

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Rationale

Deira Private School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all the children and expects all its staff members and the members of its community to share this commitment. Safer recruitment is the first step towards safeguarding children and can be achieved through effective recruitment procedures.

Aims

The document aims to describe the recruitment and selection process and provide a set of operating guidelines when hiring new staff. It also sets out the minimum requirements to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants unsuitable for work with children;
- identify and reject applicants unsuitable for work with children.

Responsibility

The School Principal has the overall responsibility for hiring new staff members and is supported by the Assistant Principal.

Procedures

Stage One: Advertising and Inviting Applications

Advertisements for all posts will clearly stipulate the stance adopted by the school through the inclusion of the following statement:

“Deira Private School is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory Police Check.”

- Advertisements are made in the local newspaper/Linkedin/social media and through the recruitment agency if necessary.
- Information about the vacancy is also passed within the staff members who may refer a suitable candidate.

Stage Two: Pre -Application Pack

The following pre-employment checks must be undertaken by responsible individuals designated by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the School for every candidate selected for appointment at DePS:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory professional references, one of which will be from the current or most recent employer, completed in the standard Reference Pro-forma (Appendices C-H);
- Verification of the candidate’s identity in line with the requirements of The Immigration Department of the UAE or country of work placement
- A Barred List Check (for UK nationals);
- A prohibition from teaching check (UK, USA, EEA teaching staff);

- A satisfactory police clearance from the country of origin
- Verification of qualifications;
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers, medical professionals, and therapists.

Prospective applicants are supplied with the following:

- Application Form
- Job Description & Person Specification
- School prospectus and information pack
- Selection Procedure for the post

All applicants must complete the application form in full.

Stage Three: Applicant Short-Listing

Following the analysis of all applications, candidates for the post and suited to the job description and person specification will be short-listed in consultation with the Principal

Where possible, references will be taken up before the selection stage. However should a candidate progress to selection and interview stage prior to their receipt, appointments would be subject to satisfactory references.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any inconsistencies or discrepancies. A written note will be kept of any such exchanges.

Stage Four: Interview

Candidates selected for interview will have to provide:

- proof of identity
- certificates of qualifications
- eligibility to live and work in the UAE (when under the sponsorship of Husband or Father)

The interview process will seek to assess each candidate in terms of fulfilling the requirements of the post and significantly in terms of safer recruitment practices will explore attitudes towards working with children. (Appendix 1)

Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- to explain satisfactorily any inconsistencies or discrepancies in the information available to the interviewers;
- to declare any information that is likely to appear on a Police Check;

- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

Interviews are conducted face-to-face where possible, or else by phone.

References

References are sought directly from the referee by telephone or e-mail.

Stage Five: Successful Candidate: Pre Employment Checks

Further to those checks at the point of interview the candidate will be required to provide all of the following prior to taking up the post being undertaken:

- receipt of at least two satisfactory references
- a satisfactory Police Check
- verification of professional status qualifications
- passport copy
- passport size pictures

All staff must sign an internal contract that specifies the job description and duties & responsibilities as well as the terms and conditions of the employment.

Work permits and residence visas are applied for staff who are hired on the school sponsorship and candidates are also required to sign a 'labour contract' that is part of the government procedures when applying for a work permit. The contents of this contract are stipulated by the Ministry of Labour and governed by the laws of the country.

Staff on husband's or father's sponsorship only need work permits.

Stage Six: Recording and Monitoring New Starters

The Single Central Record Tracker (SCRT)

Schools must keep a SCR to evidence they have carried out the range of checks required by law on their staff. All individuals who work in regular contact with children, including volunteers and those employed by third parties (including Teacher Trainees) must be included on the SCRT, along with details of all members of the Proprietor Body.

The SCRT must contain the following fields:

- Full name of staff member
- Position and Start date
- Identity check
- Qualifications
- Right to Work in the UAE
- Local Police Check Overseas checks
- References

- Application Form

Best practice for all documents copied, dated and signed is to state they are a "copy of the original" so that there is no doubt on record. It also helps if the signature has the name printed underneath for future reference.

The checker must input the following on to the SCR (in SCRT):

- Confirm the check is required by switching the appropriate tab to green
- the date the original documentation was seen their (the checker's) initials
- if there is no requirement to see documentation (e.g., an overseas check is not required) the appropriate tab should be switched to 'non-applicable' and signed by the checker's initials and this will confirm to green. No field should be left incomplete.

If operating from a multi-site school and sharing staff all information listed above should be recorded on both schools' SCRs.

Only one location, single registered school or Regional Office should be responsible for; holding the full personnel file of a staff member, obtaining the necessary documents and for undertaking any appropriate checks. They are then responsible for providing written confirmation of the checks to the other sites, together with any applicable risk assessments.

The Principal at the second site is then responsible for reviewing the data and for documenting any site specific risk assessments on the basis of the information provided and their acceptance that all the necessary checks for the post within their school have been completed to their standard. Where necessary they should also undertake additional checks applicable to the arrangements at their school if the original risk assessment does not provide an appropriate mitigation for that site. If any additional check is required, the second school will complete the check and ask for the primary school to retain the information on file.

New Starter Probation Checklist

The New Starter Probation Checklist must be completed as an evidence tool that all necessary checks and returns have been received. This document is signed off by the Principal and filed in the personnel file.

If any of the checks required are not fully compliant with the standard process this must be documented on a Risk Assessment Form whereby a discussion with the employee is recorded, the considerations noted, details of any mitigating actions are clearly defined and the outcome determined by the Principal to enable a full audit trail.

Staff Annual Declaration

On an annual basis all staff will be required to complete the Staff Annual Declaration which ensures their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding related policy, procedure, key contacts in the school and (for all relevant staff) provides for a personal safeguarding declaration. Where an aspect of the annual declaration is not applicable to the role undertaken by the individual, then they should enter “N/A” against the relevant entry on the Declaration before signing and returning it.

Change of Employment

- Where an employee’s role changes, the Recruiting Manager must give due consideration to the relevant checks now appropriate for the new role (i.e. has the existing member moved to a position involving regulated activity?).
- If a member of staff moves from a position involving regulated activity into non-regulated activity only, ongoing relevant checks should be monitored and recorded.
- In both cases the SCRT should be updated accordingly.
- All paperwork and checks associated with a change of employment must be filed in the personnel file and a note of the change recorded on the SCR.

Stage Seven: Probationary Period including Induction

An induction programme should be made available to all new staff, regardless of role or previous experience. The purpose of the induction is to:

- Provide training and information about the School policies and procedures including the vision and values, objectives and ethos, with specific reference to safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare, including child protection.
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role to which they have been appointed;
- Provide opportunities for new members of staff to discuss any issues/concerns about their role or responsibilities.
- Enable the new member of staff’s Line Manager to recognise any issues/concerns about the person’s ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The content and nature of the induction process will depend upon the role and previous experience of the new member of staff, but must include the information on the policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children e.g.:

(Education) Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure, which should also cover;

- Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behavior expected of staff and students in the School

- How and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised (HR) Other relevant employment procedures which should include;
 - o Disciplinary, performance improvement and whistleblowing procedures
- Equal Opportunities Policy and the wider Employment Handbook
 - An Induction Checklist provides the means to document that safeguarding was covered in the first week of employment as a further demonstration of the school's commitment to safeguarding our students. This Induction Checklist should be completed for each member of staff and filed in the personnel file.
 - The induction programme should also include Child Protection Training appropriate to the new member of staff's role to ensure their full understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. In addition, this will help ensure they best understand the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
 - The new member of staff will be required to complete the Staff Annual Declaration upon joining the school and on an annual basis.

Probation

- The initial period of any new role is inevitably a time of adjustment during which the new starter becomes acquainted with a new environment, different working practices, routines and standards of performance. This will take time and to enable both parties to realistically assess suitability for the role, as such all new starters employment is subject to a probationary period (the length is role dependant).
- Performance will be monitored and discussed throughout this period including a formal review meeting to discuss how both parties feel about the role, school/department/Company and progress made in position and to ensure positive relationships with colleagues, students and parents have been made.
- If the school/Company is not satisfied that the necessary level of performance has been reached during the probationary period and/or there are some other concerns, the probation may be extended. In some instances, either party may decide to give notice to terminate employment (which is usually a shorter period during this time).
- A new member of staff whose role places them in the Recruitment Community must undertake Safer Recruitment Training during their Probation Period.
- The probation period is also a significant period during which the new starter's attitude to safeguarding should be assessed. No appointment should be confirmed until the Line Manager is satisfied that the new starter fully understands and embraces the school's safeguarding philosophy and understands their own personal accountability.

- The Probation Review Form should be used to document the discussion and conclude the probationary period. No confirmation of successful completion of the probationary period should be issued if there is still an outstanding check required.

Notification Responsibilities

- If any information regarding an applicant comes to light through the recruitment and selection process, to suggest that they may have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult the matter should be discussed with the Principal or the HR immediately to ensure we meet our legal duty to refer a ‘cause for concern’ of this nature to the relevant third parties.
- This obligation regarding the legal duty to refer to a “cause for concern” extends beyond the recruitment and selection process and applies to any volunteers, trainee teachers, supply staff, those on fixed term contracts, resignations, voluntary withdrawal and all contract workers. All such instances will be disclosed to the CEO so that the Proprietor exercises their duty appropriately. In addition, all such instances will be disclosed to any external inspector as required.

Non-Employee Groups

- In order to safeguard the students in our care we require a similar rigorous approach to recruitment for all non-employee Groups. Schools must obtain written notification from any agency or third party organization that presents staff to work within the school that they have completed all the checks we would have undertaken if employing directly required for the post. The school must also conduct their own identity check to ensure that the person presenting for work at the school is one and the same person for whom the third party organisation has confirmed the checks have been undertaken. Under no circumstances should any non-employee in respect of whom no checks have been obtained, be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. To this end guidance has been produced for third party contractors and non-employees (including supply, the self employed and volunteers).

Document	Safer Recruitment Policy
Date written	August 2016
Last reviewed	March 2024
Next Review	August 2024
Version	Working Document