



## Safer recruitment policy

Key staff members:	All staff
Responsible body:	Project Steering Group/Local Governing Body
Adopted:	June 2017
Last reviewed:	n/a
Next review:	June 2018

### 1. Introduction

This policy is adopted from the latest model set out by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It is the recommended framework for recruitment of staff in schools including teaching staff and non-teaching staff. It sets out the minimum standards for recruitment and selection of staff at the school and it takes into account relevant legislation, including equalities legislation.

The policy underpins the commitment by the school to safeguard young people and promote their welfare. The recruitment and selection of staff is an important part of this process. All staff and volunteers are expected to share in this commitment and to make every reasonable endeavour to ensure that such recruitment and selection standards are met.

The standards in this policy should be adhered to by the school at all times when recruiting and selecting staff. They are also adhered to by the school when using external agencies/contracting workers who will have access to the school's premises as part of their role.

### 2. Aims

1. To ensure that Mulberry UTC meets its statutory obligations in relation to safer recruitment.
2. To help promote equality of opportunity and to attract and retain a workforce that reflects the community that the school serves.
3. To ensure that Mulberry UTC employs the best candidate for the job, regardless of race, gender, marital status, disability, religion / belief, sexual orientation, age etc.
4. To ensure that Mulberry UTC, when recruiting and selecting staff, deters, rejects or identifies people who might abuse children or who are unsuitable to work with young people.

### 3. Specific Equalities Considerations

Equalities implications will inevitably be involved whenever an employment procedure is applied. Application of these recruitment and selection standards will have particular implications for the workforce and the community we serve. In order to monitor the impact of these standards on minority groups, recruitment & selection within Mulberry UTC will continue to be monitored by the Mulberry Schools Trust and analysed by race, gender, disability, and age.

Whilst it is not currently possible to monitor by sexual orientation and religion/belief, the Trust Board reserves the right to request such information from applicants/new recruits (to be provided on a voluntary basis only) to assist in their analysis of the impact of these standards.

The Trust Board commits to offer appropriate training to principals, governors and external personnel providers on an on-going basis, in order to avoid any disproportionate impact as a result of implementation of these standards.

At Mulberry UTC, at least one member of any recruitment panel will have received 'Safer Recruitment' training.

#### **4. General Principles**

When recruiting and selecting workers and staff, Mulberry UTC will:

- Ensure its practices and systems are transparent, objective, consistent and thorough;
- Ensure those involved in the recruitment & selection process have received appropriate training;
- Include safeguarding children issues at every stage of the procedure;
- Avoid over-reliance on DBS checks as a means of 'sifting' out candidates unsuited to working with children. (*Note: only a small proportion of individuals unsuited to working with children actually have a criminal conviction*);
- Constantly endeavour to raise awareness of child protection issues, and create an open and supportive climate in which such issues and concerns can be appropriately discussed and acted upon;
- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', September 2016, DfE, the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2016, DfE.

#### **5. Recruitment & Selection Standards**

The UTC Principal has responsibility for ensuring that the following standards are applied in the recruitment and selection of staff on behalf of the governing body of Mulberry UTC. As many aspects of the process involve confidential information, the Finance and Resources Officer, supported by the Trust HR team, will oversee the administrative process. All recruitment of staff employed by the school should be undertaken by the principal on behalf of the Trustees, involving governors/trustees in interviewing as described below. For senior leadership appointments of teaching staff, a senior appointments panel of governors/trustees will be convened by the principal, chaired by a member of the governing body/trust board, in accordance with the governing body/trust board's decision.

##### **1. Stage One: Recruitment Planning**

As soon as a vacancy arises, the following will be reviewed by the Principal:

- Whether the post needs to be filled and/or whether the nature of the job has changed significantly;
- **The job description.** This should clearly state the post title, grade, school, reporting lines, resources (including staff) for which the postholder is responsible. It should also include the purpose of the post, main duties and activities, as well as making it clear that the postholder will have responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children within the school.
- A review of the grade/salary will need to be carried out if the job description has been revised (other than in the case of minor amendments)
- **The person specification.** This should set out the essential requirements for the post in terms of qualifications, skills, knowledge, experience, aptitudes, and other competences or qualities that candidates will need to demonstrate. The person specification should make it clear that candidates will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children, and that this will be tested at interview.
- **Selection criteria.** This document should set out the criteria against which applicants will be short-listed for a particular post at Mulberry UTC. Applicants will be advised to address these criteria in their supporting statement.
- **The information pack for applicants.** This should include the application form and explanatory notes (including information relating to the rehabilitation of offenders); job description; person specification; selection criteria; other essential information about the school/local authority; relevant policies including equality and diversity, and child protection; and details of the terms & conditions relating to the post

## **2. Stage Two: Recruitment**

Particular care needs to be taken when drawing up the recruitment advert to ensure it is attractive, clear, and communicates the right messages. Specifically, the advert will include:

- Post title, and a brief description of the associated duties – including the extent of contact with, and degree of responsibility for children;
- Remuneration;
- Hours/times of work, and other key working conditions;
- A description of the key characteristics/qualifications/skills/ experience necessary for the job;
- Details of the school, and who to contact for further information;
- A statement illustrating the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake a DSB check.

The application form used within the Mulberry School Trust is modelled on the Local Authority's standard job application form, which ensures that the following minimum information is obtained from candidates prior to the short-listing stage:

- Full identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, current address and contact details, date of birth<sup>1</sup>, and National Insurance number;
- Details of academic/professional qualifications the applicant has obtained that are relevant to the post applied for, with details of the awarding body together with dates;
- Teachers are required to provide their DfE reference number, evidence of QTS status;
- Confirmation that the applicant is free to take up employment within the UK with no immigration restrictions;
- A full chronological history since leaving secondary education, including periods of training, working (including voluntary work), together with dates and an explanation for any periods not in employment, education or training, and reasons for leaving employment. Start and end dates should be provided in all instances;
- A declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees, councillors or school governors;
- Contact details for two referees (one of whom should be the applicant's current or most recent employer). Where the applicant's current job does not involve working with children, a reference should be sought from their most recent employer where it did;
- A statement of the knowledge/skills/experience/personal qualities that the applicant is able to bring to the job, and how they feel they meet the person specification;
- A signed, dated statement from the applicant that they are not barred from teaching (if a teacher), disqualified from working with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body (e.g. the National Council for Teaching and Learning - DfE).

Additionally:

- As curriculum vitae are not acceptable, job applicants must always complete a standard application form. This is clearly stated in the application pack;
- Applicants must be provided with an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means that all convictions, cautions and bind-overs (including those regarded as 'spent' for other purposes) must be declared. Applicants must provide a signed statement declaring that they either have no convictions, cautions or bind-overs, or attaching details of their record (in an enclosed sealed envelope, marked confidential);
- Applicants must be informed that, where their current employment involves working with children, their employer will be asked about any disciplinary offences relating to children (including those that are 'time expired'), and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection concerns. Where the current employment does not involve working with children, but a previous position has, then that employer will be approached for such information.

<sup>1</sup> To ask for date of birth is not discriminatory. This information is required to ensure correct identification of the candidate.

- The prospective employer will seek references on short-listed candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications before interview. Information about capability proceedings which have occurred within the last two years will be requested.
- Applicants must also be informed that providing false information is an offence, which could result in their application being rejected, or summary dismissal from employment with a possible referral to the police.

### **3. Stage Three: Selection**

Short-listing is the first stage of the selection process. principals will ensure that the following standards are met:

- The short-listing panel will be comprised of a minimum of two senior employees at Mulberry UTC, (one of which would usually be the principal), or governors. Those responsible for short-listing will (except in the rarest of circumstances) also take part in the interview process. Where it is not possible for the short-listing panel to meet together, the short-listing will be conducted by one member of the panel and checked by the absent member prior to inviting candidates for interview. Where the appointment is for a senior leadership post, the short-listing will be carried out by the chair of the governors' senior appointments panel and the principal, as a minimum, with other governors from the panel involved where possible and appropriate.
- A standard short-listing matrix will be used for recording job applicants and whether they met the short-listing criteria
- All applications will be scrutinised as part of the short-listing process for consistency of information, gaps in employment, anomalies and discrepancies. Incomplete applications and curriculum vitae will not be accepted. Applicants must declare if they have lived abroad for more than 6 months in the last five years and produce a certificate of good conduct/ character in line with Home Office regulations if they have.
- All candidates will be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

Prior to inviting short-listed candidates for interview/testing, the principal will ensure that the following are sought for each candidate:

- References (for detailed guidance on what information referees should be asked to provide, please refer to the DCSF guidance 'Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education (2007)' and DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' March 2015.)
- DfE number(teachers)
- Whether s/he has Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (teachers)
- Verification of qualifications and/or professional status
- Evidence of identity and address

Where it is not possible to obtain the above checks prior to, or during interview, the recruitment panel may agree for them to be provided after the interviews have been conducted but before the successful candidate starts work. Any offer of employment will be subject to obtaining this information.

**Important Note:** It is essential that references, qualification details, and other documents provided by the applicant are cross-checked by HR against details on the application form, in order to rule out possible anomalies. Where anomalies are found, or where references are vague, or unspecific, follow-up action will be taken by the principal to establish the candidate's suitability for the post.

The next stage of the selection process will normally be to conduct interviews. In this respect the principal or her delegated representative will ensure that:

- No offer of appointment is made without the candidate having attended a face-to-face interview
- Interviews are conducted by a minimum of two interviewers at all times, one of whom should be a governor for all posts with leadership responsibilities
- For senior leadership appointments, a senior appointments panel will be convened by the principal and chaired by one of the governors in accordance with the governors' decision
- Interviewers have received appropriate training
- A core set of questions to be asked of all candidates is drawn up prior to interview, based on the person specification (these will normally be competence based)
- The interview panel reaches a consensus as to the required standards before the interviews take place and how those standards will be measured
- The interview panel agrees beforehand what additional issues specific to each candidate need to be explored at interview (these will be based on the candidate's application and references)
- Candidates' attitude towards children is explored at interview, as well as whether they are able to support the school's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children including:
  - i. resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
  - ii. attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline;
  - iii. motivation to work with children and young people;
  - iv. ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
  - v. whether they wish to declare anything in light of the fact that they will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check and have applied for a post that involves working with children;
  - vi. Candidates being invited for interview are reminded that their identity will need to be checked, and that they will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check and asked to bring relevant documentary evidence with them to the interview or shortly thereafter.

#### **4. Stage Four: Pre-Appointment Checks**

The principal or her delegated representative will ensure that all appointments are offered on a conditional basis and that (other than in the most exceptional of circumstances) new recruits do not commence work without the following checks having been satisfied:

- References received
- Barring check, and Enhanced DBS disclosure
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to teachers who obtained QTS after 7/5/99)
- Verification that the candidate has not been prohibited from teaching
- Right to work in the UK
- In addition, non-teaching staff new to the Trust will be required to satisfactorily complete a sixth month probation period.<sup>2</sup>

The Finance and Resources Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all of the above checks are confirmed in writing; that the checks are followed up if they are unsatisfactory or where there are discrepancies; and finally retained on the individual's personnel file<sup>3</sup>.

#### **5. Stage Five: Post Appointment: Induction**

There should be an induction programme for all staff and volunteers newly appointed in an establishment, including teaching staff, regardless of previous experience. The purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about the establishment's policies and procedures;
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged;
- confirm the conduct expected of teachers and support staff within the school;
- provide opportunities for a new staff member or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities; and
- enable the principal or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the new staff member or volunteer, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme should include information about, and written statements of:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, antiracism, physical intervention or restraint, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection and safeguarding procedures;

<sup>2</sup> This includes those who have previously worked for the Trust but whose continuity of employment has been broken

- safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and students in the school;
- the school's code of conduct;
- how and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised; and
- other relevant personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, capability, grievance and whistle blowing.
- The programme should also include attendance at child protection training appropriate to the person's role.