



Recruitment and selection policy

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Approved by: Chief Executive Officer

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**THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
ACCOMPANYING GUIDANCE**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Unity Schools Partnership (“the Trust”) Board of Directors recognises that recruiting and retaining high quality staff is critical to the Trust’s success. Successful appointments have a direct impact on the quality of teaching and learning. This policy and procedure provides information and resources for all stages of the recruitment and selection process, including safer recruitment practices and the regulatory requirements around the appointment of school staff.

Throughout recruitment and selection processes, schools should be mindful of their responsibilities under equalities legislation, ensuring their practices are not discriminatory and consider reasonable adjustments related to disability. Guidance on equal opportunities, equal pay, discrimination in employment and employment and disability is provided in the Trust’s Equal Opportunities policy and guidance document.

1.1 Staffing structure

The Trust’s central team and every individual school should have a staffing structure agreed by the governing body, which has been developed in consultation with staff. The staffing structure should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it makes effective use of staffing resources and whenever it is proposed to make significant changes. The structure should specify lines of management accountability and levels of responsibility for each post, and should link explicitly to the Trust’s pay policy.

All recruitment should be to a post in the staffing structure, following a review of the post by the appropriate level of management and consideration as to whether it is necessary to fill the vacancy at all, or whether the post should be changed in some way. Each post to be recruited to is approved by the Director of Primary / Secondary Education following consultation with the school’s allocated member of the finance team.

Those managing the recruitment process should ensure there is an up-to-date job description (setting out the duties and describing the context of the post) and person specification (setting out the qualifications, experience, etc, required to carry out the duties of the post) available and that these inform every stage of the recruitment and selection process. Example job descriptions and person specifications are available from the Trust’s HR Team and can also be found in the HR shared area of the Trust’s website.

Local governing bodies should also consider arrangements for CPD, career progression and succession planning, to ensure they are effectively managing the long-term recruitment and retention needs of the school.

1.2 Safer Recruitment

The Trust and all its schools will follow current statutory guidance on safer recruitment. At all stages of the recruitment, selection and appointment process the Trust includes an explicit statement about the organisation’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

1.3 Delegation of responsibility for Recruitment and Selection

The Trust's arrangements are that decisions on recruitment of all school staff other than headteachers are delegated to the Headteacher. The HR Team and Director of Primary/Secondary Education are available to provide support as is helpful for schools. Headteachers will generally involve local governing body members in interviews for more senior posts and the Director of Primary/Secondary Education will be consulted on the appointment of deputy and assistant headteachers. Agreement on a starting salary and/or any recruitment incentives to individuals selected for appointment will be agreed when the post is approved for advertising.

A Headteacher should not take any part in the arrangements for selecting their successor. The Trust will work with the local governing body on this appointment.

1.4 Headteacher appointments

Every school must appoint a Headteacher. When a headship vacancy occurs the Trust will discuss with the local governing body the following:

- As necessary, the appointment of a member of staff to carry out the functions of a Headteacher pending the appointment of a Headteacher.
- Review the salary range of the Headteacher.
- Establish a selection panel to assist in the appointment process. The selection panel will consist of at least three governors alongside the Chief Executive/Director of Primary Education/Director of Secondary Education. Schools may consider a larger group in order to ensure a balanced representation of interests and viewpoints whilst ensuring this does not overwhelm the candidate at the interview stage
- Advertise the post in an appropriate manner, generally advertising the vacancy at a national level. Any decision not to advertise should only be taken where the Trust and local governing body can demonstrate there is a good reason not to. All decisions should be fully documented.

The selection panel will make a recommendation that is endorsed and approved by the Chief Executive.

1.5 Appointment of other Staff

The Headteacher will normally take the lead in teacher recruitment and has the right to be consulted and attend all relevant selection meetings of governors.

The Headteacher will normally take the lead in recruitment of support staff.

2. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

2.1 Information for Candidates

Full and clear information should be provided for candidates on:

- The school and its current priorities/challenges

- Some of the benefits of living and working in the area
- Expectations for the post, including a detailed job description
- The likely skills and abilities of the successful candidate, usually detailed in a person specification
- Salary arrangements, including any other allowance, payment or recruitment incentive that may be part of the rewards package
- The school's commitment to safeguarding
- Where candidates can find more information and how to apply, with all the relevant information in an easily accessible place.

2.2 Advertising

All permanent vacancies, and temporary vacancies for longer than one year, should be advertised openly, both internally and externally.

Under the Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 and the Agency Worker Regulations 2010, both temporary and agency workers have a right to be informed about job vacancies in the same way as permanent staff. Vacancy details should be displayed in a place where all employees would be expected to see them or provided directly to the individuals.

All advertisements should include a statement about the school's commitment to safeguarding children and may also make reference to the requirement for a check of criminal records.

2.3 Application Forms

Schools should always use the Trust's standard application form and ensure that candidates complete it properly and fully and sign the form. Applications made on-line and submitted electronically should be signed by the candidate at the interview.

The candidate's employment history should give precise dates of employment (i.e. day and month as well as year) so that any gaps in employment history cannot be disguised.

3. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

3.1 DfE Guidance

All Trust schools should be familiar with the DfE's current statutory guidance "Keeping children safe in education", September 2018: [KCSIE](#) and its detailed advice on safer recruitment. Schools should ensure that they remain familiar with any updated DfE guidance.

3.2 Safer recruitment training

All Trust schools are required to ensure that at least one member of any recruitment panel has received appropriate training in line with safeguarding guidance. School leaders are

free to use their professional judgement to determine appropriate training for the needs of their staff and their school.

3.3 Pre-employment Checks

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken for all school appointments:

1. Employment References
2. Identity
3. Enhanced DBS and Barred List
4. Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, where appropriate to the role
5. Prohibition from teaching, for those engaged in teaching work
6. Section 128 check, for management positions
7. Health
8. Right to work in the UK
9. Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK; this would include checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions
10. Professional qualifications, as appropriate.

All Trust schools should actively manage the progress of pre-employment checks to ensure that wherever practicable the checks have been completed before the applicant starts work. A checklist is provided in the accompanying guidance and schools should ensure that the outcomes of all checks are recorded in their Single Central Record (see section 3.13). A thorough risk assessment, with the advice of one of the Trust's HR managers, should be undertaken when considering allowing an applicant to start work while any pre-employment checks remain outstanding and additional supervision may be necessary if this is agreed.

All Trust schools should seek written confirmation from any employment agency that it uses (for example, to obtain supply teachers) that the agency has undertaken all necessary pre-employment checks.

3.4 Employment References

References should always be sought on applicants for paid employment. Those references should always include one from an applicant's current employer. Where an applicant is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving should be obtained from the organisation at which they were employed. Where an applicant has not been very long in their current or most recent post, the second reference should be from the previous employer.

If necessary, where there is a history of short employments, schools should seek a further reference or references from a previous employer(s), ensuring references always cover at least the five most recent years of employment. Employers' references should be provided by an authoritative source in the employer's organisation. In schools, this will normally be the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Schools

should ensure that a reference is not, in effect, a personal reference from a colleague at the same place of work.

References should be sought using a standard pro forma which asks referees for specific information about the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people. A recommended reference request proforma is included in the accompanying guidance. In order to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the proforma asks for health-related information to be supplied in "Part 2" of the reference form, allowing this information to be separated upon receipt and only considered after any conditional offer of employment.

References should be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, and should be obtained before interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview. In exceptional circumstances it might not be possible to obtain references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because a candidate strongly objects to their current employer being approached at that stage, but that should be the aim in all cases.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate should also be asked at interview if there is anything they wish to declare or discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to their referees. References must be obtained and scrutinised very carefully and any concerns should be resolved to the satisfaction of the school, before a person's appointment is confirmed and before they start work.

3.5 Identity

All Trust schools must verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available.

3.6 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS checks)

All Unity Schools Partnership employees are required to obtain a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as part of their pre-employment checks. All offers of employment will be conditional upon a satisfactory DBS disclosure.

A DBS certificate must be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. A separate barred list check must be made if an individual is to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available. A person may not be employed to work with children or young people if they are barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service, i.e. their name appears on the Barred List. In addition, information regarding convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings provided as part of a DBS check may suggest that the person offered an appointment is unsuitable for that post. Schools should actively follow up on progress with applications. Once received, applicants must bring their DBS certificate into school to be checked, both in terms of contents and authenticity.

3.7 Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

Under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, made under the Childcare Act 2006, individuals may be disqualified from providing certain early and later years childcare or being directly concerned with the management of that provision, where

they are included in the Children's Barred List, have committed certain violent and sexual criminal offences or because of certain orders or determinations made in relation to the care of children, childcare and private fostering.

All Trust schools are required to ensure relevant staff (including those undertaking training in schools (both salaried and unsalaried), casual workers and volunteers) are made aware of the legislation. Schools must ensure they do not knowingly employ a person who is disqualified. See separate guidance for further information.

Where the legislation is relevant to the role, schools should ask applicants to complete a staff self-declaration form (see accompanying guidance) prior to commencing work. Advice on dealing with positive declarations is available from the Trust's HR Team.

3.8 Teacher Prohibition Order checks

All Trust schools are required to check that a candidate to be employed in a role that involves teaching work¹ is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.

3.9 Health

Once a conditional offer of employment has been made, fitness for the post should be assessed through the school's occupational provider, normally via the completion of a Health Assessment Questionnaire. Employment should not be confirmed until the school has received confirmation of the applicant's fitness for the post.

Subject to the employer's duties under the Equality Act 2010 (i.e. to make reasonable adjustments) a person may not be appointed as a teacher or worker with young people (nor continue in that capacity) if they do not have the requisite health and mental and physical capacity. Again, schools should actively manage progress with health assessments, to ensure that all necessary information is received and considered before employment commences.

All Trust schools should seek advice from the Trust's HR Team on any information regarding health or disability declared on application forms or at interview and how this may be further considered within the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

3.10 Right to work in the UK

Under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, employers are required to verify an employee's right to work in the UK before employment begins.

All Trust schools must ensure they check, copy and retain evidence of documents described in the acceptable documents list in the accompanying guidance.

3.11 Further checks if the person has lived or worked outside the UK

¹The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 define teaching work as: planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils. These activities are not teaching work for the purposes of these Regulations if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the head teacher to provide such direction and supervision.

These further checks should include a check for information about any teacher sanction or restriction that an EEA professional regulating authority has imposed, using the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) Teacher Services' system. Although restrictions imposed by another EEA regulating authority do not prevent a person from taking up teaching positions in England, schools and colleges should consider the circumstances that led to the restriction or sanction being imposed when considering a candidate's suitability for employment.

Whilst a DBS check considers any criminal record in the UK, it cannot currently assess criminal records held overseas. Therefore, schools should ask any candidate who has lived outside of the UK for more than six months in the past five years, to obtain a criminal record check from the country they lived in. This is commonly referred to as a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' but has many different names including Certificate of Clearance and Certificate of no Criminal Conviction. The candidate will need to obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct in addition to a DBS check.

3.12 Professional qualifications

Schools should ask to see original or certified copies of all relevant professional qualifications described in the candidate's application form, particularly where these have been stated as 'essential' criteria on the person specification for the post. The Teacher Services system should be used to verify any award of QTS (Qualified Teacher Status), and the completion of teacher induction or probation.

4. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD

All Trust schools must keep a single central record (SCR). The SCR must cover the following people:

- All staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school; and
- All members of the proprietor body i.e. the local governing body (the Trust's central SCR includes its members and trustees).

The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes) is 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 European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions

- A check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

The Trust recommends that its schools also record the following pre-employment checks on the SCR:

- References;
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, where relevant to the role; and
- Health

For agency supply staff, all Trust schools must also include whether written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS certificate check has been provided in respect of the member staff. The date on which any certificate was obtained should also be recorded.

Where checks are carried out on volunteers, schools should record these on the single central record.

5. THE SELECTION PROCESS

5.1 Shortlisting

The person specification for the post should detail all of the essential and desirable criteria against which the final appointment decision will be made. Before short-listing, the recruiting manager(s) should identify those criteria that can/will be assessed from the application form and those that will be assessed during the later stages of the selection process.

Shortlisting should include careful checking to ensure that information is not contradictory or incomplete, in particular, in relation to employment history and any gaps on the application form which may need to be followed up as part of any interview and in reference checks.

5.2 Interviews

All Trust schools should conduct a formal interview for all appointments, even if there is only one candidate. Internal applicants should be subjected to exactly the same procedure as external applicants. The interview process should be compliant with Safer Recruitment practices (see accompanying guidance).

6. APPOINTMENT AND FOLLOW UP

6.1 The appointment decision

The recruiting manager may make a provisional and conditional offer of appointment to the preferred candidate on behalf of the Trust. In doing so, the school must make it clear that the offer is subject to satisfactory completion of a number of pre-employment checks. The preferred candidate should be asked to give a verbal acceptance of the offer.

A conditional offer of employment should be confirmed in writing by the school, ahead of completion of all necessary employment checks and the issue of full terms and conditions of employment.

If no appointment is made for whatever reason the panel should decide whether a further selection process could be held on the basis of the applications already received or if the post should be re-advertised.

6.2 Feedback to candidates

Feedback should normally be offered to all candidates, both successful and unsuccessful.

6.3 Actions following a conditional offer

Unless current employment means this is not necessary, the school should provide the successful candidate with a "Pre-employment Pack" (available from the Trust's HR transactional service provider, Schools' Choice), to initiate various pre-employment checks and ensure appropriate payroll and pensions information is received/returned.

The school should also notify the Schools' Choice HR Processing Team of the appointment through the completion of an E-Form.

The Schools' Choice HR Processing Team will prepare and issue a letter of appointment, subject to the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks. Schools should actively manage the completion of all pre-employment checks prior to appointment.

6.4 Induction and probationary procedures

All new external appointments to the Trust are subject to a probationary period, normally of 6 months (see separate policy and procedure). During the probationary period, the employee will be supported through a structured induction programme which should contain the following elements:

- A clear outline of the job/role requirements;
- Explanation of terms and conditions including key policies;
- Orientation (physical) - describing where the facilities are;
- Orientation (organisational) - showing how the employee fits into the team and how their role fits with the school's and/or the wider Trust's strategy and goals;
- An awareness of other functions within the organisation, and how the employee fits within them;
- Meeting with key senior employees (either face to face or through the use of technology);
- Health and safety information - this is a legal requirement;
- Details of the school's and/or the wider Trust's history, its culture, values and services;
- Practical information such as how to contact IT and when the fire alarm tests take place.

7. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Equal Opportunities

Schools should note particularly the importance of using the appropriate equal opportunities monitoring processes to record and monitor appropriate information about the gender, ethnic origin and disability of all candidates.

7.2 Internally promoted posts

There may be occasions when the school wishes to consider an internal promotion without first advertising externally (see Leadership Development Programme policy and procedure)

7.3 Temporary appointments

Any teaching appointment for more than four months must be made according to the school's full appointment procedure.

Where the post is for less than four months a simpler process is available; posts do not need to be advertised, nor formal interviews arranged. However, all appointments should be subject to an interview process and the KCSIE statutory guidance should still be followed. Pre-employment checks are still required and any offer of appointment must therefore be made subject to these requirements.

7.4 Teaching Qualifications

Teachers who obtained qualified teacher status after 7 May 1999 must complete an induction period of three school terms in order to remain eligible for employment as a teacher in maintained schools. Newly qualified teachers should have a timetable of only 90% of normal average teaching time in order to allow for the induction programme and the local governing body should take account of the school's responsibility to provide the necessary monitoring, support and assessment for the induction period.

Employment of teachers from within the EU/EEA Member States and other overseas trained teachers should be undertaken with reference to the accompanying guidance. For further information, contact the Trust's HR Team. A person with QTLS status and membership of the IfL will automatically be recognised as a qualified teacher in all Trust schools.

There is no longer a general requirement for teaching staff in academies to have QTS. It is the intention of the Trust however to appoint an individual with QTS to every teaching post if possible. The Trust will comply with the requirement that all Special Educational Needs Coordinators and designated teachers for looked after children must have QTS, including those in academies. All teachers in special academies must hold QTS.

This policy and procedure is non-contractual and may be updated from time to time following consultation through the Trust's JCNC arrangements.