a school, the HT / principal should confirm the reference is accurate
- ask whether the referee is aware of any behaviour that might give rise to concern, including any disciplinary action
- ask specifically about allegations about their behaviour towards children
- seek specific confirmation of the details and responsibilities of the previous post given by applicant
- always verify information with the person who provided the reference
- ensure that any references received electronically originate from a legitimate source;
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post.

References are just as important for voluntary posts as for paid employment. A similar process should be followed when seeking volunteers for the kinds of posts that require a formal recruitment process.

Who should be asked to provide a reference?

References should be provided by a senior person with the appropriate authority; if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be provided by or confirmed by the headteacher / principal as others (such as a departmental head or DSL) may not have accurate information regarding any allegations, low level concerns and / or disciplinary investigations.

If an applicant has worked with children previously, whether on a paid or voluntary basis, at least one reference should be obtained from the person or organisation that employed the applicant in work with children, even if that is not the applicant's current or most recent employer. This may mean requesting an extra reference where the person is not currently employed with children.

What should referees be asked?

All requests for references should enclose a copy of the job description and person specification. The referee's opinion should be sought about how the person meets the requirements of the specification and his or her capacity to carry out the duties set out in the job description. Every request should also ask the

referee to state whether they are aware of anything that might give rise for concern about the person's suitability to work with children and, if so, to provide details.

In addition, requests for references in connection with current or previous work with children should ask not only about concerns in respect of suitability, but also specifically about whether the person has been the subject of allegations about their behaviour towards children.

When should references be obtained?

It is essential that wherever possible this information, or confirmation that there is no information or reason that might cast doubt on a person's suitability to work with children known to the referees, is available before interview.

Reference request: a person with no experience of working with children Dear [name of referee]

[name of applicant] – application for post of [job title]

I am writing to seek a reference in respect of [name of applicant], who has applied for the post of [job title] at [name of organisation].

I am enclosing a copy of the job description and the person specification for the post. I shall be grateful for your views on [name of applicant]'s suitability for this position. Please indicate your knowledge of his or her qualifications and ability to carry out the duties specified in the job description and how he or she meets the requirements of the person specification.

(where appropriate) [Name] states that he or she is currently employed by [you/name of employing organisation] as a [...] with responsibility for [...] and during his or her employment with [you/name of organisation] has also gained experience in [...]. I shall be grateful if you will let me know whether those statements are accurate along with details of

[name]'s current salary. Please also state whether [name]'s performance of his or her duties while in your employment has been satisfactory. If [name]'s performance has not been satisfactory in all respects please provide details of the areas needing improvement and any remedial action taken.

As [name] is applying for a post that involves working with children, please state whether you know of any reason why he or she might be considered unsuitable to work with children or whether you have any concern about his or her suitability for such work. If you do know of any reason or concern, please give details. Finally, please say how long you have known [name] and in what capacity. I shall be grateful if you will let me have your reply by [date] to help us avoid delaying the selection process.

Reference request form: a person with experience of working with children

To: (referee's name and organisation)
Request for a reference in respect of: (name of applicant)
In regard to application for: (title of post applied for)

Please confirm the following details

The applicant's period of employment with you:

From

To

The applicant's current or most recent job title with you

The main duties and responsibilities of that post:

The applicant's reason for leaving your employment:

How long have you known the applicant?

In what capacity do you know him/her?

Did the applicant perform his/her duties satisfactorily? Yes [] No []

If No please provide details of any areas needing improvement and any remedial action taken:

Please see the job description and person specification attached and comment on the applicant's suitability for this appointment. It would also be helpful if you could describe any strengths and weaknesses you consider the applicant has demonstrated in relation to the requirements of this job and give examples (please continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

Please comment on the effectiveness of the applicant's interactions with: a) Other adults

b) Children and young people

<p>To the best of your knowledge has the applicant ever had an allegation made against them, which was founded, in regard to his/her behaviour towards children?</p> <p>Yes [] No []</p>
<p>If Yes please give full details of the nature and date(s) of the allegation(s), by whom they were investigated, what conclusion was reached as a result of the investigation, whether any action was taken and if so what that was?</p>
<p>Has the applicant been the subject of a disciplinary action in respect of which penalties or sanctions remain in force?</p> <p>Yes [] No []</p>
<p>If Yes please give full details of the nature and date(s) of the misconduct and of the penalty or sanctions still in force.</p>
<p>Printed name:</p>
<p>Signature:</p>
<p>Position:</p>
<p>Organisation:</p>
<p>Date:</p>

Appendix 5: Competency interview questions to address suitable personal behaviours for teaching (including safeguarding children and young people)

These are examples of questions and indicators prepared for training purposes by one local authority (Buckinghamshire). These are to provide an illustration rather than to provide standard interview questions for ongoing use. At St. Matthew's we use a scoring system for interviews and tasks, where 4 is excellent and 1 is poor. At the end of the interviews scores are added to determine the strongest candidate in each task/interview.

Positive indicators	Personal competencies	Negative indicators
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<p>Convincing responses based on balanced understanding of self and circumstance.</p> <p>Has a realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Examples of having considered/tried other options and alternatives.</p> <p>A realistic appreciation of the challenges involved in working with children.</p> <p>Evidence of others having supported and encouraged based on observation of personal talent.</p>	<p>1. Motivations for working with children</p> <p>Self-awareness/knowledge and understanding of self, interconnection between self and professional role.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you feel are the main drivers that led you to want to work with children? • How do you motivate young people? • What has working with young people, to date, taught you about yourself? 	<p>Unconvincing responses based on whimsical examples. Not self-aware, don't see themselves as others do.</p> <p>Driven by personal needs not needs of others.</p> <p>Not realistic about personal strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Unrealistic impression of what working with children is really like; idealisation of children.</p> <p>Failure to consider other alternatives.</p> <p>Pushed by others, or forced by circumstance, to do something they don't appear to have personally thought through.</p>
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Positive indicators	Personal competencies	Negative indicators
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<p>Behaves consistently and appropriately under pressure or in a position of authority.</p> <p>Has control over emotions with adults and children.</p> <p>Demonstrates a good understanding of boundaries between children and adults.</p> <p>Understands position of power and how to seek help in difficult circumstances.</p>	<p>2. Emotional maturity and resilience Consistency under pressure, ability to use authority and respond appropriately, ability to seek assistance/support where necessary.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a time when you have been working with children when your authority was seriously challenged. How did you react? What strategies did you employ to bring things back on course? How did you manage the situation? • Tell me about a person you have had particular difficulty dealing with. What made it difficult? How did you manage the situation? 	<p>Inappropriate responses when under pressure or when in a position of power.</p> <p>Inconsistent responses.</p> <p>Handles conflict badly.</p> <p>Fails to control temper/emotions with children and or adults.</p> <p>Implies that adults and children are equal.</p> <p>Doesn't seek help when needed.</p> <p>Fails to go to others for advice.</p>
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Positive indicators	Personal competencies	Negative indicators
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<p>Demonstrates a balanced understanding of rights and wrongs.</p> <p>Puts the child first. Alive to the realities of abuse.</p> <p>Understands how and why children may be vulnerable</p> <p>Shows a contemplative approach, drawing on personal experiences and lessons from others. Builds values and judgments based on new information.</p> <p>Shows an appreciation of safeguarding issues and an ability to contribute towards a protective environment.</p> <p>Shows respect for others' feelings, views and circumstances</p> <p>Demonstrates a commitment to FBV and is able to relate this to the formal and informal curriculum</p>	<p>3. Values and ethics Ability to build and sustain professional standards and relationships, ability to understand and respect other people's opinions, ability to contribute towards creating a safe and protective environment.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your attitudes to child protection? How have these developed over time? • What are your feelings about children who make allegations against staff? • How do you feel when someone holds an opinion that differs from your own? How do you behave in this situation? • Have you ever had concerns about a colleague? How did you deal with this? • What does 'promoting fundamental British values' mean to you? 	<p>Extreme opinions that don't account for the views/feelings of others.</p> <p>Doesn't show balance in opinion.</p> <p>Doesn't build on new information or understanding.</p> <p>Opinions harden/become dogged.</p> <p>Doesn't show a full or rounded appreciation of safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Dismissive of, or underplays, the risks.</p> <p>Consistently puts the blame and responsibility for child protection elsewhere.</p> <p>Idealises children</p> <p>Fails to believe in suspicions/reports of abuse</p> <p>Dismissive of FBV or expresses views that undermine these</p>
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Positive indicators	Sample questions to test for safeguarding knowledge and understanding (pick one or two – not all)	Negative indicators
<p>Proactive and has personally taken actions to improve safeguarding culture.</p> <p>Has personal experience of having appropriately dealt with a challenging safeguarding issue.</p> <p>Personally committed towards making improvements. Sees it as part of their job.</p> <p>Prepared to challenge others in the workplace to make tangible improvements to safeguarding.</p> <p>Prepared to tackle difficult issues and confront individuals if necessary in order to promote best practice.</p> <p>Shows a good understanding of the issues. Up to date with events and legislation. Knows about test cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us about what you have done in the last 12 months to actually improve child protection in the workplace. How did this action arise? Follow up with: Who did you talk to? What were the results? • What is the safeguarding policy in your workplace? Follow up with: How is it monitored? What steps have you taken to improve things? • Give me an example of when you have had safeguarding concerns about a child. Follow up with: How did it arise? Who did you speak to? What actions did you take? • Tell us about a situation where you felt you fell short of safeguarding standard. Follow up with: How did it arise? Who did you speak to? What actions did you take? • Have you ever had to challenge the views of someone more senior than yourself in relation to safeguarding concerns? Follow up with: What were the circumstances? How did you go about it? What was the outcome? 	<p>No evidence of having taken steps in own right to make improvements.</p> <p>Passive approach to safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Reluctance to challenge people/systems/processes to make things better.</p> <p>No real experience of handling safeguarding issues. Naïve approach.</p> <p>Sees it as someone else’s job and/or responsibility.</p> <p>Not well versed or clear in understanding of the issues/sensitivities.</p> <p>Intolerant of the bureaucracy around safeguarding.</p> <p>Shows a tendency to take inappropriate chances/risks in area of safeguarding.</p>



When?	Task	Completed?
Before the first day	Setting up of employee's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT/intranet account • Email account • ID/security pass • Laptop/tablet/phone • Working space (if applicable) • Parking 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Make sure first week of induction is scheduled and planned, and relevant members of staff are notified, e.g. notify your designated safeguarding lead (DSL) about carrying out safeguarding training	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Provide the employee with the induction pack: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (includes DSL and CSE lead information) - Electronic Device Policy - Code of Conduct - Absence management policy - Staff Handbook - Whistleblowing - Child on Child Abuse Policy - Behaviour Policy - Part 1 of KCSiE Signpost employee to where all school policies can be located.	<input type="checkbox"/>
First day	Introduce colleagues, pupils, line manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Take employee on a tour of the school	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Outline health and safety procedures, e.g. fire drill procedures and meeting points, lock down the process for signing in and out of school, and recording incidents	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<p>Remind employee of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school timetable, including timings of staff meetings, assemblies and registration • Expectations around staff conduct, e.g. use of mobiles, social media and dress code • Conditions of employment, and absence and disciplinary procedures. <p>See Staff Handbook for the above</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Help employee get familiar with IT account, phone system and reprographics, e.g. photocopier (as applicable)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Explain the school's behaviour and rewards system</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First half term	<p>Arrange for employee to meet DSL and CSE lead and have safeguarding training (1st week). Roles explained to new member of staff.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Make sure employee meets with line manager at the end of the first half-term to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review progress • Identify training and development needs 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Make sure employee's line manager outlines the school's performance management system and begins to determine objectives</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second half-term to 6 months	<p>Arrange additional training for the employee based on the review of the first week</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Arrange follow-up session between employee and DSL to refresh safeguarding training</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Ensure regular 1-to-1 meetings are held between employee and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddy and/or mentor/line manager • Line manager 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Evaluate the success of the employee's induction programme, and use findings to inform future practice</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

