



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 the Leighton Park safer 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 and 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.

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, the authorisation for the role must come from by the Head or Bursar. In addition, the following information must also be prepared and authorised:

- 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 that set 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 of commitment to safeguarding and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion;
- 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.

Leighton Park intends to take up references from all shortlisted candidates before interview.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process, HR will consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the School may want to explore with the applicant at interview.

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

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 with a member of HR staff, all of whom are Safer Recruitment trained. This interview 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.

ONLINE 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 and/or Section 128 direction checks which are in force at the time of making the offer and are appropriate to the role. For clarity, this applies to both external and internal candidates.
- 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 three references 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 has been sought prior to the starting date.

REFERENCES

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of three 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.

All Teaching posts will be required to provide details of referees to cover the entire past 10 years career history, in addition to details of ALL posts carried out in an Educational setting.

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 independently verify the identity of staff supplied by such an agency prior to them commencing work, 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 must 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 checks 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.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

If an applicant is appointed, the information on the recruitment file will be 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.

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