



Recruitment and Selection Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 Southern Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

1.2 The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Equality policy.

1.3 The Trust will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.

1.4 We will comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 3 with regard to DBS and other pre-employment checks.

2. Delegation of Appointments and Constitution of Appointments Panels

2.1 The Trust delegates the power to offer employment for all posts below the level of Principal to the CEO.

2.2 The CEO is expected to involve Governors and the Diocese in the appointment of Principals.

2.3 Selection panels will comprise a minimum of two people (normally three). In accordance with the statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

3. Advertising

3.1 All vacant posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. This will normally mean placing an advertisement externally and internally concurrently.

3.2 Where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates, or staff are at risk of redundancy, vacancies may be advertised internally before an external advertisement.

3.3 There may be exceptional circumstances where a position may be ring fenced and no internal advertisement is placed.

3.4 Advertisements will be placed for a reasonable period of time to allow for the best possible pool of applicants and to ensure there is sufficient time to notify absent colleagues of appropriate vacancies.

4. Information for Applicants

All applicants for all vacant posts will be provided with:

4.1 A job description outlining the duties of the post and an indication of where the post fits into the organisational structure of the school. A person specification may also be provided.

4.2 An Application Form. CVs will not be accepted

4.3 An Information pack containing:

- a description of the school relevant to the vacant post
- reference to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- DBS and other pre-employment requirements
- a statement that canvassing any member of staff, or member of the Governing Body, directly or indirectly, is prohibited and will be considered a disqualification
- the closing date for the receipt of applications
- outline of terms of employment including salary

5. Short Listing and Reference Requests

5.1 The selection panel will use an agreed short listing form. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants. The selection panel will agree the candidates to be called for interview.

5.2 The selection panel will take up at least two references on each short listed candidate. If a candidate for a post working with children is not currently employed, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment working with children to confirm details of their employment and their reasons for leaving.

5.3 Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm:

- the referee's relationship with the candidate;
- details of the applicant's current post and salary;
- performance history and conduct;
- any disciplinary action involving the safety and welfare of children, including any in which the sanction has expired;
- details of any substantiated allegations or concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children;
- whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children. If so, the school will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children.

5.4 References are the "property" of the selection panel and strict confidentiality will be observed. Employer testimonials or 'bearer references' i.e. those provided by the candidate and/or marked 'to whom it may concern' will not be accepted. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied. The selection panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the candidate for any post. References will be verified and any discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

5.5 If the field of applicants is felt to be weak the post may be re-advertised.

5.6 Where Southern Academy Trust leaders / managers are asked to provide references guidance should be obtained from the Trust's HR Manager.

6. Interviews

6.1 The format, style and duration of the interviews are matters for the Manager/Leader/HR Manager/Headteacher/Principal or CEO to decide in consultation with any governors involved in the process but the following will be adhered to:

6.1.1 Briefing: All candidates will be given relevant information about the school to enable the candidate to make further enquiries about the suitability of the advertised job.

6.1.2 The formal interview: Before the interviews the selection panel will agree on the interview format. The questions asked will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirement of the job description and the person specification and each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post. The same areas of questioning will be covered for each applicant and no questions which would discriminate directly or indirectly on protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 will be asked. The selection process for every post, will include exploration of the candidate's understanding of child safeguarding issues. The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions, other than those protected, that the candidate has declared and are relevant to the prospective employment.

6.2 The recruitment documentation will be retained for six months from the date of interview. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. After six months all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

7. Offer of Employment by the CEO

7.1 The offer of employment by the CEO and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties subject to verification of right to work in the UK, qualifications requirements, satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure, teacher prohibition and barred list checks, pre-employment medical screening and satisfactory references. The successful candidate will be informed verbally, then by offer letter that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks.

7.2 No other person other than the CEO may offer employment in the Trust unless this is approved by the CEO and such authority has been delegated.

8. Personnel file and Single Central Record

8.1 Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of his/her employment with the Trust including:

- application form
- interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in the employment history
- references – minimum of 2
- proof of identity
- proof of right to work in the UK

- proof of relevant academic qualifications
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable)
- evidence of medical clearance from the Occupational Health service
- evidence of DBS clearance, Barred List and Teacher Prohibition checks
- offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment

8.2 The Trust will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

8.3 The Trust will make any further checks we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. The applicant will be advised of such checks.

9. Start of Employment and Induction

9.1 The pre-employment checks listed in paragraph 7.1 above must be completed before the employee starts work. Exceptions will only be made in circumstances where a risk assessment has been undertaken. Exceptions will never be made in the case of the Barred List and Teacher Prohibition checks.

9.2 All new employees will be provided with an induction programme which will cover all relevant matters of school policy but in particular safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

10. Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner as necessary.