

Safer Recruitment Policy

Applies to:

- The whole school including all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- All staff (teaching and support staff), pupils on placement, the Proprietor, Governors and contractors, workers or volunteers working in the school.

Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the school website, within the Parent Policies Folder in the Reception area, and on request a copy may be obtained from the school office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.
- The Principal undertakes a formal annual review of this policy.

Signed:



Amy Cavilla
Principal
September 2024

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The school is committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The school recognises that to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain members of staff of the highest calibre and integrity who share this commitment.
- 1.2 Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and complying with, the provisions of this policy.
- 1.3 The school fully recognises its responsibilities regarding safer recruitment. We seek to comply with the guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) concerning the safeguarding of children and safer recruitment in education (Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, Sept 2023).
- 1.4 The school aims to:
 - ensure that thorough recruitment procedures and pre-employment vetting for appointing all staff including volunteers and contractors enables the school to deter, identify and reject any person deemed unsuitable to work or come into contact with our pupils; and,
 - operate such procedures consistently and thoroughly whilst obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants, and those who are potentially going to work with children.

2. Employment and Safer Recruitment

- 2.1 All members of the teaching and support staff at the school, including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, contractors, volunteers and visiting staff, such as peripatetic musicians and sports coaches, are checked in accordance with the full requirements of the *Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)* and the *centralised record (Single Central Register)* before starting work.
- 2.2 Current required checks include: identity, right to work in the UK, qualifications, medical health, employment history, Barred list, DBS, prohibition from teaching and management as appropriate, overseas police and EEA as appropriate, and references.
- 2.3 The chairperson of the interview panel must have completed, and remain up to date with the requirements of, safer recruitment training and assessment.
- 2.4 Our safer recruitment practice includes those persons who may not have direct contact with young people but because of their presence will still be seen as safe and trustworthy, e.g. volunteers, support staff and contractors.
- 2.5 We understand that it is an offence under the Disclosure and Barring Service legislation to knowingly employ (or take on as a volunteer), in a DBS regulated activity, someone who is barred from such activity.
- 2.6 We will do all we can to ensure that all those working with children in the school are suitable people. This involves scrutinising applicants, verifying their identity, checking their employment history and qualifications and obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess their suitability for working with children.
- 2.7 It is our policy, in employing staff, contractors or volunteers who will work with children, to adopt a consistent and thorough process of safe recruitment to ensure that those recruited are suitable. We comply with the criteria set by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP), which includes complying with relevant government guidance, examples of good practice guidance, and model policies and procedures where needed.
- 2.8 The principles of safer recruitment are included in the terms of any agreement drawn up between ourselves and the contractors or agencies which provide services for us.
- 2.9 Compliance is monitored and sub-contracting by the provider is not permitted.

3. Retention and Security of Disclosure Information

- 3.1 Disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS which the school is permitted to hold are securely stored, with access only permitted to persons designated by the Principal for this purpose.
- 3.2 The school will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken with access only permitted to persons designated by the proprietor for this purpose.

4. Advertising and Applications

- 4.1 Our advertisements feature a safeguarding statement which includes emphasis that all new staff will be subject to enhanced checks including DBS, identity, qualifications, employment history and references

- 4.2 Our Safer Recruitment Policy can be downloaded from the 'Employment Opportunities' page of our website".
- 4.3 The school will make an assessment of each post (and potential vacancies) that includes details of the post's responsibilities, the degree of unsupervised or supervised access to the children and the key skills required.
- 4.4 When reviewing applications we know it is important to record objective evidence about the extent to which each candidate meets the criteria. The school has at least two people involved in the process of scrutinising applications and shortlisting candidates.
- 4.5 If the candidate makes a self-disclosure on the application Form, the school will compare the information to the DBS records, and the Principal will conduct a risk assessment, before deciding on whether or not the candidate should be appointed.

5. Key Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Principal will ensure that:
- appropriate policies and procedures are adopted to safeguard children in the school;
 - these policies are implemented and followed by all staff, contractors and volunteers;
 - sufficient resources and time are allocated for staff to carry out their responsibilities effectively;
 - all those working or volunteering in the school are suitable people;
 - all staff and adult helpers in the school are able to voice their concern if they feel that a child is vulnerable, or that there are any particular practices that are unsafe; and
 - staff undergo relevant, regular training and supervision to ensure they are kept up to date in issues of safeguarding.
- 5.2 The Governors will ensure that the Principal and at least one other member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have appropriate Safer Recruitment in Education training.

6. Equal Opportunities

- 6.1 The school does not discriminate between candidates on the basis of race, disability, gender, religion and beliefs, age or sexual orientation.
- 6.2 The school is mindful of the requirements relating to the recruitment of ex-offenders whilst taking into account its safeguarding responsibilities.
- 6.3 For further information, please refer to the school's Equality and Diversity Policy.

7. Modern Slavery

- 7.1 Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain. Radnor House Twickenham is committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in its own activities, and to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking. Radnor House Twickenham understands the potential modern slavery risks within its business, and works to ensure that there is no slavery or human trafficking taking place in its business and its supply chains.
- 7.2 Radnor House Twickenham has policies and procedures which contribute to ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in our own operations and our supply chains. As part of the school Whistleblowing Policy, any allegations of impropriety would be thoroughly investigated.
- 7.3 Human Resources – in accordance with our aim of providing an excellent education for our pupils, Radnor House Twickenham wishes at all times to act and be seen to be act with the utmost integrity, and expects all staff to act in the same manner. Radnor House Twickenham is committed to the provision of a working environment for all staff, prospective staff, and others working in or visiting the school, which promotes an open, honest and transparent working environment. We are committed to ensuring all colleagues are treated with dignity and respect and are able to carry out their job role free from conflict, risk, harassment or any other behaviour perceived to be compromising, demeaning or demoralizing. The Group has a number of HR policies in place which ensure that this ethos is put into effect. New staff receive appropriate training regarding Radnor House Twickenham's policies and procedures.
- 7.4 It is a statutory requirement for all schools to undertake certain recruitment and vetting checks on individuals working within their establishment and to maintain a live Single Central Record of these checks. Therefore, we are able to demonstrate that those vetting checks, including proof of right to work in the UK, have been carried out for all staff.

- 7.5 Supply Chains - Radnor House Twickenham has considered which of its supply chains could be at a high risk of slavery or human trafficking. Guidance from ISBA (The Independent Schools' Bursars Association) identifies high risk supply chains for schools as catering, cleaning, stationery and uniform.
- 7.6 As part of Radnor House Twickenham's initiative to identify and mitigate the risk of slavery and human trafficking in supply chains, the school carries out due diligence on new suppliers, ensuring that they are able to provide adequate assurances of their own commitment to preventing modern slavery and human trafficking, and that they undertake all the required vetting checks and right to work checks on all their workers.

Appendix: Recruitment Procedures

The Importance of Safeguarding

At each stage of our recruitment process **we are mindful of the need to protect and safeguard children, and to ensure that their welfare is promoted at all times.** There is a thorough and consistent process of obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information about applicants. In order to ensure safe recruitment, the school will ensure that through safer recruitment advertising and pre-interview information it collects it will be made clear the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Comprehensive details

We require all adults employed in school to complete the application form which requests comprehensive details regarding dates of an applicant's training and employment history to enable the school to identify any gaps in training and employment to alert the interview panel. Any gaps will be recorded by the panel giving a satisfactory explanation for those gaps. The application form will ask candidates if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS disclosure. The application form will also ask for details regarding length of service in previous employment.

If a candidate's application is considered to be fraudulent or contains false information, the school will report the matter, without delay, to the Secretary of State via the DfE, and also the police as appropriate.

Application procedures

With reference to the application process, the school has the following procedures in place:

- We ensure that job descriptions make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- We obtain and scrutinise comprehensive information from applicants, taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies that are identified.
- We obtain two independent professional and character written references, ideally pre interview, including 'Safer Recruitment' questions that ask specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children. Information from references is compared with information on the application form, to ensure that the information provided is consistent, and any concerns identified will be followed up. Where appropriate verification will be sought that the referee has actually completed the reference.

The school selects candidates, by checking for the following and where possible, exploring further at interview:

- Gaps in employment.
- Any period of three months or more spent overseas during the previous ten years (a Police Check will need to be obtained for the country where the applicant spent time, if an appointment is made).
- Reasons for repeated and regular changes in employment.
- Anomalies or discrepancies in information contained within the application.
- Anomalies or discrepancies between information contained in references and the application.
- All candidates are assessed equally against the criteria in the job description or role profile without exception.
- Where appropriate the school will also perform an online check and check social media activity of applicants.

The Interview Process

- Candidates will be invited to interview using an 'Invite to Interview' email outlining arrangements for the day, asking them whether they require any reasonable adjustments in order to attend the interview, and asking them to provide the following original documents at interview:
 - proof of identity, e.g. driving licence, or birth/marriage/divorce certificate, plus a valid passport;
 - certificates or diplomas confirming education qualifications;
 - qualified teacher status or qualifications appropriate for the position;
 - named utility bills or bank statement with the candidate's address (not more than three months old);
 - where appropriate any documentation giving evidence of change of name.
- Verification will be sought of a candidate's right to work in the UK and copies of the successful candidate's passport and documentation as outlined above will be taken and retained on the person's file.

The Interview -

- Where possible we conduct a face- to- face panel interview to explore the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his/her suitability for the position being recruited.
- The panel will consist of at least two members of staff including one who has been trained in safer recruitment and a second who has the authority to make the decision on the appointment.
- A consensus about the required standards for the post will be reached and issues considered and explored in interview in line with the agreed assessment criteria.
- The panel will assess the candidate's attitude towards children and young people and his/her ability to support the safeguarding policies as well as the aims of the school.
- Questions relating to child protection and safeguarding children will be asked in every interview for staff and volunteers prior to an offer of appointment.
- We will not ask questions regarding health at the interview. A successful candidate is then required to complete a self-declaration medical health questionnaire.
- Interview notes will be made and copies retained on the relevant personnel files.

Lesson Observation –

- For teaching positions, where possible, the candidate will be observed teaching a lesson and notes kept of the outcome of the observation.

Identity Verification –

- Verification of the successful candidate's identity from all scrutiny previously undertaken will occur and details entered on the Single Central Register (Centralised Register) and our staff employment checklist related to:
 - character/professional references;
 - original copies of qualifications seen and photocopied to confirm that the successful candidate has all the academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
 - the place of residence and identity of the successful candidate including name, address and date of birth by checking passport together with utility bills less than three months old (Refer to www.gov.uk/guidance/documents-the-applicant-must-provide);
 - the successful candidate having the right to work in the UK along with a clearly traceable employment history and experience

Our application form also requests more detailed information regarding: teaching experience, special areas of teaching interest, and any relevant training undertaken recently (e.g. First Aid course).

Applicants must provide details of two referees (one of whom must be the applicant's current employer, if he/she is in employment at the time of the job application), a declaration of any prior criminal record, a declaration of any family link with (or close relationship to) existing employees or employers, and a declaration that all information is true and accurate within the applicant's knowledge.

For unsuccessful candidates, we do not retain copies of their applications or interview notes.

Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders

The school will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The school makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability.

If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the school. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

All positions within the school are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must therefore declare all previous criminal convictions and/or cautions or bind-overs, including those prior to 18 years of age or which would normally be considered "spent" except for those to which the DBS filtering rules apply. A failure to disclose a previous conviction (which should be declared including those spent or in childhood) may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose 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. Upon offer of employment the school asks for a detailed disclosure declaration to be completed and signed by the prospective new employee.

It is unlawful for the school 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 attempt to apply for a position at the school. The school will make a report to the Police and/or the DBS and/or TRA if:

- it receives an application from a barred person;
- it is provided with false information in, or in support of, an applicant's application; or
- it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

Assessment criteria

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 school will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence; or
- serious Class A drug-related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.
- If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.
- If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

Assessment procedure

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 school will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the assessment criteria set out above.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, s/he can do so by contacting the DBS directly.

In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the school will, 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.

Equality legislation

It is important that candidates are provided with the opportunity to share any information that may impact on the nature of the work and/or work environment, at the earliest stage (if they wish to disclose such information). Pragmatic discussions can then take place at an early stage in the employment process. Candidates also need to be clearly aware of the exact nature of the role, and in particular that they will be able to manage (with the relevant risk assessments and control measures in place), the hazards associated with the role.

Typical questions for candidates

Subject to the character and responsibilities of the post, candidates may be asked one or more of the following questions:

- Are there any adjustments to this role or particular aids that may be needed to enable you to perform this role effectively?
- Where there are particular risks associated with the role, the candidate may be asked questions in line with the role. Some examples are provided below:
- This role requires the post-holder to perform, on a regular basis, manual handling activities, including weights up to 15kg. Are you able to fulfil this aspect of the role requirement?
- This role has high potential to require physical behaviour interventions. Are you able to fulfil this aspect of the role requirement?
- This role requires the post-holder to occasionally drive the school's minibus. Are you able to fulfil this aspect of the role's requirement?

Requirements for candidates for teaching roles include:

To be able to undertake teaching duties safely and effectively, it is essential that individual teachers:

- have the health and wellbeing necessary to deal with the specific types of teaching and associated duties (adjusted, as appropriate) in which they are engaged;
- are able to communicate effectively with children, parents and colleagues;
- possess sound judgment and insight;
- remain alert and focused at all times;
- can respond to pupils' needs rapidly and effectively;
- are able to manage classes;
- do not constitute any risk to health, safety or wellbeing of children;
- can, where disabilities exist, be enabled by reasonable adjustments to meet these criteria.

Requirements for candidates for support staff roles include:

To be able to undertake support duties safely and effectively, it is essential that individual support employees:

- have the ability to deal with the specific job role for which they are engaged;
- are able to communicate well;
- possess sound judgment and insight to a level required by the post;
- remain alert and focused at all times;
- can, if appropriate, respond to pupils' needs rapidly and effectively;
- are able, if appropriate, to cover a class;
- do not constitute any risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children;
- can, where disabilities exist, be enabled by reasonable adjustment to meet these criteria.

Conditional offer of employment

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the school receiving two satisfactory references if these have not yet been received (including, for teaching staff, one from the Head of your current school), the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the school's standard terms and conditions of employment together with any additional stipulations regarding the specific role and responsibilities of the post offered.

Additionally, any offer of appointment to the successful candidate is conditional upon satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks relevant to the specific post, as follows:

- identity verification (e.g. passport or driving licence or birth certificate or marriage/divorce certificate) and proofs of current address (e.g. utility bills);
- verification of right to work in the UK;
- barred list check;
- successful DBS clearance - sight of an original certificate for an enhanced disclosure;
- check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher (including peripatetic music, SEN, EAL and private tutors and sports coaches) is not subject to a prohibition from teaching order;
- check that any person to be employed as a manager is not subject to a prohibition from management order;

- check the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their responsibilities: the candidate is asked to make a self-declaration;
- minimum of two suitable employment references;
- verification overseas criminal records checks for anyone who has lived and worked outside the UK for a period of three months or more during the previous ten years: details listed on the DBS website for each country (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>);
- verification of any professional prohibitions or sanctions which apply to those coming from EEA countries;
- verification of appropriate qualifications for the post applied for, with sight of original certification.

We will always carry out all relevant checks (as if the person was a new member of staff), if an existing staff member of staff moves to work in regulated activity, where their previous work was not regulated. We undertake to do the same, if we are concerned about the suitability of any existing member of staff.

We always see the original certificate, including the DBS check from the candidate. We use the DBS Update Service, where the applicant or individual joins this service. Together with the individual's prior permission, this provides us with an opportunity to carry out an online check to see if they need a new certificate because new information is available (www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service).

Commencing Employment Prior to Obtaining Enhanced DBS Clearance

Our procedures are followed in a professional and timely manner, therefore the vast majority of new employees will be in possession of the DBS Certificate before their contract start date. There will, however, be rare occasions when contracts start before the Enhanced DBS Certificate has been received.

In this instance, the Principal will use his/her discretion as to whether an employee can start work pending the receipt of the certificate, providing all other checks have been completed.

The Principal will carry out a risk assessment, and ensure that any employee with DBS clearance pending will be appropriately supervised with a signed risk assessment. The risk assessment form will be completed, and the employee informed that they are under this extra scrutiny and the reasons for it. Any supervision arrangements will be reviewed at least every two weeks. In all cases an extra Barred List Check must be carried out prior to the new employee commencing in post.

Contractors and Occasional Visitors /Visiting Speakers

The school will have arrangements in place with contractors (including agency/supply staff) to make sure that any contracted staff that work regularly in our school, with an opportunity for contact with children, are deemed suitable.

Although we do not carry out the required checks for any contractor, for any third party or agency staff we require written confirmation that the contractor has obtained an enhanced DBS check and any other required checks, before they work on a regular basis in our school and we carry out a barred list check.

Where contractor's staff do not work regularly in our school but may have limited contact, we will determine suitability by ensuring they are supervised. However, where a contractor is self-employed, we can obtain a barred list check on their behalf and ask them to complete a safer working practice agreement.

We expect all contractors and third parties to have photographic ID on site so that their identity can be checked before they work in our school and so that we can make sure the checks carried out have been made on the person completing the work.

They must always sign in before entering the school, both when children are present and otherwise for fire, and health and safety considerations.. We will not undertake barred list or DBS checks on occasional visitors, but we will ensure that they are supervised or escorted on our premises and a Close Supervision Agreement is in place.

Please refer to our Visiting Speakers Policy for information on procedures in place for visiting speakers.

Retention of records

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 his/her 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, medical fitness and qualifications.

Medical information may be used to help the school to discharge its obligations as an employer, e.g. so that the school may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

This documentation will be retained by the school for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the school. It will be retained for a further period of seven years (minimum) after employment terminates, after which time it will be securely destroyed.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed within six months.

Volunteers

A voluntary member of staff is someone who volunteers their time, skills and abilities to the school free of charge. These volunteer helpers are usually parental helpers, members of the local community or individuals committed to a particular career path who wish to gain experience in a school environment in pursuit of their chosen professional goals.

The same safeguarding procedures as for paid staff are to be adopted for all volunteers with regular contact with children. The details of volunteers and the checks carried out on them will be entered on to the school's Single Central Register and the school will undertake fresh DBS checks on all volunteers who do not undertake any work at or for the school for a period of three consecutive months or more before they can return to volunteering duties.

Volunteers working on an ad-hoc, one off basis (that is not more than once per term) will not be required to obtain DBS clearance, supply referees or attend an interview. The school will, in such cases, ensure the volunteer is never left alone or unsupervised in the presence of young people. Examples of ad hoc occasions are day trips and sports days.