

# Appointment, selection and disclosure

Woodcroft School staff policy 01.05.10

## Introduction

Woodcroft School is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The school is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The school recognises that, in order to achieve these commitments, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share our views.

The aims of Woodcroft School's recruitment policy are to ensure:

- that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, gender, disability, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation;
- compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the DCSF in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* and the *Code of Practice* published by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB);
- that the school meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy. This policy should be followed alongside the *Appointment checklist 1 (office file)* and *2 (staff file)*.

## Recruitment and selection procedure

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an *Application form* containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. They will also be encouraged to visit the school informally prior to formal application. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. A Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

Applicants will receive a *Job description* and *Person specification* for the role applied for.

The applicant may then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his or her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the receipt of two satisfactory references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the school considers satisfactory;
- the receipt of an *Enhanced disclosure* from the CRB with which the school is satisfied;
- verification of medical fitness; and
- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a *Job acceptance form*.

If the offer is accepted and the above conditions are satisfied, the applicant will be issued with a letter of appointment as confirmation of employment. A *Contract of employment* will be issued approximately six weeks after the start of employment.

## Pre-employment checks

In accordance with the recommendations of the DCSF in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* and current Home Office guidance on the prevention of illegal working, the school carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

### **Verification of identity and address**

All applicants who are invited to a second interview will be required to bring the following evidence of permission to work, identity, address and qualifications. (All documents must be original, photocopies will not be accepted):

- passport *or* full birth certificate; and
- current driving licence if they have one (photocard and paper counterpart)
- two utility bills or bank or credit card statements (from different sources) showing their current name and home address which are less than three months old; and
- documentation confirming their National Insurance number (P45, P60 or National Insurance card); and
- original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

Where an applicant claims to have changed his or her name by deed poll or any other mechanism, e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration, he or she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

### **References**

Wherever possible references will be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current or most recent employment does or did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title and duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.

The school will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

The school will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.

### **Criminal records check**

Due to the nature of the work, the school applies for *Enhanced disclosure criminal record certificates* from the CRB in respect of all prospective staff members, directors, volunteers and students on placements. (Please see the *Student, work experience and volunteer policy*)

An enhanced disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record including current and spent convictions (including those which are defined as 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. If the individual is applying for a position working with children, the disclosure will also reveal whether he or she is barred

from working with children by virtue of his or her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DCSF and the Department of Health (DOH). It may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s). The current guidelines from the DCSF on CRB checks for people from overseas will be followed.

The school expects supply agencies and contractors that are used by the school to register with the CRB on their own account and to follow Woodcroft's policy or their own equally rigorous policy as well as the Woodcroft *Procedure for administering agency staff*.

## **Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders**

### **Background**

The school will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The school makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar him or her from employment within the school. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out under *Assessment criteria* below.

In view of the fact that all positions within the school will amount to 'regulated positions' within the meaning of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000), all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the school to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DCSF and the DOH of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the school to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the school.

If the school:

- receives an application from a disqualified person;
  - is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
  - has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,
- it will report the matter to the police.

### **Assessment criteria**

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the school will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;

- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any of the following offences against children or adults:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

#### **Assessment procedure**

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the school will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the managing director and the head teacher of the school before a position is offered.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he or she can do so by contacting the CRB direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the school will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

#### **Retention and security of disclosure information**

The school's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the CRB on the use of disclosure information. In particular, the school will:

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the CRB in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the school's senior management team and staff administrator.
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. In most cases, the school will not retain such information for longer than six months although the school will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the CRB and the recruitment decision taken.
- ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding;
- prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information.

The school complies with the provisions of the CRB Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on request.

## **Retention of Records**

If an applicant is appointed, the school will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months unless the applicant specifically requests the school to keep their details on file.

## **Queries**

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter they should contact the head teacher.