

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Leighton Park School is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its students 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 staff.

Leighton Park recognises that in order to achieve these aims, as well as the need for an objective and transparent process which complies with statutory obligations, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share these commitments.

The aims of Leighton Park recruitment policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of merit, ability and suitability for the post, who are in sympathy with Quaker values and the aims of the School
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity leave, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the most recent recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document, the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Equality Act (2010)
- To ensure that Leighton Park meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks as obliged by statute and through questions asked at interview.

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR RECRUITMENT

Human Resources (HR) will take the lead responsibility for securing the best field of candidates; advising on recruitment and selection matters. HR will work in partnership with the recruiting manager.

Staff involved in the recruitment and selection process are responsible for familiarising themselves and complying with the provisions of this policy.

At least one member of each interview panel must have successfully completed Safer Recruitment in Education training.

ESTABLISHING THE NEED TO RECRUIT

When a post falls vacant, the requirement for the post to be retained in its existing form must be reviewed by the Head or Bursar. Furthermore, the quantity of work may have increased or decreased so a change of hours may be required. Such considerations should be determined by the recruiting manager in conjunction with HR and SLT and agreed before the recruitment process commences.

To initiate the recruitment process, an Authorisation to Recruit Form must be prepared. This must be fully completed and signed by the Head or Bursar. In addition, the following information must also be prepared and attached to the Authorisation to Recruit Form:

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- A draft job advertisement

PROCEDURE

PREPARING TO RECRUIT

As stated in the Safer Recruitment in Education training guidance, having a clear job description and person specification, setting down the boundaries and expectations of the role are all features of a safer recruitment process.

Job description and person specification

The job description and person specification should normally form part of the recruitment pack, which is sent to prospective applicants. These documents require careful drafting to ensure that the criteria listed are accurate. "Essential" requirements must be essential since anyone not meeting these would normally be excluded from the selection process. "Desirable" requirements must be relevant to the post and not unfairly exclude otherwise suitable candidates. A person specification enables the School to choose objectively between candidates on the basis of their relevant skills and ambition with the objective of selecting the best candidate.

Planning the recruitment process

The Head or Bursar and HR should agree the following:

- Methods of selection;
- Interview Panel members;
- Who will be involved in short-listing (usually the Head/Bursar and the recruiting manager/head of department);
- If any other selection techniques are required (such as tests or a presentation at interview), who will be required for these;
- Selection dates and times;
- The use of recruitment agencies where appropriate.

ADVERTISING

Preparing the advert

The recruiting manager should liaise with the HR Department to consider and discuss generating applications from high quality candidates. The recruiting manager in conjunction with HR should complete the job advertisement with close reference to the Job Description and Person Specification. In addition, advertisements should normally contain the following information:

- Job title;
- Annual Salary (if appropriate);
- Location;
- Standard information about Leighton Park School;
- Outline of the main responsibilities
- Outline of the main skills, qualifications and experience required (based on the Person Specification for the post);
- Statement on safeguarding;
- Contact details for further information regarding the post and how to apply;
- Start date (if appropriate);
- Closing date;
- Interview date, where agreed.

The membership of the interview panel and an interview date should be agreed at this stage.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENTS

Vacancies are promoted internally as appropriate to ensure existing employees have the opportunity to apply.

If an advert is to be placed in the external media HR and the line manager or Head/Bursar will produce the advert. All application forms should be acknowledged (normally this will be carried out by HR) at the time of application.

Following the interview process, all unsuccessful candidates will receive written confirmation and thanks for their interest.

SHORTLISTING PROCESS

Short-listing should be carried out as soon as possible after the closing date and applications must be measured against the requirements detailed in the Person Specification and Job Description. Applications will only be considered if submitted on a Leighton Park Application form, CVs or application forms cross referenced to CVs will not be accepted as a substitute. The application form will be accompanied by any references that have been received. Panel members should rate the candidate's application against the Person Specification, Job Description and experience required for the role. When the panel members have agreed whom they wish to interview they should inform HR, who will invite the candidates to the selection event. The Panel Chair is responsible for ensuring that justifiable and objective reasons are provided for any applicants not selected for interview. Short-listing information will be retained by HR for six months to ensure feedback is available at a later date if requested.

Candidates will be contacted inviting them to attend the selection event with details of the selection methods and directions on how to get to the School. Candidates will be asked to bring evidence of their qualifications, DBS information, overseas checks (where necessary), Right to Work in the UK evidence and confirmation of identity.

PANEL INTERVIEWS

To support the principle of equality and transparency, panel interviews should be the norm. One to one interviewing should only be conducted after consultation with HR and with the express permission of the Head.

The Head/Bursar or recruiting manager/head of department will normally act as the Chair of the interview panel. The purpose of this role is as follows:

- Welcome the candidates, explain the format and the interview and introduce panel members;
- Ensure the interviews keep to the allocated time;
- Co-ordinate the panel members and the order of questioning;
- Ensure that the candidates have an opportunity to ask questions of the panel members;

DURATION OF INTERVIEWS

The length of interview will vary between the types of post. However, the suggested time an interview should take is 30 minutes for a junior support staff post. For teaching posts, the usual process is a 30 minute interview with the Head or Deputy Head plus a member of the Leadership Team, followed by an Interview with the Deputy Head Academic and the appropriate Head of Department for approximately 30 minutes. The candidate will also usually be asked to teach a lesson which is observed by a senior member of the teaching staff. If appropriate, candidates may be given a tour of the school and the opportunity to meet other staff within the department.

SAFER RECRUITMENT INTERVIEW

All applicants selected for interview will undertake a safer recruitment interview which will last for approximately 30 minutes. This will ensure that the appropriate questions concerning pre-employment checks, gaps in employment history and compliance are carried out in accordance with government guidance, our policies and procedures and safer recruitment best practice. A Safer Recruitment in Education Interview Form will be completed and act as a record of the interview.

QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

All candidates should be asked questions covering, among others, the same core areas based on essential criteria as identified in the Person Specification. This is to ensure a fair and consistent procedure and to provide a defence in any claim of unfair selection. Panel members should ensure that each candidate is given equal opportunity to respond. Panel members should agree questions before the interview takes place to ensure consistency and to avoid repetition.

Generally, questions should be “open” questions, e.g. “Tell us about.....”; who/what/why/when, unless a specific confirmation of fact is required. Questions should be behaviourally based in order to elicit real examples as demonstrators of how the candidate does or does not meet the criteria required for the job.

SKYPE (or similar) INTERVIEWS

Occasionally an *initial* interview may be held with candidates who cannot attend the School site (e.g. overseas candidates). These will follow standard interview procedures and if the candidate is considered suitable, will normally be followed up with an interview and activities on site before an offer of employment is made.

MAKING A DECISION AFTER THE SELECTION EVENT

Summary of interview / presentation

The Panel members should take their own notes throughout the interview and/or presentation. After each interview the Panel will agree on their preferred candidate(s) to progress to offer stage. This information will be recorded and all notes retained by HR. These notes may be used to provide feedback to candidates. All other notes should be destroyed at the end of the process.

MAKING AN EMPLOYMENT OFFER

Conditional offers should be made by HR in agreement with the Head/Bursar or the recruiting manager, once the formal interview process has been completed. This offer will then be confirmed in writing by HR. The offer letter will state that it is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks being received and cleared. Any offer should be made with advice and guidance from HR.

Contracts of employment will be issued after the relevant pre-employment checks have been completed and confirmed and are generally issued once the candidate has begun employment with the School.

Candidates who are not selected after the selection event may be told verbally, but this should be confirmed in writing by HR.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

HR must ensure that the following pre-employment checks and processes have been successfully completed prior to the starting date for employees.

- The photographic identity of the applicant has been verified, through sight of a current passport or photo driver's licence. These should be copied, signed and retained.

- Any required qualification relevant to the position has been verified, preferably at interview by presentation of original certification. These should be copied and signed and retained with the recruitment documentation.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- A separate Barred List Check where required, e.g. when the DBS certificate is delayed.
- Eligibility to work in the UK.
- Driving licence verification should be gained for any staff required to drive as part of their employment.
- Regulatory and compliance checks such as Prohibition Orders which are in force at the time of making the offer and are appropriate to the role.
- Relevant overseas checks, including police and national teacher associations.
- Medical checks appropriate to the candidate's role with follow up to Occupational Health for advice and guidance where necessary.
- At least two references are considered satisfactory and follow up telephone calls have been made to check authenticity and clarify anything vague or ambiguous (as stated below).

No employee may start work at the School unless all required checks have been completed satisfactorily except for

- a. a delayed DBS check when a risk assessment should be made as to whether or not the employee may work under supervision; or
- b. a delayed overseas check where there is written evidence that a police check had been sought prior to the starting date.

SEEKING REFERENCES

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by Leighton Park. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children, where applicable. In accordance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, HR contacts each previous employer to verify the content of the reference and to confirm the applicant's suitability to work with children.

The Standards also require Leighton Park to ensure direct contact (usually by telephone) is made with the referees of any person applying for a post working with Boarders. The School goes beyond those standards by making direct inquiries with referees of applicants for all posts.

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

Referees should not be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE CHECK

Due to the nature of the work, Leighton Park will apply for Disclosure and Barring Service checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all prospective staff members, governors and volunteers. From 17th June 2013 onwards, new certificates will be applied for prospective staff members who are not registered with the Update Service and who do not hold a current DBS check.

For prospective staff members who are registered with the update service, written consent will be obtained to approach the Update Service to check and verify their registration.

For all positions, the school will request an enhanced disclosure from the DBS as stated in the School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The School may in exceptional circumstances make reasonable safeguards if an employee's DBS check is mislaid or delayed in the post and the School has been advised by a registered umbrella body that it contains no information. The School expects supply/temporary workers' agencies/contractors that are used by Leighton Park to register with the DBS on their own account and to provide written confirmation that all relevant checks have been carried out in respect of staff supplied to the school.

Proof of DBS registration will be required to be seen by the School before the School will commission services from any such organisation.

The School will prior to commencing work in the School independently verify the identity of staff supplied by such an agency and provide Child Protection Training for all staff and will check the original DBS certificate.

VOLUNTEERS AT LEIGHTON PARK SCHOOL

Volunteers, including governors will undergo checks commensurate with their work in the school and contact with students. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been appropriately checked be left unsupervised or be allowed to engage in regulated activity. All volunteers sign to confirm they have received, read, understood and agreed to follow a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and other key policies.

Supervised volunteers

Volunteers who work only in a supervised capacity and are not in regulated activity will undergo the safe recruitment checks appropriate to their role, in accordance with the school's risk assessment process and statutory guidance.

Contractors

The school checks the identity of all contractors working on site and requests DBS checks and barred list checks as required by statutory guidance. Contractors who have not undergone checks to the School's satisfaction will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

Visiting Speakers

Visiting speakers are required to undergo the safer recruitment check appropriate to their role and in accordance with the School's risk assessment process and statutory guidance. The School may also conduct internet searches in line with the Visiting Speaker Policy to establish speaker's suitability.

RETENTION AND SECURITY OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

Leighton Park will observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the issue and retention of disclosure information.

The School complies with the provisions of the DBS code of practice.

DBS documentation is retained on file for safeguarding audit purposes for six months or with the employee's consent for a longer period.

Medical questionnaires and other relevant information should be kept by the HR Department and seen only by School medical staff and referred if necessary, to the Head/Bursar

It is Leighton Park policy that all key staff with close links to students and boarding students in particular will have an updated DBS check every 3 years. This will include:

- All members of the Leadership Team
- Designated Safeguarding lead and Deputy Safeguarding leads
- Housemasters and their Deputies

- All Matrons and Nurses
- All House Tutors
- The Chair of Governors
- Adults living in a building which houses boarders and are employed by the School but excluding graduate residents.
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RETENTION OF RECORDS

If an applicant is appointed, the information on the recruitment file will transferred to their Personal File. For unsuccessful applications the documentation relating to the application will be collated and stored by HR and normally be confidentially destroyed by HR after six months.

Author: Matthew Judd, Head
Reviewer: Bruce Johnson, Governor
Sign off: Matthew Judd, Head
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V:\School Policies\Recruitment Policy
<http://www.leightonpark.com/About/Policies>

APPENDIX 1 – For use for the duration of the Pandemic

Addendum: REMOTE INTERVIEWS: [guidelines](#)

With a focus upon pandemic arrangements, the DfE has adjusted its guidelines for pre-appointment checks relating to DBS and Right to Work: the details are set down on the following page; but see also:

<https://www.isi.net/news/vetting-checks-during-social-distancing>

Either during the remote appointment video interview itself or at a later follow-up remote video interview the following needs to be done:

Interview tasks in red; follow up tasks in blue:

1. **Identity:** sight of the identity documents provided by the applicant: preferably passport and proofs of address as required for DBS checks: these documents should then be **scanned or photographed** by the applicant and sent to the interviewer by email attachment. A dated note should be made that the documents have been seen.
2. *These documents should then be used as if they were originals to apply for the DBS check: this must be enhanced.*
3. *These documents should also be used as if they were originals to carry out the Right to Work check.*
4. *Checks on any gaps in the application form or cv provided by the applicant: these checks should be carried out by a member of staff who is **safer recruitment trained***
5. If there are any **unexplained gaps** of three months or more then during the interview the applicant should be asked to explain them. A note should be made of any responses.
6. Any significant concerns about gaps should be referred for decision.
7. **Qualifications:** if any qualifications are required for the post, then any relevant certificates should be shown during the video interview. A dated note (with outline details of the qualification) should be made that the documents have been seen.
8. **Medical:** the applicant should be asked to send by email to the interviewer a brief statement which assures the College that there is no medical reason why the applicant may not be able to carry out the normal duties associated with the post.
9. ***References:** two references are still required, but one or both of these may be oral: a phone call with notes being taken will suffice: signed and dated. At least one of the references should include an opinion relating to the suitability of the applicant to work in an environment with children.*
10. **Overseas checks:** if the person to be appointed has spent three or more months overseas during the previous ten years, then the process of applying for police checks (usually done by the applicant themselves) must commence ahead of the starting date: the applicant must provide some form of written confirmation that the process has begun. This should be signalled if required during the video interview.
11. *On the first day attending in the school itself, **all original documents** should be brought for copying for the relevant staff file.*
12. *Until the DBS arrives, a risk assessment (renewed fortnightly) must be put into operation: this will simply state that the person concerned poses no risk to children through remote working or there being no pupils on campus and so needs no active safeguarding supervision.*

DBS ID Checks

Due to current measures that have been put in place as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, we're aware that organisations are having difficulty following the DBS ID checking guidance.

Currently, when validating ID documents, it is best practice to carry the examination out face-to-face with a live video link as an alternative method. Under the current guidance, the ID checker must be in physical possession of the original documents so they can be checked for indicators of fraud.

As the public is being advised to work from home where possible, this is causing difficulties in receiving the physical documents and is delaying applications, and in some cases, preventing applications from being submitted.

To ensure that the necessary DBS checks can still be carried out, the DBS ID checking guidance will be changed for a temporary period.

The change will enable:

- ID documents to be viewed over video link
- scanned images to be used in advance of the DBS check being submitted

Please note, the change should only be implemented for urgent cases where it is not possible to follow the normal identity checking guidelines. The applicant must present the original versions of these documents when they first attend their employment or volunteering role.

The change will come into effect from today, 24 March 2020.

Right to Work Checks

Right to work checks have been temporarily adjusted due to coronavirus (COVID-19). This is to make it easier for employers to carry them out.

As of 30th March 2020 the following temporary changes have been made:

- checks can now be carried out over video calls
- job applicants and existing workers can send scanned documents or a photo of documents for checks using email or a mobile app, rather than sending originals
- employers should use the [Employer Checking Service](#) if a prospective or existing employee cannot provide any of the accepted documents

Checks continue to be necessary and you must continue to check the prescribed documents listed in [right to work checks: an employer's guide](#). It remains an offence to knowingly employ anyone who does not have the right to work in the UK.

Because of COVID-19, some individuals may be unable to evidence their right to work.

During this period, you must take extra care to ensure no-one is discriminated against as a job applicant or employee because they are unable to show you their documents.

For more information, please see the [code of practice for employers: avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working](#).