

PLASHET SCHOOL



Working together to promote & celebrate achievement

Safer Recruitment Policy

Applicable from 3rd December 2021

Signed:

Handwritten signature of Irene Papadopolou in black ink.

Chair of Governors

Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our young women. Plashet School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This is to be achieved through effective recruitment and retention of competent, motivated staff members who are suited to, and competent in their roles.

Plashet School recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce comprising different backgrounds, skills and abilities. As such it is committed to a recruitment and selection process that is systematic, efficient, effective and equal. In doing so, it upholds its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants on grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation or identity, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

Plashet School emphasises the importance of safeguarding the children in our care and this policy should be read in conjunction with the school Safeguarding Policy. 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 hereafter) in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSiE hereafter). In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils, the school is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy and practice.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the practice of safe recruitment of staff appointed to Plashet School. It also sets out the minimum requirements to:

1. attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
2. deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
3. identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.
4. ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in KCSiE September 2021 Part 3 and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
5. ensure that Plashet School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

This policy covers the recruitment and selection process from the planning and advertising of vacancies through to appointment and induction. It is intended as a guide for all staff involved in the recruitment and selection process and follows best practice guidance from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and KCSiE. We aim to conduct all recruitment and selection of staff in a professional, timely and responsive manner.

Plashet 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.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, then they are required to declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

This policy applies to all people who carry out work at Plashet School, whether paid, voluntary, supplied by an agency or under a service term agreement.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board of the school has the responsibility to ensure that effective policies and procedures are in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers and to monitor the school's compliance with them.

The Head Teacher, Leadership Team and HR Officer involved in recruitment have the responsibility to:

1. ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out;
2. monitor contractors' and agencies compliance with our policy and legislative requirements;
3. to promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

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

The Governing Board of the school has delegated to the Head Teacher the responsibility to lead and manage all recruitment and make final decisions on appointments. However, the Governors may be consulted and involved in the process as appropriate and always when appointing members of the Leadership Team.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

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

1. Vacancy, Job Description and Person Specification

Once a vacancy is identified a Job Description and Person Specification are written or reviewed and updated as necessary. The ideal start date is identified and the recruitment timetable is planned out as far as is practicably possible, working backwards from this date.

2. Advertising

Vacancies at Plashet are advertised in a variety of media: the local and national press and online. We also use recruitment agencies where necessary. All advertisements we publish state: *Plashet School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure via the DBS.*

Where we use employment agencies we obtain written confirmation from them that they have carried out all the appropriate checks on staff supplied and that those are satisfactory.

The Vacancies section of our website, states that we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff to share this commitment. A link is provided to our Safeguarding Policy. We also state here that successful applicants will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced check, previously known as a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, where we are legally entitled to do so.

The updated Job Description and Person Specification are available on the website along with the job advertisement and relevant Newham application form.

3. Application Form

All candidates are required to complete in full and sign the standard Newham application form. We require information on full academic and employment history; suitability for the role; two referees; information about facilities for disabled applicants; declaration about Criminal Record Checks and the DBS Children's Barred List; a declaration of eligibility to work in the UK. We also state here that the provision of any 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/or the DBS.

With the application form we also provide "Explanatory Notes" to facilitate the completion of the form correctly and to provide the necessary legal information. We also explain clearly the pre-appointment checks upon which any offer of appointment is conditional.

Upon receipt each application is checked by the HR Officer for anomalies, discrepancies and any unexplained gaps in employment history to be addressed, before shortlisting takes place. Applications are shortlisted by a panel which usually comprises the Head Teacher, member of the LT with line management responsibility for the subject/area and the relevant Curriculum/Subject Leader or Support Staff line manager for the area.

4. References

Shortlisted candidates' references are taken up immediately. References are sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate are never accepted. We do not accept open references ('To Whom it may concern etc.) or those from relatives or those writing solely in the capacity of friend.

On receipt of references the information provided is checked for accuracy against the information that has been provided by the applicant on their application form. Any discrepancies or areas of concern will be taken up with the applicant at interview where possible. We also contact the referee by telephone to verify the reference provided if there are discrepancies.

In addition, the school reserves the right to obtain such formal or informal background information about the applicant as is reasonable in the circumstances to determine whether they are suitable to work at the school. This will include internet and social media searches.

5. Interviews

DfE Safeguarding guidance recommends that the selection process for people who are applying to work with children should always include a face-to-face interview, even if there is only one candidate.

All candidates are asked to bring with them photographic proof of their identity, right to work in the UK and their qualifications. Only original documents are accepted and photocopies of these are taken and retained by the school. All documentation is required to be in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and the DBS Code of Practice Regulations. Such documents for subsequently unsuccessful applicants will be destroyed at the end of the recruitment process.

Applicants for teaching roles are invited to attend a selection day. For other roles we hold interviews and tours of the school. The teaching candidates are also given a tour of the

school by students and are asked to teach a lesson, for which they have been given the topic and outline beforehand, whilst being observed.

All formal interviews cover the applicant's suitability for the role and suitability to work with children, exploring any gaps or anomalies in the application form and ensuring safeguarding criteria are met. At least one member of the interviewing panel will have had safer recruitment training and it is best practice for this training to be updated on a regular cycle to ensure that knowledge is up to date (every 3 years is the suggested cycle). Candidates will always be required to:

- explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment or significant periods of time working or living abroad;
- explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the interviewers;
- declare any information that is likely to appear on an Enhanced DBS disclosure;
- demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

Plasnet interview panels should explore issues relating to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including:

- Motivation to work with and ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people.
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours and attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline. What is said at the interview can form part of a contract of employment.

Interview notes are collated, along with feedback from other teachers and colleagues who have met the candidate. The selection panel decides on the successful applicant.

The successful applicant is contacted by the LT line manager or area manager by telephone and unsuccessful applicants are then telephoned. Any unsuccessful applicant who requests feedback will be given verbal feedback.

6. Offer of Appointment

A Conditional Offer of Appointment is made in writing to the successful candidate: the offer is made subject to:

1. Production of proof of eligibility to work in the UK.
2. Receipt of at least two references satisfactory to the school (if these have not already been received).
3. Verification of identity and qualifications including professional Qualified Teacher Status where applicable.
4. A Barred list check.
5. Satisfactory DBS Certificate at the enhanced level.
6. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas in the previous five years, such checks and confirmation as the school may require in accordance with the statutory guidance.
7. A satisfactory check of relevant regulatory body sanctions, for example Prohibition Orders (for both teaching and management roles) as imposed by the Department.
8. A probationary period of one year for teaching.
9. Medical fitness for the role and duties.
10. The entries on the application form proving to be complete and accurate.

7. Starting Employment

Upon starting employment, the Induction Programme for new staff includes:

1. Point of contact (DSL or DDSL) for all safeguarding concerns within the school.
2. Policies and procedures to include:
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education
 - Staff Code of Conduct
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Fire Procedures
3. Online training in the following as a minimum:
 - Child Protection in Education
 - The Prevent Duty
 - Child Exploitation
 - FGM Awareness
 - Online Safety

8. Record Keeping – the Single Central Register.

All required employee information is recorded on the Staff Appointment Checklist. The information on these sheets is collated onto the school's Single Central Register – a record of recruitment and vetting checks. Details are kept on all staff who are employed to work at the school; all others who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, governors and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for students but who are not staff members, e.g. a specialist sports coach, peripatetic staff and agency/cover staff.

Governors

Governors are subject to an enhanced DBS check as well as confirmation of identity.

Supply Staff

For the purposes of creating the record of checks for supply staff provided through a supply agency, the school will request written confirmation from the supply agency that it has satisfactorily completed all relevant checks. Access to the check is only required where there is information contained in the Enhanced DBS Disclosure. Information disclosed as part of an Enhanced DBS Disclosure will be treated as confidential. Identity checks will be carried out by Plashet School to confirm that the individual arriving at the school is the individual that the agency has referred.

Peripatetic Staff

For the purposes of creating the record of checks for peripatetic staff (for music, sports) the school will require all necessary checks and DBS requirements are fulfilled.

Contractors

All contractors directly engaged by the school are expected to show a valid DBS certificate to allow the school to record this along with their details on a record sheet. Those contractors engaged on the school's behalf by London Borough of Newham are vetted centrally by LBN.

Contractors Falling Under IR35

Because there is a payroll component for these service providers we require the following pieces of information/checks: DBS, MP1 Form and evidence of right to work.

Visiting Speakers

The Prevent Duty Guidance requires the School to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by students, are suitable and appropriately supervised.

The School is not permitted to obtain a DBS disclosure or Children's Barred List information on any visiting speaker who does not engage in regulated activity at the School or perform any other regular duties for or on behalf of the School.

All visiting speakers will be subject to the School's usual visitors signing in protocol. This will include signing in and out at Reception, the wearing of a visitor's badge at all times and being escorted by a fully vetted member of staff between appointments.

The School will also obtain such formal or informal background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and/or permit a speaker to attend the School. In doing so the School will always have regard to the Prevent Duty Guidance and the definition of "extremism" set out in KCSIE which states:

"Extremism" is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations."

In fulfilling its Prevent Duty obligations the School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age.

Volunteers

The School will request an Enhanced DBS on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with students at or on behalf of the School (the definition of regulated activity set out above will be applied to all volunteers) for example our assembly speakers.

Under no circumstances will the School permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with students.

It is the School's policy that a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with the School for three consecutive months or more. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with the School on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits the School to obtain up-to-date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

In addition, the School will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source; and an informal safer recruitment interview.

Record Retention/Data Protection

The School is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, the School will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process.

This documentation will be retained by the School for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the School. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the Head Teacher's office in locked and secure cabinets.

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with School activities.

Plasht School will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 3 months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (i.e. shredded). The 3-month retention period is in accordance with GDPR.

Appendix A

Pre-Employment Checks

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA) was revised following implementation of change to the ROA included in the Legal Aid and Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. As of May 2013, amendments made to the Exceptions Order of the ROA resulted in certain old and minor cautions and spent convictions not being subject to disclosure or appearing on a standard or enhanced DBS disclosure certificate.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to students. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' **must be** declared when applying for any position at Plaset School.

The London Borough of Newham has the following wording in its application forms:

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

All posts involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013 & 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected'. These are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the Ministry of Justice website or see: www.nacro.org.uk

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of all unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview. You may be asked for further information about your criminal history during the recruitment process. If your application is successful, this self-disclosure information will be checked against information from the Disclosure & Barring Service before your appointment is confirmed.

Disclosure and Barring Service Check (Now DBS but formerly known as CRB Disclosure)

The School applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) in respect of all positions at the School which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended). The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information.

It is the Schools policy that the DBS disclosure **must be** obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees/applicants should bring their original Certificate to the Human Resources Officer.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status.

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the school will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS identity checking guidelines. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Medical Fitness

The School is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School, **after** an offer of employment has been made but **before** the appointment can be confirmed.

All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire via the PAM service purchased by the school.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

Overseas checks

The School, in accordance with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) will, if applicable, sponsor new foreign nationals (see Certificate of Sponsorship section).

In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a criminal records check from the relevant country. The applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by the School.

Appendix B

Application and Recruitment Process Information and Explanatory Notes

1. Candidates should submit a Letter of Application and a fully completed and signed Application Form. If you would like to submit a CV, you may do so but this will not be accepted or processed in isolation.
2. Your Letter of Application should state the reasons why you are applying for the role and explain your suitability for the role with particular reference to the Job Description and Person Specification.
3. Candidates should be aware that all posts in the school involve responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Please see the Job Description for the post.
4. The successful applicant will be required to complete an application for a Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Certificate (DBS), previously known as a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Further information on Criminal Record checks is given in Section 7 of the Application Form.
5. We will seek references on shortlisted candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications.
6. If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired) and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children, although they may, where appropriate, answer "not applicable" if your duties have not brought you into contact with children or young persons.
7. You should be aware that provision of 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/or the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Conditional Offer of Appointment – Pre-Appointment Checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

1. Production of proof of eligibility to work in the UK
2. Receipt of at least two references satisfactory to the school (if these have not already been received).
3. Verification of identity and qualifications.
4. A check of the DBS children's Barred List.
5. A satisfactory DBS Certificate at the enhanced level.
6. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas in the previous five years, such checks and confirmation as the school may require in accordance with the statutory guidance.
7. A satisfactory check of relevant regulatory body sanctions, for example Prohibition Orders (for both teaching and management roles) as imposed by the Department of Education.
8. A probationary period of one year for teaching.
9. Medical fitness for the role and duties.
10. The entries on the application form proving to be complete and accurate.

Appendix C

Invite to Interview Letter

Dear,

Post of: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Further to your application for the above post, I am pleased to confirm that you have been shortlisted for interview.

The interview will take place on XXXXX at XXXXXXXXX. Please arrive at XXXXXX so that we can process your documents (see below). I would be grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible, if you are able to attend the interview, by telephoning the school on 020 8471 2418 and asking for me, Miss Noreen Malik or by replying to the following email address recruitment@plashet.newham.sch.uk. Please find attached to this email the schedule for your interview day.

I should like to remind you that, in order to meet safer recruitment requirements, references will be taken prior to the interview.

Please bring the following ID documents with you:

- Evidence of your right to work in the UK.
- Passport and/or a Naturalisation Certificate (Please note that we can no longer accept proof of 'indefinite leave to remain in the UK' in an expired passport; you **must** have a biometric residence permit **and** a valid passport).
- Formal proof of your National Insurance number – this should be a P45 or P60 or a recent Government Agency letter (an NI card is not acceptable).
- A Driving Licence if you have one.
- A bank statement or utility bill showing your home address and dated within three months of your interview date.
- If you hold a current DBS certificate, please bring this with you.
- Your degree certificate and degree transcript (if applicable).
- GCSE Certificates for Maths, English and Science as well as any other subject you may have taken.
- A level Certificates.
- Skills Test Certificates in Numeracy and Literacy.

I remind you that Plashet School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

I look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

Noreen Malik
HR Officer