

Safer Recruitment Policy

Frequency of Review	Every 1 year
Author	COO/Headteacher
Approved by	Trust Directors
Reviewed	December 2022
Date of Next Review	December 2023 (unless there is a material change)

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the Propeller Academy Trust's (PAT) strategic approach to recruitment and selection activity and to establish a consistent framework for the application of these activities.
- 1.2 The PAT recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people. The Trust is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection activities are undertaken in a fair and transparent way and that appointments are based on the candidate judged to be most suitable. The aims, therefore, of this policy are to:
- attract and appoint the highest calibre of applicants;
 - ensure safe and equitable recruitment and selection is conducted at all times;
 - deter, identify, and reject prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.
- 1.3 This document is available to all members of school staff and to any prospective applicant. The PAT welcomes any comments or contributions to this policy.

2. Legal context

- 2.1 The PAT recognises that recruitment and selection is governed by many statutory provisions, too numerous to list separately, and is committed to ensuring that all legislative requirements are met in the application of this policy.
- 2.2 This policy does not form part of any employee's contractual terms and conditions and any links within this document to other documents are for ease of use and do not form part of this policy.

3. Delegation of authority

- 3.1 In respect of the position of the headteacher and Deputy headteacher, the responsibility and authority to appoint lies with the Trustees. Where such recruitment activity is required, the Trustees will convene a recruitment and selection panel in accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. Where a panel of Trustees is convened, the Trustees will ensure members of the panel have knowledge and understanding of the school's needs, the appropriate experience and training in recruitment and selection, including safer recruitment training, as well as the confidence in carrying out the process effectively. Unless statutory legislation has been contravened, the Trustees will normally endorse the recommendation for appointment made by the selection panel.
- 3.2 In respect of all other posts the Trustees have delegated responsibility and authority to appoint to the CEO, COO or headteacher.

4. Equal opportunities

- 4.1 The PAT is committed to providing equality of opportunity at all stages of the recruitment and selection process and ensuring that candidates are treated fairly and lawfully throughout the process. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or trade union membership.
- 4.2 All disabled applicants who indicate that they consider themselves to have a disability on their application and who meet the minimum criteria for the role will be guaranteed an interview.
- 4.3 Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability.
- 4.4 Recruitment and selection activities will be undertaken in line with the principles of the school's equalities policy.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Trustees and governors will:
- ensure effective policies and procedures are in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department of Education (DfE) guidance and legal requirements
 - monitor our compliance with them
 - ensure that appropriate staff, trustees, and governors have completed safer recruitment training (and repeat this every 5 years)
 - ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training
- 5.2 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operations Officer (COO) and headteachers will:
- ensure that all schools and operation of the Trust operate safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and up dated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
 - ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers within the Trust
 - monitor any contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
 - promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process

6. Recruitment and selection process

6.1 Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken

- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected,' so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statement.

“The Propeller Academy Trust and its member schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and preventing extremism. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. All post holders in regulated activity are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory “Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Check. Shortlisted candidates will be subject to online searches for publicly available information.

The Propeller Academy Trust is an equal opportunities employer, and we welcome applications from a range of backgrounds to represent diversity in line with our school’s community”

7. Application forms

- 7.1 Prospective applicants must complete, in full, and return a signed application form. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed forms has not passed. Unaccompanied CVs will not be accepted. We will only consider a CV as supplementary to a fully completed application form.
- 7.2 The application form will include:
- a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
 - personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number, details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
 - full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment, and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment.
 - qualification, the awarding body, and date of award.
 - details of referees/references
 - a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification
 - Include a link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy
- 7.3 We will check that information provided is not contradictory or incomplete.

7.4 Candidates submitting an application form completed online will be asked to sign the form if called for interview.

8. Recruitment panel

8.1 At least one member of the Selection and Recruitment panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment within the last 5 years.

9. Shortlisting

9.1 Our shortlisting process will involve at least two people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

9.2 Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage.

9.3 The information we will ask for includes:

- If they have a criminal history
- Whether they are included on the barred list
- Whether they are prohibited from teaching
- Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

9.4 Candidates will be shortlisted against the person specification for the post.

10. Seeking references and checking employment history

10.1 We will obtain references before interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

10.2 When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references e.g., to whom it may concern or rely on applicants to obtain their references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- take at least two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current employer and completed by a senior person with appropriate authority. Where the referee is school based, the reference must be confirmed by the head of establishment as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations

- obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

11. Online search

- 11.1 As part of the shortlisting process a member of the admin/HR Manager, or someone who is unrelated to the interview process will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on the shortlisted candidates.
- 11.2 This procedure applies to all jobs across the Trust and must be completed for each shortlisted candidate.
- 11.3 Locked accounts such as Facebook do not need to be reviewed, we will only search in the public domain. Any news stories or links to popular social media sites could be reviewed.
- 11.4 Any information discovered will be printed and shared with members of the interview panel prior to interview. The search may identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

12. Interview and selection

- 12.1 When interviewing candidates, we will:
- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
 - Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
 - Record all information considered and decisions made

13. Pre-appointment vetting checks

- 13.1 We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

14. New staff

- 14.1 All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.
- 14.2 When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities through the completion of a pre-employment health check with our occupational health and wellbeing provider.
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach. Details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland are on the Regulated Professions database or UK Centre for Professional Qualifications.
 - Where this information is not available the PAT will look at alternative methods of checking suitability and undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment.

14.3 Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

** Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, CEO, COO, headteachers, and deputy/assistant headteachers.*

14.4 We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

14.5 **Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a Trust setting, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a Trust setting where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

15. Existing staff

- 15.1 In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:
- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
 - An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
 - There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more
- 15.2 We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
 - We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
 - We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e., they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
 - The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

16. Agency and third-party staff

- 16.1 We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform.
- 16.2 We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made, by requesting that photographic ID is shown when arriving on site on their first day of assignment.

17. Contractors

- 17.1 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS. This will be:
- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
 - An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

- 17.2 We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- 17.3 We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- 17.4 Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- 17.5 We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the Trust premises.
- 17.6 For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

18. Trainee/student teachers

- 18.1 Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by the Trust, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.
- 18.2 Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.
- 18.3 In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

19. Volunteers

- 19.1 We will:
- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
 - Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
 - Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
 - Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

20. Trustees, governors, and members

- 20.1 All trustees, local governors and members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

- 20.2 They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.
- 20.3 The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state. Academy Chairs should apply for their countersigned DBS before they take up the role using the form available from the EFSA [Academy trust chair: Apply for a suitability check - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk). The EFSA carries out these checks on behalf of the Secretary of State.
- 20.4 All trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:
- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
 - Identity
 - Right to work in the UK
 - Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

21. Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

- 21.1 When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.
- 21.2 We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.