



The GORSE Academies Trust: Safer Recruitment Policy

Designated Teacher: Director of Human Resources (HR)
Reviewed by: Governors Policy Committee
Date: March 2023
Version: 1.1

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the duties and responsibilities of all staff at The GORSE Academies Trust (TGAT) in relation to recruiting and vetting staff, contractors, or volunteers and for maintaining a safe learning environment, including the process for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff or visitors. ('For the purpose of this policy, and for the avoidance of doubt, the term 'staff' also includes trainee teachers on a GORSE school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route').
- 1.2 We will comply with Safer Recruitment best practice, some of which is underpinned by legislation including the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Education Act 2002 s157 (amended 2011, s5141), Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (Update – January 2021 Post EU Exit), Part 3. We have a duty to ensure that all supply agencies and many contractors supplying services to the school also use Safer Recruitment techniques.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with:
- TGAT Child Protection Policy
 - TGAT Dealing with Allegations Against Adults Policy
 - TGAT Single Equality Policy
 - TGAT Whistleblowing Policy
 - TGAT Recruitment and Selection Policy

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 ***“The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.”*** ('For the purpose of this policy, and for the avoidance of doubt, the term 'staff' also includes trainee teachers on a GORSE school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route').
- 2.2 The statement above should be included in:
- Publicity materials
 - Recruitment websites
 - Advertisements
 - Candidate information packs
 - Person specifications
 - Job descriptions
 - Competency frameworks
 - Induction training

3. CONTEXT

- 3.1 Experience shows the importance of organisations, that provide services to students, operating recruitment and selection procedures and other Human Resources (HR) management processes that help deter, reject, or identify people who might pose a risk of harm or abuse students, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Making safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students is an integral factor and an essential part of creating safe environments for students.
- 3.2 The measures described in this policy will be applied in relation to everyone who works within the Trust and who are involved in teaching, training, instructing, caring or supervising students, and

including those who may not have direct contact with students as a result of their job, but nevertheless will be seen as safe, trustworthy and a regular presence in the setting. This includes workers not on the payroll, e.g. staff employed by contractors and unpaid volunteers. ('For the purpose of this policy, and for the avoidance of doubt, the term 'staff' also includes trainee teachers on a GORSE school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route').

- 3.3 This policy is not a comprehensive guide to recruitment and selection or employment issues. It does not cover all the issues relevant to that subject. It is not a substitute for training in those areas, or in interviewing and assessment techniques. Staff who recruit and select staff and volunteers will need appropriate training as well as access to support and advice from HR to ensure their practice satisfies the requirements of employment law. ('For the purpose of this policy, and for the avoidance of doubt, the term 'staff' also includes trainee teachers on a GORSE school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route').

4. SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

- 4.1 Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) requires that the Principal and at least one governor must have completed the Safer Recruitment Consortium (SRC) Safer Recruitment training (<http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/>). Contact Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership for further information on 0113 3786018.
- 4.2 Every interview panel for a school-based post must include at least one member with the SRC certificate.

5. ELEMENTS OF SAFER RECRUITMENT

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 If there is any reason to believe that an individual is barred, it is an offence to allow the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity. There are penalties of up to five years in prison if a barred individual is convicted of attempting to engage or engaging in such work. (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, Part 3).
- 5.1.2 Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child/student protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants. Main elements of the process include:
- Ensuring the job description makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students
 - Ensuring that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with students
 - Obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies
 - Obtaining independent references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns
 - A face-to-face interview, except in exceptional circumstances, that explores the candidate's suitability to work with students as well as their suitability for the post
 - Verifying the successful applicant's identity
 - Verifying that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed

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- Checking previous employment history and experience
 - Verifying they have the health and physical capacity for the job
 - Checking that an applicant has the right to work in the UK
 - An Enhanced Disclosure via the Disclosure and Barring Service – (DBS)
- 5.1.3 N.B. It is important not to rely solely on criminal record and Children’s Barred List (List 99) checks to screen out unsuitable applicants. Those checks are an essential safeguard, but they will only pick up those abusers who have been convicted, or have come to the attention of the police, or who have been listed.
- 5.1.4 The checklist contained within the accompany guidance document for the Recruitment and Selection Policy provides a convenient way of signing off each stage of the process and can be filed as a permanent record at the end of the process. Completion of this checklist will fulfil the statutory requirement to maintain a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been undertaken as specified in this guidance.
- 5.1.5 Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted alone. Completion of job applications will be the only method for consideration of a position within the Trust.

5.2 Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Statement

- 5.2.1 As an organisation assessing applicants’ suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order using criminal checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), we comply fully with the [code of practice](#) and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record based on a conviction or other information revealed.
- 5.2.2 We are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of our services, regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability, or offending background.
- 5.2.3 This policy on safer recruitment and the statement of recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- 5.2.4 We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.
- 5.2.5 A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts, and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- 5.2.6 Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we request that all applicants called for interview, provide details of their criminal record. We request that the declaration form (within the application pack) is completed and that all job applicants are asked to detail any criminal convictions which are not ‘spent’ under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (updated 2013 & 2020).
- 5.2.7 Where an appointment is subject to Enhanced Disclosure you should also provide details of any police enquiries undertaken following allegations against you which may have a bearing on your suitability for this post.
- 5.2.8 At interview, or in a separate discussion, we will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.
- 5.2.9 We make every subject of a DBS disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS [code of practice](#)

and make a copy available on request.

- 5.2.10 We undertake to ensure that any matter revealed in a disclosure is discussed with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- 5.2.11 Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar candidates from working for The GORSE Academies Trust. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of their offences.
- 5.2.12 Applicants can refer to the guidance and criteria on the DBS website, which explains the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions, which are now “protected”.

5.3 Online Searches

- 5.3.1 An online search will be conducted on all shortlisted candidates. This involves searching for information publicly available online.

5.4 Interviews

- 5.4.1 The selection process for people who will work within the Trust should always include a face-to-face interview, apart from in exceptional circumstances, even if there is only one candidate. At the interview, the identity of the successful candidate will be checked thoroughly to ensure the person is who they claim to be, and the successful candidate will be required to complete an application for a DBS disclosure and consequently all candidates should be instructed to bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements.

5.5 Involving staff and students

- 5.5.1 We are committed to involving staff and students in the recruitment and selection process where appropriate. This may be by student panel, lesson observation or group activities, for example.

5.6 Conditional offer of employment – pre-employment checks

- 5.6.1 An offer of appointment to the successful candidate should be conditional upon:
- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if those have not already been received – see below)
 - Verification of the candidate’s identity (if that could not be verified at interview)
 - Verification of the right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty advice should be followed on GOV.UK website
 - A satisfactory DBS Enclosed Disclosure
 - Further checks if a candidate has lived or worked outside of the UK:
 - criminal records checks for all overseas applicants
 - for teaching positions – a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked N.B. – Where this information is not available alternative methods of seeking suitability should be sought and/or a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment should take place
 - Verification of the candidate’s mental and medical fitness to work
 - Verification of qualifications (if not verified at interview)
 - Verification of professional status where required e.g., Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (unless properly exempted)

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- (For teaching posts) verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
- (For non-teaching posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period
- Prohibition from teaching check

N.B. – from 1st January 2021 the TRA Teacher Services Agency System will no longer maintain a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states, if a candidate has lived or worked outside of the UK, appropriate checks must be undertaken – see 5.6.1 (e)

- Prohibition from participation in management check

5.6.2 NB: In any case where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, the chair of the interview panel must ensure that it is received and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed.

5.6.3 All checks should be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the staff file (subject to relevant advice contained in the DBS Code of Practice and our own data protection arrangements)
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies

5.7 Post appointment: Induction

5.7.1 There will be an induction programme for all staff and volunteers newly appointed to a position within the Trust, including teaching staff, regardless of previous experience. The purpose of induction is to:

- Provide training and information about our policies and procedures
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities
- Enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately
- Provide training and access to policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g.
 - Child Protection
 - E- and Online Safety, local child protection and safeguarding legislation and procedure
- Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and students within TGAT
- How and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised and other relevant HR procedures e.g., disciplinary, sickness reporting procedure, and whistleblowing

6 RECRUITING AND VETTING CHECKS

6.1 See also:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 (Update – January 2021 (Post EU Exit))
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

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- Disclosure and Barring Service (<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview>)

6.2 All TGAT staff appointments will be subject to an Enhanced DBS Check in line with current legislation. This requirement will also apply to all supply staff, regular volunteers visiting the school regularly (once a month or more, or for more than three days in one month) and some contractors (see Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2020 Part 3). ('For the purpose of this policy, and for the avoidance of doubt, the term 'staff' also includes trainee teachers on a GORSE school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route').

6.3 DBS checks for all staff will be renewed at least every five years, earlier if there is cause to believe that the employee may no longer be a suitable person to work in an education setting. We expect all staff to notify the Principal/Chief Operating Officer of any cautions or convictions accrued whilst in the employ TGAT.

6.4 We will ensure that all adults – whether employees or volunteers – involved in overnight or residential activities have a current enhanced DBS. ('For the purpose of this policy, and for the avoidance of doubt, the term 'staff' also includes trainee teachers on a GORSE school centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route').

6.5 The Single Central Record (SCR)

6.5.1 We will also make all other recruitment checks as outlined earlier and will keep a single central record as described in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, DfE guidance. The single central record will include all employees, supply staff, governors, trainees, relevant contractors and volunteers. The single central record must indicate whether all relevant checks have been completed.

6.6 Supply Staff and Trainee Teachers

6.6.1 The Trust will expect supply agencies to comply with Safer Recruitment procedures and we will seek written confirmation from each agency to this effect. We will require the DBS disclosure reference for each agency worker in order that this can be recorded on the SCR. In addition, we will seek to verify the identity of each agency worker when they arrive on site and these checks will also be recorded, including the date that confirmation of disclosure was received.

6.6.2 Where applicants for initial teacher training are employed on a salary at a Trust establishment, the necessary checks should be made by that Academy. When trainee teachers are fee funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks.

6.7 Local Governing Bodies

6.7.1 All members of TGAT Board and Local Governing Bodies within the Trust must have an Enhanced DBS check, which will include a barred list check prior to taking up their position.

REFERENCES AND USEFUL WEBSITES

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2020) (Update – January 2021 (Post EU Exit))
www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- The GORSE Academies Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- The GORSE Academies Trust Dealing with Allegations against Adults Policy
- LSCP – Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership www.leedsscp.org.uk
- Teachers' Standards (DfE 2011)
- The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) www.ofsted.gov.uk

Document control:

Reason for version change:	Update/amendment of policy to clarify position of online searches	Version number:	1.1
Date of Approval:	15 March 2023	Approved by:	Policy Committee
Target Audience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principals• SLT's• Central Team leaders• Governors• HR teams	Date issued:	15 March 2023