



# Safer Recruitment Policy

## Venn Wide

Reviewed By	Approved By	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date
LC/AA	The Board	19.10.2020	1.1	As necessary
LC/AA	The Board	7.6.2021	1.2	As necessary
LC	The Board	18.10.21	1.3	As necessary



## **1. Introduction**

The safe recruitment of staff in schools within Venn is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education. The trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Effective safer recruitment is fundamental to the success of the trust. Finding people with the necessary skills, experience, qualifications and attributes to join our team will enable Venn to succeed.

Venn has a statutory duty to maintain the safety and welfare of children and young people, in accordance with the government's guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. The trust will robustly follow safer recruitment practices throughout the appointment process.

In accordance with statutory guidance, the trust will ensure that at least one person on a recruitment panel is safer recruitment trained.

## **2. Equalities and diversity**

Venn are committed to equal opportunities for all staff and job applicants and decisions based on merit alone. The trust complies with the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate on the basis of the protected characteristics.

All applications should fill in an equal opportunities form as part of the application process which should be monitored at a school based level in line with our equality obligations.

This policy should be read alongside the trust's equal opportunity in employment policy.

## **3. Data Protection**

All data is processed in line with the general data protection regulations (UK GDPR) to ensure confidentiality of information provided by applicants.

A privacy notice should be issued to all applicants. A separate privacy notice should be issued to all new starters. This policy should be read alongside the trust's UK GDPR policy.

Applications of unsuccessful people will be kept for 6 months before being destroyed.



## **4. The Recruitment Process**

### **4.1 Pre advertising**

When a vacancy arises, the head of school should decide whether to replace the role like for like.

Any changes to the current staffing structure must have appropriate approval as per the scheme of delegation.

Any changes to a support staff job description must go through job evaluation before being advertised. This allows for the trust to robustly defend any claims of equal pay.

### **4.2 Advertising**

The head of school should decide whether to advertise Internally in their setting only, internally or across the trust or externally. It must be stressed that an application form must be completed even for an internal role. The application form will inform applicants that they must declare all criminal convictions whether “spent” or “unspent” and include any cautions and pending prosecution at the interview stage.

### **4.3 Shortlisting**

Shortlisting should be completed based on the essential criteria of the job description. The panel will scrutinise previous employment history, look for gaps and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete and that the dates match. This will determine who from the applicants the individual school are going to interview.

### **4.4 Interview preparation**

Questions should be prepared, the same list for every applicant.

Additional questions for each applicant based on any gaps or queries the shortlister has on the application form.

At least one question should be a safeguarding question.

Interviews should be used to explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant’s suitability to work with children. Areas to probe are outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.



#### **4.5 References**

The individual school will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview.

The panel will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments.

The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

Any references should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations or child protection concerns.

#### **4.6 Interviewing**

Good practice would be to carry out a systematic interview process for each candidate. This may include a lesson observation, or other task as well as a formal interview. The process will vary depending on the role.

When candidates are invited for an interview, they will be required to bring copies of qualifications and proof of their identity, best practice would be to see their birth certificate, and documents to assess their proof to work in the UK. They should also be told to let the school know if they have a disability to ensure the interview is accessible for all applicants.

Candidates should also bring their self disclosure form as part of part 3 of the application form.

Notes should be made from the interviews for future reference or in case there is a challenge of unfairness. Some panels might find it useful to score the answers to the questions so that there is a quantifiable reference point to determine the successful and unsuccessful candidates. Interview notes should be kept for six months from the date of interview.

Any conflicts of interest must be declared prior to the interview.

Any self declaration of criminal convictions will be discussed with the applicant by the chair of the panel. The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment but will be considered in the same way as positive DBS disclosures.



## 5. Following appointment

All successful applicants will be given a “conditional” offer of employment subject to a number of checks. The individual schools will record all information on the checks carried out in the school’s single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals’ personnel files. The trust follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

The trust will ensure for new starters we:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. A copy of this certificate will not be kept longer than 6 months, but the corresponding record of suitability (letter from the DBS company) will be. DBS checks will be made upon appointment. Another DBS check will be carried out if an alternative internal move occurs more than three years after the initial appointment.
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available. The individual school will also risk assess this role prior to them starting to ensure children are safe despite this delay
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities in the form of a medical report from Occupational Health
- Verify their right to work in the UK. This will be kept for the duration of the member of staff’s employment and in line with the data retention schedule.
- Verify their professional qualifications, as outlined as essential on the JD
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, ~~including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent~~
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state.

The individual schools will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where the trust takes a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and do not carry out such checks, the trust will retain a record of our assessment on the individual’s personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

## 6. Induction



Following a successful recruitment, a thorough induction will be held at individual schools. This will include but will not be restricted to:

- Welcome video from the CEO/HR/chair of trust board
- Introduction to key people within individual schools
- Familiarisation of a number of key documents and policies in school including the whistleblowing policy
- Explanation of the probationary period if the employee is new to Venn.

Induction should be held with any new role, regardless of whether the successful applicant was internal or not. If the new starter is from elsewhere in the school or trust, the induction should be altered to prevent repetition, but still carried out.

## **7. Agency and third-party staff**

Written notification from any agency or third-party organisation will be obtained to ensure that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that would otherwise be performed. Individual schools will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. A short induction will be held with the agency staff to ensure they are aware of health and safety, as well as safeguarding processes.

Regular agency / third party staff will have their details kept on the single central record.

## **8. Contractors**

Individual schools will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school with children, must have the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract).

This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children
- Individual schools will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- Individual schools will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months



- Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, individual schools will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where individual schools decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and individual schools do not carry out such checks, individual schools will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regular contractors will have their details kept on the single central record.

### **9. Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are employed by us, individual schools will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are on placement with us, individual schools will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

Trainee/student information will also be kept on the single central record.

### **10. Volunteers**

With all volunteers individual schools will follow the principles outlined above. A simpler application form for paid employment can be used, but references must be obtained.

Individual schools will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. Venn will retain a record of this risk assessment



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- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where Venn decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and Venn do not carry out such checks, Venn will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Volunteers information will also be kept on the single central record

### **11. Governors/Trustees**

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008).
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Governors information will also be kept on the single central record.

*For further advice and guidance surrounding safer recruitment practices within Venn, please contact Lynsey Cook, Senior HR Business Partner for Venn.*