



Safer Recruitment Policy

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in organisations working with young people is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Inspire to Aspire is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people in its care. As an employer, Inspire to Aspire expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse young people or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The aims of Inspire to Aspire's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- 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 or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2019 (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
- to ensure that Inspire to Aspire meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

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

Inspire to Aspire 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 in the organisation 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, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance (including KCSIE 2019 and Prevent Duty Guidance).

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.

Inspire to Aspire aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Shrewsbury School.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.

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- Monitor the Organisation's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Managing Director and other Managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that Inspire to Aspire operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work in the organisation.
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of Inspire to Aspire will amount to "regulated activity" if it is carried out:

- frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- overnight, meaning between 2.00 am and 6.00 am; or
- satisfies the "period condition", meaning four times or more in a 30-day period; and
- provides the opportunity for contact with children.

The Organisation is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The Organisation is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff, Volunteers and Directors who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, the Organisation can also carry out an enhanced DBS check on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e. roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, Inspire to Aspire will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA18).

Application Forms

Inspire to Aspire 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 (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history). Applicants submitting an incomplete application form will not be shortlisted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration 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. CVs will not be accepted.

It is unlawful for the Organisation 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 Organisation. 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 referral to the police and/or the DBS.



Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the 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.

References

References for short-listed applicants will be sent for immediately after short-listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the Organisation. 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 reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up.

Inspire to Aspire do not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers will see 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. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps which have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

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, if it has been disclosed on the application form.

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. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed 6 months after the recruitment programme.

OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSIE and the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 Inspire to Aspire carry out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

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If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the Organisation's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- verification of the applicant's identity (if not previously been verified);
- the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the Organisation considers to be satisfactory;
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the Organisation considers to be satisfactory;
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List ;
- verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK;
- any further checks which are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK; and
- verification of professional qualifications which the Organisation deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where not previously verified).

Whether a position amounts to "regulated activity" must therefore be considered by the Organisation in order to decide which checks are appropriate. It is however likely that in nearly all cases the Organisation will be able to carry out an enhanced DBS check and a Children's Barred List check.

A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

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

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check

The Organisation 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 in Inspire to Aspire 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 Organisation's policy that the DBS disclosure must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

It is the Organisation's policy to re-check employees' DBS Certificates every three years and in addition any employee who takes leave for more than three months (ie maternity leave, career break etc) must be re-checked before they return back to work.

Members of staff at Inspire to Aspire are aware of their obligation to inform the Directors of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence.

Portability of DBS Certificates Checks

Staff may wish to join the DBS Update Service if they are likely to require another check in the future. Applicants may sign up to the Service for a fee of £13 per annum, which is payable by the applicant.



This allows for portability of a Certificate across employers. The Organisation will:

- Obtain consent from the applicant to carry out an update search.
- Confirm the Certificate matches the individual's identity.
- Examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, ie enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information.

The Update check would identify and advise whether there has been any change to the information recorded, since the initial Certificate was issued. Applicants will be able to see a full list of those organisations that have carried out a status check on their account.

DBS Certificate

The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees/applicants should arrange to show the Managing Director before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity.

Dealing with convictions

Inspire to Aspire operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Please also see 'Recruitment of Ex-offenders' policy and procedure.

Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Managing Director. A decision will be made following this meeting. 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 Managing Director will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

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 Organisation 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.

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 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 (eg 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.



Overseas checks

Inspire to Aspire, 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 Organisation.

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the school policies and procedures, including the Child Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct, and KCSIE, and make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in school and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Managing Director. The Single Centralised Register will contain details of the following:-

- All employees who are employed to work at the Organisation;
- all employees who are employed as casual staff whether employed directly or through an agency;
- all others who have been chosen by the Organisation to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers and directors.

A designated admin staff member will be responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting their findings to the full Directors meeting once per year.

Record Retention/Data Protection

Inspire to Aspire is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, we will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK and qualifications..

This documentation will be retained by the Organisation for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with us. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in a locked and secure cabinet.

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

Inspire to Aspire will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (ie shredded). The 6-month retention period is in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) [DPA18].

Ongoing Employment

Inspire to Aspire recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. We will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the termly supervision and appraisal required by all staff.



Leaving Employment at Inspire to Aspire

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely, there will be occasions when allegations of serious misconduct or abuse against children and young people are raised. This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed. Whilst these are pre-employment checks Inspire to Aspire also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS in circumstances where an individual:

- has applied for a position at Inspire to Aspire despite being barred from working with children; or
- has been removed by Inspire to Aspire from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child.

Contractors and agency staff

Contractors engaged by the Organisation must complete the same checks for their employees that Inspire to Aspire is required to complete for its staff. Inspire to Aspire requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Contractor can commence work in the Organisation.

Agencies who supply staff to the Organisation must also complete the pre-employment checks which Inspire to Aspire would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, Inspire to Aspire requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work in the Organisation.

Inspire to Aspire will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency in and will require the provision of the original DBS certificate before contractors or agency staff can commence work in the organisation.

Visiting Speakers (Prevent Duty)

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

Inspire to Aspire 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 in the Organisation or perform any other regular duties for or on behalf of the Organisation .

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

Inspire to Aspire 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 Security in Sessions Policy, 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

Volunteers in sessions have the same access to young people as staff and therefore are subject to the same checks before volunteering in sessions as staff would before commencing employment.

This includes Young people involved in our Young Leader programme over the age of 16

Under no circumstances will Inspire to Aspire permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with children.

It is Inspire to Aspire'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 Inspire to Aspire to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Managing Director will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the school. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly Safer Recruitment Evaluation audit which will be presented to the Managing Director to present to the board of directors at the August Directors meeting.