



Safer Recruitment Policy

(Incorporating procedures for all adults in school)

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. St Thomas' CE (VA) Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff, volunteers, contractors and other visitors to share this commitment.

In line with legislation including the Children Act 2004, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DfES/04217/2006, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Disqualification under the Children's Act 2006 and guidance from DfE under Keeping Children Safe In Education July 2015, the school takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils the school is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are 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. It also identifies the ways in which the school ensures that all other adults who volunteer, provide a service or are on placement are also suitably checked.

Staff

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

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

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision making process.

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 St Thomas Primary School.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

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

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Bursar and any other staff involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school.
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations, the governing body has delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to lead in all appointments. School governors will be involved in the appointment of teachers and finance staff but in the event of a split opinion the final decision will rest with the Headteacher.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Regulated activity for children is unsupervised activities on a frequent basis, for example, teaching, training, care or supervision, advice or guidance on well being or driving a vehicle with children as passengers.

Frequent is once a week or more on an ongoing basis or four or more times in a single month or overnight.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Application Forms

St Thomas Primary School uses the Staffordshire County Council application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
CV's will not be accepted in place of an application form.

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

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

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

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

References

References for short listed applicants will be sent for immediately after short listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. 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. Any areas of concern or the need for additional information will result in direct contact by phone or face-to-face the referee to verify the reference and gain further information.

The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

Staff / governors at St Thomas' CE Primary School who have undertaken the safer recruitment training are:

Mrs Lynne Williamson – Headteacher

Mr David Shemilt – Chair of Governors
Mrs Mandy Prince - Bursar

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents only will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed at the end of the recruitment programme.

OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks, copies of qualification and proof of identity. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formerly known as CRB Disclosure)

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

It is not the School's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates unless there are concerns about an existing staff member's suitability to work with children, or an employee takes leave for more than three months (ie: maternity leave, career break etc.), then all relevant checks will be carried out as if the person were a new member of staff. Similarly, if a person working at the school moves from a post that was not regulated activity, into work which is regulated activity, the relevant checks for the regulated activity must be carried out.

Members of staff at St Thomas Primary are aware of their obligation to inform the Headteacher of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

Dealing with convictions

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

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

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Headteacher. A decision will be made following this meeting.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status.

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the school will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those

set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Medical Fitness

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 applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

Overseas checks

All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the school policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy, and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in school and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfES requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Bursar. The Single Centralised Register will contain details of the following:-

Single Central Records (SCR)

- All staff including teacher trainees on salaried routes
- Detail for each of the following checks, certificates, date completed
- Identity
- Barred list
- Enhanced DBS
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks e.g. worked aboard
- Professional qualifications

A designated Governor will be responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting his/her findings to the full Governing Body during the Summer Term meeting.

Record Retention / Data Protection

St Thomas' Primary School will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie: shredded). The 6 month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal.

All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the school office in a locked and secure cabinet.

Ongoing Employment

St Thomas Primary School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The school will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the Annual Review/appraisal procedure.

Leaving Employment

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (ie: physical, sexual and emotional and neglect) the School's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, St Thomas Primary School will inform the DfES and the Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances why the employee is leaving the school's employment.

Procedures for volunteer posts and other service providers/contractors

Volunteers including parent helpers

The headteacher will assess the suitability of the person requesting a voluntary position usually by interview. Where a prospective volunteer is not known at all to the school then suitable reference checks would be made. An enhanced DBS would be obtained prior to the volunteer starting in school if it was clear the post would be unsupervised. An induction would be carried out by a senior member of staff covering a range of conduct, health and safety and safeguarding topics. On occasions where parents are recruited to help with events such as walking children to church or helping with a visit, then staff will assess the suitability of the parent but they will always be supervised and will not be carrying out regulated activity and therefore a DBS check would not be obtained.

Coaches/ Tutors

References or testimonials will be sought as to the quality of service on offer before engagement. An enhanced DBS will be obtained for an individual or will be undertaken for regulated activity. Where the school engages the services of a company who employs a number of staff to provide their services, then an enhanced DBS will be obtained for the lead person in addition to an undertaking that all staff providing the service will also have undergone an enhanced DBS check. A list of staff members and their DBS checks will be kept on file. Coaches and tutors will sign in and out of the building and their identity checked on arrival.

Contractors

Where contractors are undertaking regulated activity or have an opportunity for regular contact with children then an enhanced DBS check will be obtained. Contractors who do not fulfil those criteria will be supervised at all times. Contractors identify will be checked and they will sign in and out of the building.

Student Teachers

University or other teacher trainer providers will ensure enhanced DBS are obtained before students start and will confirm this to school prior to the start of placements. A full induction will be carried out covering all aspects of appropriate conduct, safeguarding and health and safety procedures. Students will wear identity badges.

Work Experience Placements

Where students under 16 are on placement no DBS can be obtained. Where students are 16 or over the headteacher will consider whether a DBS should be requested. A full induction will be carried out covering all aspects of appropriate conduct, safeguarding and health and safety procedures. Students will wear identity badges and sign in and out of the building.

Policy adopted by Governors: November 2015

To be reviewed : March 2016