



HILBRE HIGH SCHOOL HUMANITIES COLLEGE

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Author:
Date to be reviewed:

Emma Harrison
September 2025

INTRODUCTION:

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Hilbre High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our safeguarding responsibilities inform our practices throughout the recruitment and selection process. We have given careful consideration and attention to the guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education':

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies.
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children.
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children.
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance, including the recommendations of the DfE.
- To ensure 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.

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 policies 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 Hilbre High School.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to:

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

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Head of School, Deputy Headteacher: Curriculum, the School Business Manager and other Managers 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.
- 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 Board of Trustees has delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to lead in all appointments. School Trustees may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with the Headteacher.

The school will ensure that at least one member of the appointment panel has successfully completed Safer Recruitment Training. This member will be part of the whole recruitment process.

The following procedures and practices are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff:

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.

All advertisements for all posts will clearly stipulate the stance adopted by the school by the inclusion of the following Safeguarding Statement:

“Hilbre High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the GDPR.

Application Forms, Job Descriptions and Person Specifications:

Prospective applicants are supplied with the following:

- Application Form;
- Job Description;
- Person Specification;
- Copies of the Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding policies.

Hilbre High School uses its own 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. CVs will not be accepted.

A Job Description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must 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.

SHORTLISTING:

At least two people should carry out the shortlisting exercise.

Candidates will be shortlisted against the Person Specification for the post using the short listing proforma (Appendix 1). Gaps in employment should be noted on this form.

After shortlisting has been carried out, shortlisted candidates will be sent a self-declaration form. This will ask questions 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. 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.

At this point, the school will also carry out checks to establish the digital footprint of an applicant and may explore this during interview, if appropriate.

REFERENCES:

- Two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the procedure. This applies to all external appointments.
- For internal applicants, a reference from the persons' direct line manager will be requested. The Headteacher will not be required to complete a reference.
- The school does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.
- We will secure a reference from the relevant employment from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children).
- References will be sought directly from the referee, and, where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- All references must be written directly to the Headteacher, and we will not accept open references (e.g. to whom it may concern).
- We will ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source.
- We will contact referrers to verify any information which requires further information or any discrepancies.
- Referees will not be asked about the applicant's health or disability unless the applicant has been offered a job.

Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people.
- The candidate's suitability for the post.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

INTERVIEWS:

There will be a face-to-face interview, wherever possible, 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.

Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the interviewers; and
- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

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.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Qualifications required are the ones specified in the essential criteria on the person specification. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken.

It is good practice to have a Trustee on the panel, and this always be the case for senior posts.

The scoring system will be agreed by the panel before the interview.

EMPLOYMENT CHECKS:

An offer of appointment will be conditional and all successful candidates will be required to:

- Provide proof of identity.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS certificate. If a DBS is returned with notification of a disclosure that the candidate has not declared, the school reserves the right to withdraw the offer of employment. Successful applicants will only be allowed to commence employment once in receipt of the original Enhanced DBS and Barring List Certificate. This must be made available to school.
- Provide proof of professional status (QTS/QTLS/Teacher reference Number TRN number).
- Provide original certificates of qualifications of those specified in the essential criteria on the person specification.
- Complete a confidential health questionnaire. All successful candidates will complete a medical clearance form to be scrutinised by the HR manager. This may be passed to Occupational Health. All issues arising from the medical clearance will be risk assessed.
- Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment.

In addition, for all teaching staff checks will be made by the school Teaching Regulation Agency.

Any member of staff in a management position, including Trustees, will also have to undergo Section 128 checks, in addition to having an Enhanced DBS. This will be recorded on the Single Central Register (SCR).

We will ensure that new staff are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher. If appropriate, we may carry out further checks if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, e.g. if there is a break in teaching employment in another country.

All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing.
- Documented and retained on the personnel file.
- Recorded on the school's SCR.
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received.

A firm offer of appointment will only be provided when we are in receipt of all checks of employment are completed.

New members of staff will not be able to commence employment at Hilbre until an Enhanced DBS certificate has been received by the school.

Dave White, Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding) will oversee and maintain a constant vigilance with all matters relating to the SCR, and ensure we are fully compliant at all times. The Trustee linked to safeguarding will also review and sign off the SCR on a termly basis.

INDUCTION:

All newly appointed staff will, either prior to or at the point of taking up the post, undergo a programme of induction appropriate for their post. The induction will specifically address issues concerning the safeguarding of children and young people as well as matters directly related to the operation of the post.

SUPPLY STAFF:

All supply agency staff will have an Enhanced DBS check carried out by the agency. The supply agency will provide the school with the DBS number.

PGCE STUDENTS/VOLUNTEERS:

All ITT students and volunteers or anybody undertaking work experience on site will have an Enhanced DBS clearance before they start. The school must have seen a copy of this. The only exception to this is work experience students who are still at school/college studying Level 2/3 qualifications.

Recruitment Flowchart:

1. Assistant Headteacher (T&L)/School Business Manager to ensure there is Job Description and Person Specification. Advert written.
2. PA to Assistant Headteacher (T&L) to arrange adverts in suitable publications/websites.
3. Assistant Headteacher (T&L)/School Business Manager to inform PA of interview date and panel members/tour, etc. Shortlisters agreed.
4. PA to liaise with HR/Cover Manager about staffing requirement for interview panel.
5. PA to invite a Trustee, if applicable.
6. PA to send out confirmation of receipt for applications received electronically.
7. Job advert closes.
8. PA to email shortlisting form and to distribute the applications to personnel responsible for shortlisting (there should be at least 2 members of staff who shortlist).
9. Shortlister informs PA of names on the shortlist.
10. PA sends out self-declaration to all shortlisted candidates.
11. Digital Marketing Manager to carry out online search out of all shortlisted candidates. This is to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publically available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Appendix 5 should be used. This should be returned to the PA prior to interview.
12. For teaching appointments, Assistant Headteacher (T&L) will liaise with the appropriate Progress Leaders to ascertain what the candidates will be teaching, ie. lesson title, year group/set, rooming requirements/name of person conducting the tour.
13. PA to invite candidates for interview (initially by telephone and follow up letter/e-mail).
14. PA to start to ask for references.
15. Interview takes place; candidates are asked to sign original documentation (application form and self-declaration form).
16. Headteacher (or Trustee) to offer job (conditional upon receipt of relevant documentation/references if not received).
17. Assistant Headteacher (T&L) or lead interviewer completes the green 'Appointment Form' and passes to HR/Cover Manager.
18. School Business Manager to give HR/Cover Manager the 'Contract Set Up' Form, and passes this to HR/Cover Manager.
19. HR/Cover Manager to issue a letter to new starter providing a conditional or unconditional offer depending on documentation already available.
20. HR/Cover Manager to undertake all checks on the 'Verification of Identity' form and cross reference with application form.
21. HR/Cover Manager to send the following forms to payroll:
 - Application form.
 - Certificate of Identity form.
 - HRMC starter form.
 - Bank Details form.
 - DBS Certificate (if available at this stage).
 - Copy of any teaching qualifications (Degree, PGCE, QTS/QTLS Certificate).
 - Contract Set Up form.
22. HR/Cover Manager to set the new starter up on SIMS/Edulink.

23. HR/Cover Manager to liaise with Network Manager, Office Manager, Caretaker, DSL and Pastoral Admin (Year 9) and VPA technician with regards to setting up ICT access arrangements, inVentry setup, MyConcern setup, staff photo, staff tray, fob and lunch card.
24. HR/Cover Manager (in their absence PA to Assistant Headteacher T&L) to issue new starter pack, which will include:
- Staff handbook.
 - Induction checklist/booklet.
 - Registration of pecuniary interest form.
 - Responsible use of ICT form.
 - Social Networking form.
 - Health and Safety Information.
 - Staff data collection sheet.

If a member of staff joins the school in September, then the PA to Assistant Headteacher will issue:

- Staff handbook.
 - Registration of pecuniary interest form.
 - Responsible use of ICT form.
 - Social Networking form.
25. HR/Cover Manager to set up all new starters on The National College.

Pre-Appointment Checklist

Employee Name: _____

Staff Code: _____

For all employees the following checks must be undertaken as part of the safer recruitment process.

Type of check	Completed	Comments
Application form - original signed		
Self-declaration - original signed		
Reference 1		
Reference 2		
Check of qualifications		
Proof of QTS (teachers only)		
Proof of PGCE		
*Prohibition from Teaching Check, including teachers from EEA countries		
Section 128 check for employees appointed to a management post in an Academy		
Identity check as per 'certification of verification of identity form'		
Enhanced DBS check/original certificate seen		
Barred list check		
SCR online updated		
Check to establish the person's right to work in the UK (passport)		
Set up on SIMS/other electronic systems		
Copy of passport uploaded to SIMs		
Medical clearance		
Further checks on individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK		
Notification of Appointment (JDO to initially complete and send to EMI to send to LA)		
Conditional/Unconditional appointment letter sent		
Request ICT/Email logins/ID badge/InVentry		
Register to National College		

Once all the checks have been made and appropriate clearance received, the safer recruitment process requires the information to be input to the school's Single Central Record.

Upon commencement of employment:

Type of check	Requested	Date
Safeguarding training carried out with DWH		
DBS checked by DWH		
Prevent & Safeguarding training Completed via National College		
Health and Safety Induction with JDO		
Induction Form completed and returned to EMI/DFE		
Staff handbook, register of pecuniary interest, responsible use of ICT form and Social Networking forms		

Appendix 1



HILBRE HIGH SCHOOL SHORTLISTING PROFORMA	
Post Title:	Closing Date:
Name of Person Shortlisting:	Reference Number:

Consider each of the candidates against the criteria set out in the Person Specification and score them from 0 to 3 for each element of the shortlisting process, as appropriate:

3 - Meets All Criteria 2 - Meets Most Criteria 1 - Meets Some Criteria 0 - Does Not Meet Criteria/No evidence supplied
 E = Essential D = Desirable

Name of Candidate	Qualifications		Experience		Knowledge and Skills		Personal Qualities/Other		Total		Interview Y / N
	E	D	E	D	E	D	E	D	E	D	

Are there any inconsistencies or noticeable gaps in employment for any candidate? Do you have any other concerns about any of the candidates? If yes, please provide details below.

Please return the completed pro-forma, together with the original applications to Debbie Fegan.

Signed:	Date:
Name:	Job Title:

Appendix 2

'NAME OF POSITION' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, DATE



Candidate: _____

Interviewer: _____

Asked By:	Question	Response	Weighting	Score
	1.			
	2. Safeguarding Question			
	3. Any questions for the panel?			
	4. Are you still a firm candidate for the position?			
TOTAL SCORE				

Appendix 3

Pre-employment Health Questionnaire



Hilbre High is committed to the Health and Safety of its staff. As part of this commitment, a Pre-employment Health Questionnaire is required to be completed by all staff upon receipt of a conditional job offer. Your appointment is subject to an assessment of your fitness to undertake the role you have been appointed to.

The purpose of the health assessment is:

- To identify any health conditions or disabilities that may make your ability to carry out the proposed job difficult or unsafe for you or others.
- To enable the school to assess what reasonable adjustments may be needed to enable you to fulfil the role if you have a health condition or disability. If you are appointed, this information will be held on your personnel file. This data may be shared with nominated individuals within the school; this will be kept to a minimum.

This short questionnaire is designed so that you do not have to give any confidential details about your health to the school. Read the questions carefully. In most cases the questionnaire itself will be sufficient for the school to confirm medical suitability for employment in the proposed occupation. However, in rare instances, the school may need to make further enquiries of an individual, or may request that a candidate undergo a medical examination.

Read all the questions carefully. Please refer to the Job Description.

You should tick either the 'yes' or 'no' box, sign and date the statement and return the form to schooloffice@hilbre.wirral.sch.uk

If you answer 'yes', you may be required to complete a full medical questionnaire, which will only be seen by nurses or doctors employed by our Occupational Health provider.

If you have answered 'yes' and you do not wish to provide further details, we will refer you directly to our Occupational Health provider. **Please note this could delay the start date of your employment.**



Pre-employment Health Questionnaire

Full Name	
Date of Birth	
Job Title	

1. Do you have any physical or mental health condition or disability that affects your ability to undertake your work effectively?
Yes No

If you have answered 'yes' and are comfortable to, please provide further details, including any reasonable adjustments:

2. Are you currently certified as unfit to work?
Yes No

If you have answered yes, please provide a GP's fit note

3. Are you currently receiving advice or treatment from your General Practitioner or a Medical Specialist for any condition that may require lengthy or frequent absences from work, or alternatively waiting to see one for the same reason?
Yes No

If you have answered 'yes' and are comfortable to, please provide further details, including any reasonable adjustments.

Please read this statement carefully before signing:

The above answers are true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if, after commencing employment with the school, it is subsequently shown that I have given false or misleading information I could be subject to disciplinary proceedings which may result in dismissal. I will advise the school if my health changes during the course of my employment.

Signature	
Date	

If you complete the form electronically and submit via e-mail, please type in your name into the signature box above to indicate that you have read and agree to the declaration.

E-mail Address	
Preferred Contact Number	
Alternative Contact Number	

Please provide if you have answered 'yes' to one or more of the questions above as consent for Occupational Health to contact you by phone/e-mail.

Appendix 4

Statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders:

The school will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment based on conviction or other details disclosed. The school makes appointment decisions based on merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar them from employment with the school. Each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria.

All positions within the school are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must, therefore, declare all previous convictions and cautions, including those which would normally be considered "spent" except those received for an offence committed in the United Kingdom if it has been filtered in accordance with the DBS filtering rules.

A failure to disclose a previous conviction (which should be declared) may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose 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.

It is unlawful for the school to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the school.

The school will make a report to the Police and/or the DBS if:

- It receives an application from a barred person;
- it is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

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; and
- 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 applicant.

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 the following offences:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence; or 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.

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.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the school may, where practicable and at its discretion, 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 DBS on the use of disclosure information.

In particular, the school will:

- Store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted;
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary, and for a maximum of six months;
- 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 DBS and the recruitment decision taken;
- ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding; and prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information without the express permission of the individual to whom the disclosure relates.

If a DBS Certificate reveals any convictions, the person concerned will be invited to attend an interview with the Headteacher to discuss the conviction(s) and circumstances. Following this meeting, a risk assessment will be carried out and a decision made and communicated back to the person concerned. For safer recruitment purposes, until this decision has been made the applicant should not commence employment.



Hilbre High School
Online Search Record

Role shortlisted for:	
Searcher name:	
Date and time of online search:	

SEARCH 1:

Google search the following terms, looking at the first page of results:

- ‘Candidate name’
- ‘Candidate name’ + ‘current school/employment’
- ‘Candidate name’ + ‘previous school/employment’
- ‘Candidate name’ + ‘educational institution’
- ‘Candidate name’ + ‘job title’

SEARCH 2

The candidate’s name should be into the search function of the following websites:

- LinkedIn
- Twitter (checked the top 10 results)
- Facebook (checked the top 10 results)
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Their current school’s website

Only record information that suggests the candidate:

- Is unqualified for the role
- Poses a potential safeguarding risk
- Risks damaging the reputation of your school/trust
- **Don’t** include any irrelevant personal information

Candidate name:	Concerns Raised:
