



Recruitment Policy

The Alwyn and Courthouse Federation

Owned by:	Executive Headteacher	Date: Summer 2026
Last reviewed on:	Spring 2023	
Next review due by:	Summer 2029	

1 Scope

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

2025. Amend or add to this as applicable to reflect your own approach.

The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework contains its own requirements for safer recruitment

(pages 24 to 27). [Remove the sections for EYFS provision if your school doesn't have EYFS provision.]

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure the recruitment of both permanent and temporary staff is conducted in a fair, effective and lawful manner while acting as a mechanism to keep children safe.

To achieve this purpose, those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

In line with DfE guidance, the paragraph below will be included in all advertisements, recruitment websites, candidate information packs, person specifications, job descriptions, competency frameworks and induction training materials:

The Alwyn and Courthouse Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check with a check of the DBS Barred List.

3 Principles

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- To ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people occurs at each stage of the recruitment process.
- All applicants receive fair treatment and a high-quality service.
- The application form, job description and person specification are essential tools which will be used throughout the recruitment process.
- Applicants will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job.
- Selection will be carried out by a panel of at least two members, except for the selection of an Executive Headteacher / Head of School where the panel will consist of at least three members including representation from the governing board.
- The governing body must ensure those involved in recruitment have received training that covers, at a minimum, the full content of Part Three (Safer Recruitment) of the 2025 guidance. At least one member of the recruitment panel will have undertaken this safer recruitment training.
- Selection should be based on a minimum of a completed application form, shortlisting and interview.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of the recruitment process should be carried out to assess its effectiveness and the impact on recruitment and retention, equality and diversity.

4 Local authority's entitlement to offer advice

Under The School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 for community, voluntary controlled, community special and maintained nursery schools, the Local Authority has a statutory right to send a representative to all proceedings relating to the selection of any teacher (including the Executive Headteacher and Head of School) and offer advice. The schools allow local authority representative to attend interviews if they so wish. The governing board considers any advice offered by the Local Authority representative.

5 Appointment of an Executive Headteacher and Heads of School

The School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 requires that the governing board of maintained schools:

- notify the Local Authority in writing of any vacancy for the Headteacher and any post for a Deputy headteacher which it had identified as one to be filled (for Alwyn and Courthouse, this equates to Executive Headteacher / Head of School);
- must advertise any such vacancy or post in such manner as it considers appropriate unless it has good reason not to and
- must appoint a selection panel, consisting of at least three of its members an Executive Headteacher, but not those who are staff governors. For Heads of School, a governor must be on the selection panel.

The role of the selection panel is to:

- select applicants for interview;
- notify the Local Authority, in writing, of the names of the applicants selected for interview for the post of Executive Headteacher and
- where appropriate, recommend one of the interviewed applicants to the governing board for approval.

The governing board may wish to seek advice from their linked Local Authority adviser.

6 Recruitment process

Through our recruitment processes we will:

- minimise the risk of appointing someone unsuitable;
- ensure the capabilities and conduct of new staff;
- enable the school to 'track' the process and ensure all relevant steps are taken and
- ensure written records of procedures are available for future reference if required.

6.1 Defining the need to recruit

When an employee leaves, senior leaders review the post and consider whether there is really a need for a replacement for 'like for like' or whether other alternatives could be available. Leaders consider:

- What is the purpose of the post?
- Is the post still required?
- Has the job remained the same or have changing work patterns, organisation or technology resulted in changes to the role?
- Could the tasks be carried out differently e.g., could any additional duties, responsibilities or hours be advertised internally to offer advancement or increased hours to existing staff
- Is job-sharing appropriate?
- Will any review of the role affect the salary?
- Is sufficient funding available?
- Does the governing board need to agree any changes or that the post can be advertised?
- Should the new post be permanent or temporary?

If the decision is to recruit, the next step is to write a job description and person specification if it is a new role, or review the existing job description and person specification if it is an existing role to ensure that they accurately reflect the requirements of the job.

6.2 Job Description

The job description is a list of the responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken by the post holder. It is an effective way of communicating expectations about standards to employees and to school leadership team to help ensure effective performance in the job. The document also assists in writing the person specification by identifying the key attributes required to do the job.

Job descriptions for support staff are evaluated in accordance with the schools' adopted job evaluation scheme. This provides protection against any future claims of unequal pay and ensures fairness and consistency within the workforce. If changes are made to an existing job description it is recommended that the revised job description should be re-evaluated to ensure that the grade reflects the responsibilities of the post.

For teachers, Part 7 of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document defines the professional responsibilities of teachers including (Executive) Headteachers, Deputy and Assistant headteachers (Heads of School) and are considered when deciding on job descriptions for teachers.

For safeguarding purposes, in addition to the list of the responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken, the job description includes the post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons they will be responsible for or come into contact with.

6.3 Person Specification

The person specification is essential to the recruitment process as it defines the type of person being sought. It describes the essential and desirable skills, knowledge, qualifications, specific conditions and competences required to undertake the duties of the job description and should state how these will be tested and assessed during the selection process. It also refers to the person's responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of children.

The person specification is used to:

- inform the advertisement;
- assess applications to shortlist for interview;
- plan interview questions and selection tests and
- assess applicants and make the final selection.

6.4 Application form

All applicants are required to complete an application form. The use of an application form will help to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants in a consistent format. This will assist through the process of shortlisting and interview. CVs are not accepted.

6.5 Advertising the vacancy

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's 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
- Disclose that successful applicant will need to undertake an enhanced DBS check (including a Barred List check).

To help decide on the most effective recruitment method, consideration is given to the nature of the post, the circumstances of the school at the time, the type of person required and budgetary implications.

Whenever possible, the appointment panel agrees dates for short listing and interviews before advertising the post and the date for interviews should be incorporated into the advertisement and information packs to be sent to applicants to ensure that all applicants have notice to make themselves available.

Candidates are encouraged to visit the school and meet with the Executive Headteacher / Head of School (or chair of governors if the vacancy is for an Executive Headteacher).

6.6 Information pack for candidates

Our application and Information packs to candidates include the following:

- 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)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders
- Job description and person specification
- The school's policy on equal opportunities
- Information setting out the extent of the relationship / contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled
- Any other relevant material to attract applicants (e.g., school prospectus)

6.7 Shortlisting applicants

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

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

The information we may 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
- If they are known to the policy and children's local authority social care and
- If they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

All applications will be treated confidentially and only circulated to those individuals involved in the recruitment process e.g., the selection panel.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel, it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

During the shortlisting process, the appointment panel will check to ensure that the application forms are fully completed, the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies and to identify any gaps in employment. Incomplete applications are not accepted and, time permitting, are returned for completion. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment are noted so that they can be taken up at the interview stage if the applicant is shortlisted. In addition, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work, should also be explored and verified.

Where there is disagreement on the suitability of a candidate, this will be openly discussed, and consensus reached if possible. If not, there may have to be a vote by the selection panel members.

A shortlisting form is used to score the applications and record decisions. Applicants are compared with consistency against the person specification criteria which can be evidenced from their application. Reasons for not shortlisting an applicant are recorded and retained for six months to demonstrate how

criteria was not met and that discrimination did not take place. Whenever possible, one consolidated and agreed record of the panel's reasons for selecting or rejecting applicants is kept on file.

6.8 Online Checks

The DSL will undertake online searches of **all shortlisted candidates** to identify issues that the school may wish to **explore with the applicant at interview**. This will be conducted by using a search engine and reviewing common social media platforms. This will only include publicly available information. Any content that raises a concern will be discussed by the senior leadership team and raised with the applicant at interview.

6.9 Interviews

The candidates shortlisted for interview will be sent confirmation in writing, giving adequate notice of the date of interview. The letter includes:

- Date, time and place of the interview
- Format of the interview and whether any tasks / presentations will be involved and what equipment will be made available for the tasks / presentations
- Documents the candidates should bring with them e.g., proof of qualifications, identification

The appointment panel will meet prior to the interview to agree:

- Who will chair the interview
- What questions will be asked, in what order and by whom - questions should clearly relate to criteria in the person specification and the panel should avoid asking any questions about the applicant's health prior to making a job offer as the Equality Act 2010 prohibits this unless it is necessary to:
 - find out whether an applicant can participate in an assessment to test their suitability for the role;
 - establish whether there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable an applicant to take part in the recruitment process;
 - establish whether the applicant will be able to carry out function(s) that is intrinsic to the job concerned and
 - establish if a person has a disability where this is an occupational requirement.

The employer is not permitted to ask the applicant other health questions until they were offered the job.

The selection panel will ask whether an applicant has a disability that would require reasonable adjustments to be made to the recruitment process. The example given in the explanatory notes to the Equality Act is of 'an applicant who discloses a speech impairment and asks for the adjustment of more time being allowed for the interview'.

The panel should also agree the areas which need to be explored with each applicant based on the information provided in their application. Interview and observations should aim to assess.

The candidate's **motivation** for working with children.

Any **gaps in employment** or frequent changes in location.

Inadequate understanding of **appropriate boundaries** or the vulnerability of children.

- Which other selection technique(s) will be used to assess experience and competencies identified e.g., presentation, test
- The timeframe for making a decision
- The arrangements for notifying the candidates of the outcome of the interview
- Who will offer feedback if a candidate requests it and how it will be given

Panel members take notes to assist in making evidenced judgements, assist with feedback and in case of challenge by an unsuccessful applicant. Under data protection provisions, applicants can request copies of the notes taken at the interview relating to their own application.

At the end of the interview the panel will:

- Give applicants the opportunity to ask any questions that they may have

- Explain what will happen next including the timing of the decision or next stage if there is a second interview
- Thank candidates for attending the interview

When all applicants have been interviewed, the panel will discuss each applicant in relation to the person specification, the application form, and the interview performance and any selection test they may have undertaken. The panel will be as objective and fair as possible to select the best candidate for the job. The selection panel use a consistent scoring system to measure the standard of answers given against each question and any presentation or test that forms part of the selection process.

6.10 Notifying unsuccessful candidates/giving feedback

Unsuccessful candidates are advised by telephone promptly and courteously. Feedback is given over the phone if it is wanted by the candidates.

6.9

Seeking references and checking employment history

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

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references (e.g. 'to whom it may concern')
- Not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- Not accept references from a family member
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person.

Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal 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.
- If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- Contact referees to clarify where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- Establish the reason for the applicant leaving their current or most recent post, and ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed
- 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

6.10 Pre-appointment vetting checks

Any offer of employment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, must be conditional on satisfactory completion of the following pre-employment checks.

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.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

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
- 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
- For staff working in early or later years childcare (including those in the 3 to 5 age range, or those working in wraparound care for children under 8), a check to ensure the candidate is not disqualified from such work under the **Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018**.
- For school leaders or those 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, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.
- 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

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.

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All checks should be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the personnel file in an appropriate format
- A record of the checks must also be held centrally in the form of a Single Central Record of checks as required by the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 guidance (see Section 11) and,
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided

7 Record keeping

The Single Central Record covers all staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school.

The checks set out below is the minimum information that must be recorded on the Single Central Record in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The record indicates whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- an identity check
- a barred list check
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate

- a prohibition from teaching check
- a Section 128 check for management positions
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK (this would include recording checks for the European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions)
- a check of qualifications required for the job
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the UK; recording the date this check was undertaken in a separate column
- check to establish that the person is not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 (where applicable to the role).

Copies of all job applications and notes relating to shortlisting and interview decisions are retained for at least 6 months. In the event of a legal challenge from an unsuccessful applicant, these documents must not be destroyed until the case is resolved.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity, right to work in the UK and required qualifications is kept for the personnel file and in accordance with the Data Protection guidelines.

8 Post appointment induction

An induction programme is in place for new employees and tailored to their needs. The purpose of induction is to:

- Provide training and information about the school's policies and procedures
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff within the school
- Provide opportunities for the new member of staff to discuss any issues or concerns about their role and responsibilities
- Enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately (for support staff, these issues can be identified and hopefully addressed during the probationary period)
- Share the school's **Low-Level Concerns Policy**, which includes the definition of a low-level concern and the clear procedure for reporting any concerns about the conduct of any adult working in or on behalf of the school that do not meet the harm threshold.

The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the new member of staff, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned, the induction programme includes information about:

- Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and children
- Other relevant personnel procedures

The programme also includes attendance at child protection training appropriate to the person's role.