



PLATANOS TRUST

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at, the Platanos Trust and its schools. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

2023-2024

Safer Recruitment Policy

Review procedures

This policy is to be reviewed annually or as necessary with notification being given to the Board of Trustees on the results of any review.

If any amendments to the Policy are required as a result of a review, then these will be presented to the Board of Trustees for acceptance of the amendments.

Signature:	Signature:
Chair of Trustees	Headteacher
Date of approval:	

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Aims

This Policy is implemented for the recruitment of all permanent, temporary, supply, agency and casual staff in order to safeguard all children at the school/trust.

In line with the Government regulations and guidelines to safeguard children within our schools, we are required to carry out a number of checks on all staff, whether they are a permanent or temporary member. We are also required to maintain a Single Central Record (SCR) which documents the checks that have been carried out.

2. Legal framework and guidance

The establishment will follow all government guidelines and regulations on safer recruitment practice in line with published documentation including *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* and *'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment'*.

3. Recruitment: application and proof of identification

All applicants will be required to bring in a minimum of 3 proofs of identification which verify their name, date of birth and current address. Ideally, this should be the following:

- a) Valid Passport, Birth Certificate or Driving Licence (proof of identification which includes name, address and date of birth).
- b) Marriage Certificate, Birth Certificate, NHS Card, National Insurance Card (another proof of name and/or date of birth).
- c) Additional proof of address. We need at least 2 (recent utility bill, bank statement, valid TV licence).

These identification documents will also be sufficient if a new DBS Disclosure application needs to be completed (please refer to the DBS Guidance Notes for clarification when completing an application).

- If the applicant is required to hold a specific qualification relevant to the post (e.g. QTS, a specific subject field, First Aid or Food Hygiene) that has been entered on their application, we need to see the original documentation to verify this.
- References will have been sought prior to the interview, or in other cases shortly afterwards. **Appointments are always made on a conditional basis, subject to a completed application form, the relevant checks being carried out and receipt of satisfactory references. A curriculum vitae (CV) submitted alone without a fully completed application form will not be considered for any job application.**

It is mandatory that at least one person on any interview panel has completed Safer Recruitment training. Details of all staff and trustees/governors who have completed this training are held at the establishment.

4. Right to work in the UK

It is the school's responsibility to check that all employees have the right to work in the UK before their employment commences.

To do this the documentation which evidences their right to work in the UK (e.g. a passport which states they are a British national or a national of a member country of the European Economic Area or of Switzerland) will be verified by the school and photocopies taken. Lists of acceptable documentation are also detailed in the Home Office's Border and Immigration Agency Code of Practice available via the following link www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Some of these documents provide ongoing evidence of the employee's right to work, others have to be checked annually. The school will not knowingly employ someone who has no right to work in the UK. The right to work in the UK will be checked for all employees, not just those who appear to be non-British.

5. Conditional offer of employment

Any offer of employment with the Trust will be conditional on the satisfactory completion of the following:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
- satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure and where the appointee has lived outside the United Kingdom, a certificate of good conduct (or equivalent) if applicable;
- where applicable, satisfactory DBS checks in respect of the Children's and Adult's Barred List;
- confirmation of the candidate's medical fitness (through a pre-employment health check);
- verification of qualifications by the individual by providing original certificates;
- verification of professional status where required;
- verification that the candidate has not been prohibited from teaching or carrying out teaching work and has no sanctions or restrictions against them, by the Teaching Regulation Agency where relevant;
- verification that the candidate has not been prohibited from carrying out management work where relevant;
- verification that the candidate has not been disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018, where applicable to their role;
- Letter of professional standing from the overseas professional regulating authority where relevant;
- verification of the candidate's identity;
- verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK.

A record will be kept to show that the above checks have been carried out for all employees.

The details of checks will be reported to the police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if:

- the DBS disclosure shows that an applicant has been disqualified from working with children;
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, their application; or
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children gained from other legitimate information sources (e.g. references).

6. Vetting of different groups

Staff

The recruitment of staff will follow Government guidelines in line with the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment' documentation and the school's Safer Recruitment Policy. All individuals including volunteers (where necessary) will be subjected to an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check (formerly known as a CRB check) and will be checked against the DBS Barred List (list of names barred from working with children) prior to their appointment. These checks will be updated regularly. Individuals barred from working with children and young persons will not be knowingly employed by the school. The school will immediately cease to employ an individual if it is later discovered that the individual is included in any of the above barred lists. For supply staff, the school will require the agency to provide evidence of DBS checks.

Teacher status checks will also be conducted on applicants against the DfE / Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) database for any suspensions or prohibitions and to verify individual records (and QTS). The school will take all reasonable steps to establish this before employment. Any offer of employment will always be made on a conditional basis, subject to the relevant checks being carried out and the receipt of satisfactory references (references will be obtained prior to interview where practically possible and open testimonials will not be relied upon).

In addition to the above, any member of staff who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order made under section 141B of the Education Act 2002, and therefore prohibited from teaching.

For those also engaged in management roles, an additional section 128 check is required to ensure that they are not prohibited from school management. Section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 provides for the Secretary of State to prohibit a person from participating in the management of a school.

Individuals that have lived or worked abroad must undergo the same above checks. Further checks should include a check for teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by another professional regulatory body using the TRA Teacher Services system where applicable or available. The school will also seek overseas criminal records/overseas police checks or a certificate of good conduct.

Trustees/governors

All trustees/governors will be subject to an enhanced DBS check. The Trust will also contact the TRA Teacher Services to check if a proposed governor/trustee is barred as a result of being subject to a section 128 direction, which prevents them from being involved in the governance of schools. Identity checks will also be completed before, or as soon as practicable after, the individual takes up their position. Associate members are not required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

Volunteers

The school will not, under any circumstances, allow a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained to be unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Volunteers in regulated

activity will be subjected to an enhanced DBS check (including a barred list check). The school may carry out an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check for volunteers who are not engaged in regulated activity.

Contractors

The school will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced check including barred list information. For all contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check without barred list information will be required. In considering whether the contact is regular, it is irrelevant whether the contractor works on a single site or across multiple sites.

Alternative Provision

If the school places a pupil with an alternative provision provider, the school continues to be responsible for the safeguarding of that pupil, and will ensure that it is satisfied that the provider meets the needs of the pupil. The school should obtain written confirmation from the alternative provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

Adults who supervise children on work experience

The school will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Barred list checks might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. The school will consider the specific circumstances of the work experience. Consideration must be given in particular to the nature of the supervision and the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary. These considerations would include whether the person providing the teaching/training/supervision to the child will be unsupervised themselves and providing the supervision frequently (more than three days in a 30-day period or overnight). If the person working with the child is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the child, the work is likely to be regulated activity. If so, the school could ask the employer providing the work experience to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a barred person. Schools and colleges are not able to request an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for staff supervising children aged 16 to 17 on work experience (under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2012).

7. Pre-employment checks

a) Online Searches

We will carry out an online search against the applicant, for information that is publicly available online, as part of its due diligence. This will include social media accounts they may hold. This may help 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. This will only be carried out on shortlisted candidates and usually before interview.

b) References

The purpose of obtaining a reference is to ensure that we have objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. References will normally be taken up on shortlisted candidates prior to interview including staff who may already be employed by the Trust.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which we deem satisfactory, one of which 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 referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

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. All referees will be sent a copy of the Job Description and Person Specification for the role that the applicant has applied for. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, the reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired);
- the facts of any substantiated safeguarding allegations or concerns that meet the harm threshold
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people;
- We will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials;
- we will ensure the person providing the reference is sufficiently senior and has appropriate authority to provide it;
- We will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.

c) Criminal Record Check

Due to the nature of the work, we apply for criminal record certificates from the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") in respect of all prospective staff members and volunteers.

The type of check that may be requested from the DBS will depend on the nature of the position. If the individual is applying for a position that may provide them with an opportunity to engage in regulated activity with children, then an Enhanced Check with Barred List will be required. This check will contain details of all convictions, adult cautions, reprimands or warnings (except those which are "protected" as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

(Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013 and amended in 2020) held on the Police National Computer.

The Enhanced Check with Barred List will also reveal whether the individual is barred from working with children by virtue their inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children.

An Enhanced Check may also contain non-conviction information from local police records and/or protected information (as defined above) which the police consider may be relevant to the work the individual will be undertaking.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a Disclosure if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

Should DBS clearance be delayed and employment commence before it is received, we may agree to the individual commencing work but before doing so shall obtain a barred list check (where required), undertake a Risk Assessment on the prospective member of staff concerned, ensure all other checks are completed and make arrangements as appropriate for the member of staff to be paired with or supervised by another member staff who has received DBS clearance.

8. Single Central Record

A Single Central Record will be kept of all vetting checks, which will include verification of identity and the date these checks were made. Records on any relevant qualifications and permission to work for non-EU nationals will also be kept. The school will only use agencies that rigorously check their supply staff. Staff joining the school will familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding/Child Protection policies of the school.

9. Procedure with DBS checks if appointed

- A new Enhanced DBS Disclosure application will be completed as soon as practicable if a current valid one is not already held by the applicant. In addition to the identification documents mentioned above, other information that will be required includes a five year address history and any other surnames held.
- Should DBS clearance be delayed, the school has the discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the DBS Disclosure provided that the individual is appropriately supervised and all other check, and a risk assessment is carried out.
- If an Enhanced DBS Certificate is already held then the portability of the DBS Disclosure may apply (see below).

10. Portability of DBS Disclosure Certificates

- If the DBS Disclosure Certificate held was processed for a similar job type, was an enhanced check and carried out within the last three years, then a further application may not be necessary under the discretion of the school. The school would need to see and verify the original documentation. A DBS Update Service online check will be made where possible.
- If the DBS Disclosure Certificate was not an enhanced check or not issued within the last three years, then a new DBS enhanced check will be made by the school or Trust depending on the role.

11. Volunteers

- All volunteers who have direct contact with children on a regular basis will be required to have an enhanced DBS clearance and be checked against the aforementioned barred lists. The Headteacher will assess the need on an individual basis.
- Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member and will be subject to the same Code of Conduct as paid employees of the school and the Trust.

12. Agencies/agency staff

Should the school seek to employ supply staff via an agency, the agency must be able to confirm in writing that all the relevant vetting checks have been undertaken (at the point of confirmation of terms of supply).

1. The agency must confirm in writing what checks have been carried out and inform the school if there is anything that may be considered relevant in the context of safeguarding children.
2. The agency must provide evidence of the checks carried out on their central record.
3. The agency must ensure that the supply staff member is aware that they have to bring in their Enhanced DBS Certificate, proof of qualifications (e.g. QTS Certificate) and identification documents (proving their name, date of birth, address etc.) on the first day of their supply work for the school.

The school reserves the right to terminate the contract or arrangement with the agency and send home an agency staff member without notice should these terms of safer recruitment practice be breached by the agency or the member of agency staff. In these instances, the school will not be liable for any charges connected to the booking.

Any queries relating to this Policy should be directed to the Human Resources Manager/Business Manager.

13. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)

The nature of the job roles at the school means that applications are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013).

This means that applicants will be requested and required to give details of all current (unspent) and 'spent' convictions or pending cases, cautions, bind-over orders, reprimands and final warnings (that are not eligible for filtering), including dates, the offences(s), sentences, and the court or police force which dealt with the offence, at the point of application (an application form must be completed).

Failure to make a full and accurate declaration by the applicant may result in the withdrawal of the job offer or, if subsequently discovered, to disciplinary action and/or dismissal.

Where a disclosure is made about a previous conviction or pending case, a detailed risk assessment on the applicant will be carried out to assess suitability.

Any offer of employment will always be made on a conditional basis, subject to the relevant checks being carried out and the receipt of satisfactory references.

We will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. We make appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar them from employment within the Trust. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria.

In view of the fact that all positions within the Trust and its schools will amount to "regulated positions", all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions and adult cautions (except those which are "protected" as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013 and amended in 2020). A failure to disclose a previous conviction or adult caution may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for us to employ anyone who is included on the lists, maintained by the DfE and the Department of Health, of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for us to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the Trust. If:

- we receive an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- we have serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

we will report the matter to the Police, DBS and/or the DfE.

Note:

1. Applicants do not need to declare any criminal record information that is now filtered under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended in 2013. Certain cautions and convictions are now considered 'protected' and therefore filtered from DBS checks. Further guidance on what is eligible for filtering can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance.

2. It is the responsibility of the applicant to check if any convictions etc. are eligible for filtering and exempt from declaration.

3. Failure to disclose convictions (except those that are filtered), cautions, pending court, reprimands or orders during the recruitment process will result in the withdrawal of the job offer. If undisclosed cautions, convictions or charges pending are discovered after employment commences, disciplinary action/dismissal could ensue.

4. Any information provided will be kept confidential and will only be considered in relation to the job applied for.

5. It is an offence to apply, offer or accept to do work with children (paid or unpaid) if disqualified from working with children.

6. Any offer of employment will always be made on a conditional basis, subject to the relevant checks being carried out and the receipt of satisfactory references in accordance with our Safer Recruitment Policy.



Safer Recruitment Policy Agreement

Applicant/staff signature

I have read, fully understand and agree to abide by the terms as set out in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

I confirm that the information that I have provided in my application is true and accurate. I understand that any attempt to deliberately pass on incorrect information may result in my employment being terminated.

Signature: Date:

Print name: Agency:
(where appropriate)

Designation/position: