



“You are the light of the world, let your light shine!”

## **Whaddon Church of England School**

### **Safer Recruitment Policy**

**2024-2025**

Revised: September 2024

Adopted: March 2025

Renew date: September 2025

*“Challenging each other, to be our best, through actions, choices and words, so we can all shine.”*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. At Whaddon Church of England School it is important to us that every member of the school community feels safe, valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a school community, built on a clear Christian foundation and rooted in Christian values. We aim to provide the highest quality all round education, for each and every child, in partnership with parents, within the context of a Christian community. Safeguarding is the most important aspect of our school’s culture.
- 1.2. Whaddon Church of England School is committed to creating a school culture where vigilance and exemplary behaviour is at the heart of our inclusive and engaging learning experiences. Everyone- staff, children and parents alike, are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, to accept responsibility for their behaviour, and encourage others to do the same with a foundation of forgiveness and disagreeing well.
- 1.3. Our school policies are therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a positive and collaborative way. Our policies underpin an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure and well prepared for the next phase of their education and for life in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Britain.
- 1.4. Our school’s vision and values are based upon Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. These are a means of promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to shine brightly. Our shared school values are:

**Wisdom-** honesty, integrity, grace

**Compassion-** forgiveness, respect, advocacy, kindness

**Endurance-** courage, justice, ambition, patience

These core values and each decision we make are all addressed through the lens of our school vision

**“You are the light of the world, let your light shine!” Matthew 5: 14-16**

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Whaddon C of E School  
Stock Lane  
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*“Challenging each other, to be our best, through actions, choices and words, so we can all shine.”*

1.5. The school encourages every member of the school community to behave in a considerate way towards others and by following these set of values, so that our vision is lived and part of our school culture and ethos.

## **2. Recruitment and selection process**

To ensure that we recruit the best and most suitable people to work in our school, the members of our community involved in the recruitment and employment of staff have received appropriate safer recruitment training. This is updated at least annually, or at the point of induction and then inline with the CPD schedule.

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.

### **2.1. Advertising**

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

### **2.2. Application forms**

Buckinghamshire Council application forms will:

- 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)

### **2.3. Shortlisting**

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 will 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
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates, to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.

#### **2.4. 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
- 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
- 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

#### **2.5. Interview and selection**

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

### **3. Pre-appointment vetting 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.

### 3.1. 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 using TP Health
- 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 to the role/job description
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- 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 the circumstances of 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.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

### 4. Social Media Vetting checks

Keeping Children safe in Education states that schools should 'consider' carrying out an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates.

Whaddon Church of England School consider that to ensure robust safer recruitment procedures, it is useful for these checks to be carried out with the intention of identifying any safeguarding or suitability issues that may hinder a thorough recruitment process.

These searches will not be discriminatory and will not affect candidate's ability to be successful in their application being mindful of the 9 protected characteristics. Any 'inconsistencies' or questions will be addressed at interview. When being invited for interview, potential staff will be made aware of these searches.

Our procedure:

- Candidates will be made aware of the searches at the point of interview. Candidates will also be reminded that they will have the chance to address any issues of concern that come up during the search at interview.
- Any searches will be carried out by the same consistent member of our team, who will not be directly involved in the recruitment process. This will remove unconscious bias.
- The Online Search Record will be completed for each candidate which details the exact checks and searches that will be made. A copy of this can be found in Appendix One.

Online searches will also look to confirm a candidate's eligibility and to check relevant information. For example, it could reveal:

- A work history that doesn't match the application form / references provided (for example on LinkedIn)
- An education history that doesn't match the stated qualifications
- Attitudes that suggest the candidate is unsuitable for the role or risks damaging your school's reputation, for example posting pictures of/with students or expressing discriminatory opinions

All relevant care will be taken as Whaddon Church of England School are aware that certain information may be misleading due to being:

- Out of date
- Out of context or untrue
- Relating to someone else, especially if the candidate has a common name or uses a social media pseudonym.

If necessary, advice will be taken by the recruitment teams at Buckinghamshire Council HR team for advice throughout the process.

## 5. Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or

- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- We believe the ‘harm test’ is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

## **6. Agency and third-party staff**

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

## **7. Contractors**

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check / letter of assurance (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children.
- We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

For self-employed contractors such as music teachers or sports coaches, 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 decide that the circumstances of 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. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

## **8. Trainee/student teachers**

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006.

## **9. Volunteers**

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity

- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- 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 decide that the circumstances of 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. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

## **10. Governors**

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

## **11. Staff working in alternative provision settings**

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

## **12. Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Work experience on our site will involve pre-work place checks between the school the work experience pupil attends and the setting they will be working in.

A face to face meeting with regular on-site visits will be arranged, between schools and the relevant liability insurance and work experience risk assessments will be shared ahead of the placement commencing.

## **13. Pupils staying with host families**

Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.





## APPENDIX ONE -SAFER RECRUITMENT – ONLINE SEARCH RECORD

Candidate name:

Role shortlisted for:

Searcher name:

Date and time of online search:

SEARCH PARAMETERS	CONCERNS RAISED
<p>Google search: The following terms, looking at the first page of results:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 'Candidate name'</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 'Candidate name' + 'current school/employment'</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 'Candidate name' + 'previous school/employment'</p> <p>Websites: The candidate's name was typed into the search function of the following websites. If a profile is found, the recent activity is looked at :</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Twitter (checked the top 10 results)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Facebook (checked the top 10 results)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Instagram (checked the top 10 results)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Their current school's website</p>	<p>Only record information that suggests the candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is unqualified for the role</li> <li>Poses a potential safeguarding risk</li> <li>Risks damaging the reputation of the school</li> </ul> <p><b>Don't</b> include any irrelevant personal information.</p>