**Education settings: Recruitment & Selection Checklist with advice on recruiting during Covid-19 pandemic**

This is a guide to help schools and colleges consider the best way to carry out recruitment safely during the Covid-19 pandemic.

*It is vital that schools and colleges create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children.*

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

**Aims**

* Assist governing bodies and proprietors to act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of a prospective employee
* Understand ways to carry out safer recruitment checks using virtual platforms.

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| **Pre-interview** |
| **Planning – timetable decided:** job specification and description and other documents to be provided to applicants, reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc.   * Consider recruitment timescales maybe extended during this time with having to communicate electronically. * Consider if all those involved in the recruitment process have the necessary ICT skills and ICT equipment to participate fully. * Ensure whoever is leading the recruitment process has someone who can take over from them in case of possible absence. * Consider what your policy is, if a candidate cannot take part in the recruitment process because suffering from Covid-19. * For senior leader roles, you may want to consider making a film of a tour of the school, sending to the interested parties and recruiting personnel being available for questions or discussions. |
| **Vacancy advertised –** (where appropriate) advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy, that is, statement of commitment to safeguard and promoting welfare of children and need for successful applicant to be DBS checked.  Consider if applicants want further information who is available for them to contact, for example, some staff maybe working from home or not available to due self-isolation. |
| **Applications on receipt –** Scrutinised – any discrepancies/ anomalies/gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for shortlisting.  If applications are being returned electronically can the person receiving them and administering them access them if they cannot work on site. If hard copies are returned, ensure someone can access these. |
| **Interview Panel** – should be briefed and at least 1 member suitability trained in safer recruitment.  Identify, where possible, back up safer recruitment trained panel members to ensure interviews can go ahead in the absence of trained panel members not being able to participate. |
| **Shortlist prepared and interview** |
| **References –** Seeking – sought directly from referee on shortlisted candidates; ask recommended specific questions; including any previous safeguarding allegations.   * If the entire recruitment process is going to be virtual, references may be even more important. * References maybe delayed during this time. Ensure this is built into your recruitment timescale. Have a clear procedure for what to do in the scenario of a referee not being able to complete a reference in your timescales, for example, they are suffering from Coronavirus. You many need to seek another reference or inform the successful candidate that as part of the conditional offer you many need to probe their references with them when received. |
| **Reference – on receipt** checked against information on application; scrutinise; any discrepancy/issue of concern noted to take up with referee and/or applicant.   * Verify electronic references. Provide up-to-date contact details for referees to contact recruiting personnel if required. * Consider how the person receiving references can make them available to the interview panel to enable probe at interview. |
| **Invitation to interview –** includes all relevant information and instructions.  Consider sending invites electronically, where possible, to help avoid delays in delivery from postal services and/or not being able to print letters in the event of school closures. |
| **Interview arrangements –** at least 2 interviewers; panel members have authority to appoint; have met and agreed issues and questions/assessment criteria/standards.   * You should complete a virtual interview via a secure Platform approved by your Information Governance Officer. * The common practice of a group discussion between candidates could be replicated on a secure Platform. * You could film the inside of the school, classrooms, etc (if that can be done safely) as an introduction to the role they are applying for, with maybe a short speech from the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, CEO of MAT and/or you as safeguarding lead. * If lots of schools/academies are all recruiting more or less the same way, you want to stand out against the other settings that you are competing with for the best candidates in a virtual recruitment process. |
| **Interview –** explores applicant’s suitability for work with children as well as suitability for the requirements of the post.  Ensure recruitment records can be kept securely, especially where recruitment takes place virtually. Preferably recruitment records will be kept electronically at all times and then sent securely to the person leading the recruitment process to ensure confidential storage.  When recruiting remotely allow time for technical difficulties to be overcome. You may want to run tests to ensure all those on the panel can access any virtual platforms being used. Also, a member of the panel may want to complete a test with all candidates prior to the interview to help reduce the likelihood of unsuccessful interviews.  Where interviews do not take place face-to-face, at the earliest opportunity a wet signature must be obtained on the application form from the successful candidate.  You could consider the following:   * devise an online / virtual lesson for their subject or age group * include all the steps that should be taken to make an online / virtual lesson as safe as possible (a strong candidate will consider the safety of children and staff rather than just one or the other) * for senior posts, write a COVID learning strategy or COVID risk assessment * analysis and action planning of last year's school data * complete an activity identifying the safeguarding issues raised by COVID and school closures * for pastoral roles, a paper on what schools should consider when meeting the mental health/wellbeing needs of children during and post-COVID. |
| **Any self-disclosed criminal history or issues of suitability –** check information would not be filtered / protected, discuss context with candidate at interview, record what was discussed, seek additional advice if necessary.  Consider who will send and collate self-disclosure forms to/from shortlisted candidates and forward to the chair of the recruitment panel. Who will/can pick up this task if the person responsible is absent. |
| **Note –** Identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on the day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents; copies of documents taken and placed on file.  Consider who will verify ID and qualification documents. It is recommended for the checking of all ID and documents the following advice is followed. Please see Temporary changes to ID checking guidelines are being made as a result of the coronavirus outbreak <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines> |
| **Conditional offer of appointment –** offer of appointment is made on conditional satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks and consideration of a probationary period. |
| **References -** receive and check (If not obtained and scrutinised previously) any issues are clarified with referee and/or candidate. Electronic references are verified as from a legitimate source. |
| **Identity & Qualifications** (If that could not be verified at interview)  Please see Temporary changes to ID checking guidelines are being made as a result of the coronavirus outbreak <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines> |
| **Evidence of right to work in the UK** – refer to <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk> for guidance.  Consider who will verify ID and qualification documents. It is recommended for the checking of all ID and documents the following advice is followed. At the earliest opportunity a copy of the right to work evidence must be obtained to be held on the staff file.  There is an amended process for the Right to Work Checks during this Lockdown Period  [Coronavirus (COVID-19): right to work checks - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-right-to-work-checks) |
| **DBS Certificate –** Apply for relevant level of DBS, which will be sent back to the applicant. Applicant should then present the original certificate to the recruiting manager. The recruiting manager should make a note on the Single Central Record of the date it was seen by them as well as the date of issue.  Any disclosed information relevant to suitability should be compared with the self-disclosure.  Telford & Wrekin Council HR do not support the use of the DBS update service. However, for other education settings who have an alternative HR provider please follow their advice on the use of the DBS update service. Where it is used please consider for applicants who are signed up to the DBS update service, permission must be sought from the candidate to view the certificate by the recruiting manager. If it isn’t at the appropriate level or the disclosure details have changed, a new DBS must be obtained  Consider who and how the original DBS certificate will be presented to the recruitment manager or their nominated representative. This could be through posting it securely to the school, arranging to view it virtually and presenting to the school in person, while following appropriate social distancing guidelines.  Please see Temporary changes to ID checking guidelines are being made as a result of the coronavirus outbreak <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines> |
| **Barred list check** – check the candidate is not barred from taking up the post.  For those education settings who receive support from Telford & Wrekin Council HR please follow this guidance: For Barred list check this should be undertaken via the enhanced DBS check. If you need a separate barred list check, for example if you need to complete a pre-DBS risk assessment this can be undertaken by HR – please email hrhelpdesk@telford.gov.uk |
| **Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)** – (for teaching posts in maintained schools) the teacher has obtained QTS or is exempt from the requirement to hold QTS (for teaching posts in FE colleges), the teacher has obtained a PGCE or Certificate of Education (Cert. Ed) or FE Teaching Certificate |
| **Prohibition** – *(for teaching posts and those support staff doing teaching work)* the teacher has not been included in the prohibition list, interim prohibition list or subject to GTCE sanctions |
| **Prohibition from management s128 checks** *(independent/free schools/academies and maintained school governors)* **–** anyone appointed to a management position is not barred from management by the Secretary of State |
| **Health –** Ensure the candidate is medically fit to take up the post. This requirement can be satisfied by using a self-declaration medical form. For those education settings who receive support from Telford & Wrekin Council HR please send the self-declaration medical form through to HR for assessment, email hrhelpdesk@telford.gov.uk |
| **Disqualification from childcare** – (for relevant posts only)  Consider how you will ensure candidates complete a relevant self-disclosure. This could be in person following social distancing guidelines, send and return of form via post or electronic self-disclosure. |
| **Employing individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK –** These individuals must undergo the same checks as any other candidate, as well as further checks so that relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. For teaching posts, this will include a check of the EEA list, although please note after this the 1 January 2021 this will no longer be maintained so other checks will need to be made for those that have lived or worked in EEA country after that date.  Consider who and how the original overseas checks will be presented to the recruitment manager or their nominated representative. This could be through posting it securely to the school, arranging to view it virtually and presenting to the school in person, while following appropriate social distancing guidelines. At the earliest opportunity a copy of the overseas check evidence must be obtained to be held on file. |
| **Appointment and probationary period** |
| **Induction** covering all requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education.  For relevant posts, consider who will provide an induction and how this will be done. For example, virtual induction and/or induction following social distancing guidelines.  **Please note for Telford & Wrekin Council maintained or voluntary maintained schools probationary periods are not used.** |

**Support Available**

**Telford & Wrekin HR Support**

Please be reminded that specific guidance on safer recruitment checks and template forms are available via the HR Advisory SharePoint site for those of you that buy in these services from Telford & Wrekin Council HR Services [Telford & Wrekin HR Safer Recruitment Guidance](https://telfordcorporate.sharepoint.com/sites/TWHRAdvSchools/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?viewid=fc5e8092%2D7e51%2D4efc%2Dbf3f%2D3d2bb93e9d35&id=%2Fsites%2FTWHRAdvSchools%2FShared%20Documents%2FModel%20HR%20Policies%2C%20letters%20and%20guidance%20documents%2FSafer%20Recruitment%20Guidance)

If you have any queries in respect of recruitment processes/safer recruitment then please email your named HR Advisor or [hrhelpdesk@telford.gov.uk](mailto:hrhelpdesk@telford.gov.uk)

**West Midlands Employers**

They provide advice, guidance and specific support about recruitment for schools which has been adapted to reflect the restrictions around Covid-19 and recruitment, for more information please access their website [WME Recruitment Support](https://wmecovid19.org.uk/resourcing/)