

# **Bowden House School & Bowden Primary School**

## **Safer Recruitment Selection Policy and Procedure**

**Bowden House School, Bowden Primary School and its Governing Body are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its students/pupils and requires all staff to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.**

The school is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing high quality education and care for its students/pupils. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability is critical to the school's performance and fundamental in improving the outcomes and life chances of the students/pupils of our schools.

Our selection and recruitment policies, practices and procedures comply with all relevant, statutory guidance on safer recruitment and act in accordance with the provisions of Part Three of the DfE Guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022'. Our schools also comply with Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 to minimise the risk of unsuitable persons being employed. **Further Guidance relevant to Bowden House School includes Standard 14.1 (NMS April 2015 and School Staffing Regulations 2009 Statutory Guidance).**

The Governing Body 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 reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background or any other distinction.

The Governing Body has delegated the responsibility for recruitment to the School Business Manager with the support of the Executive Headteacher and the Head of Student Welfare. The SBM will conduct the appropriate pre-employment checks for all prospective employees, including internal candidates and candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK. At Bowden House School, this will be included in the SCR check within the Standard 20 Inspection by the Chair of Governors and reported to the school's Governing Body.

The School Business Manager ensures compliance with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022, with regard to Enhanced DBS checks and other pre-employment checks including due diligence and 'professional curiosity' in using a search engine as another tool which might provide more information on the suitability of a candidate to work with children.

The intention of this Policy is to ensure that all stages of the recruitment process contain measures to deter, identify, prevent and reject unsuitable applicants from gaining access to the students in our school. The Policy and implementation of the recruitment process aims to meet all legislative requirements detailed in paragraph 3 above.

### **Delegation of Appointments and Constitution of Appointment Panels**

The Governing Body and all staff working in the school are committed to ensuring that the selection and recruitment of all candidates is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient and effective and promotes equality of opportunity. All those responsible for each stage of the selection and recruitment process will be expected to adhere to this Policy and the Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022; seek to secure an on-going safe and secure environment for the students/pupils in both schools and demonstrate a professional approach with all internal and external candidates. The ultimate responsibility for selection and recruitment lies with the school's Governing Body but it has delegated responsibility to the Executive Headteacher. The Governing Body is responsible for the appointment of the Executive Headteacher with a selected Panel of 3 Governors to short-list; interview and appoint a suitable candidate. The Governing Body is also responsible for the safeguarding checks for all new internal and external appointments.

In accordance with the statutory requirement, every Selection Panel will have at least one member of staff or a Governor who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

### **Advertising Vacancies**

All advertisements will include a Safeguarding Statement:

"The school is committed to the Safeguarding and Protection of Children. We appoint staff in positions of trust and it is our duty under the DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022' to ensure they are fit to work with vulnerable children and young people. References and an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check against the Teacher Services system as well as the PoCAL (Protection of Children Act List) that are satisfactory to us, will be a condition of appointment".

Bowden House School is responsible for the placing of advertisements for both schools. Vacancies are advertised using the media relevant to each position – the vacancies board in the school for internal and external posts; the school's web-site in addition to the TES and the DfE 'Teaching Jobs' web-site for all Teaching posts including the Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher; the East Sussex website for Care posts and the FridayAd/Job Centre for Domestic posts. London Borough of Tower Hamlets employment links will be used for Bowden Primary, if necessary.

Advertisements contain information concerning Bowden House School and Bowden Primary School; an outline of the duties involved; salary guidance;

qualifications required (if any) and an invitation to request an information pack and application form.

Advertisements for vacancies do not contain age or gender related criteria. However, an age restriction may be applied in certain posts due to the nature of the school. Certain posts are exempt from the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 Section 7(2)(E).

### **Application Pack**

Upon request, candidates will be sent the following:

A covering letter which includes:

- a description of the schools and how they meet the needs of the students/pupils
- reference to the school's Induction & CPD programmes
- the closing date for the receipt of applications

Attachments to the letter comprise of the following:

- a copy of the advertisement
- the Job Description setting out the nature and identifying the duties of the work which an employee is expected to perform and specifying the scope of that role
- Person Specification – which gives an indication of qualifications; type, length and range of experience; skills and abilities which are considered to be essential and/or desirable to the post and assist the applicant in deciding whether they meet the job requirements. The Safeguarding Statement is quoted again at the end of the Person Specification as a continued reminder of the school's diligent recruitment process and robust measures to deter unsuitable applicants
- an application form which includes the Safeguarding Statement detailed in the advertisement and a statement that canvassing any member of staff; the Governing Body or a member of the local authority, directly or indirectly, is prohibited and will be considered a disqualification
- the salary scale of the post as quoted in the advertisement and the Job Description
- a DBS declaration form.

Applicants will be referred to the school's web-site to view Ofsted Reports and the statutory Policies and Procedures required to be posted on all schools' web-sites.

Recruitment and Selection will be as robust and as thorough as possible to 'help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse (or pose a risk of harm) to children' (Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022). The following checks will be made on all potential employees:

- verification of the candidate's identity/entitlement to live and work in the U.K in line with the requirements of the Immigration, Asylum and

- Nationality Act 2006 – National Insurance Number, passport, birth certificate, visa status, etc. and dates of any official Home Office letters (if applicable). There should be 3 forms of ID - a photo; a utility bill or a document showing current home address and a document such as a passport to show the right to work in the UK
- receipt of a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check provided by the candidate; the mandatory check of List 99 to verify current and previous names, e.g. maiden name or change of name document
  - provision by overseas candidates or anyone who has worked overseas in the last 2 years of an Overseas Police Check (Certificate of Good Conduct)
  - all applicants are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions
  - candidates should account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history. A written record by the school with explanations of any gaps in employment will be sought and will have to be considered satisfactory by the school
  - details of at least three written references which must include the most recent employer. The school will make direct contact with each referee to verify the reference and ask additional questions if there are concerns or clarification needed. The school will request of each employment referee that they are authorised on behalf of their school/organisation to provide a reference. In addition, the SBM will, where possible, approach a school/organisation's HR Department for a reference and/or confirmation of any disciplinary procedures that are current/under appeal and or spent
  - candidates must provide verification or proof of relevant qualifications – only original or certified documents will be accepted

### **Selection for Interview**

Candidates are selected for interview following a short-listing process by the relevant staff members and the Senior Leadership Team.

Bowden House School and Bowden Primary School are committed to ensuring people who have been convicted of a criminal offence are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to an interview or obtaining a position (see also Interview Procedure)

Short-listed applicants will be sent a written invitation to attend an interview

### **Unsuccessful Applicants**

Applicants not selected for interview will be informed by letter. The SBM offers an explanation to unsuccessful applicants, upon request.

### **Interview Procedure**

There are set questions/tasks for each job role which are reviewed regularly and set by the Governors and/or SLT of the school and circulated to the

interviewing panel in addition to other exercises/presentations dependent upon the job role.

The Interview Panel will have the following documents to assist with the process:

- candidate's application form
- interview questions/score sheet
- an example of a standard rota/details of sleep-ins, etc for care staff
- salary scales applicable to the post
- groupwork/scenarios, if applicable
- Job Description/Person Specification
- relevant Job Advert

The interview questions, written and group scenarios (where applicable) are designed to assess the merits of each candidate against the requirements of the job and to explore their suitability to work with children and young people. 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.

If the candidate discloses or has disclosed on his/her application form or at interview, that any disciplinary action/misconduct/allegations have been investigated or are under investigation, the Interview Panel will 'take proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required' (Keeping Children in Education, September 2022) or request clarification to further deter unsuitable candidates.

All the main terms and conditions of employment including whether the post is to be full or part-time; permanent/temporary or fixed term; salary and proposed start date are to be made clear to all candidates. All candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding and commitment to Safeguarding and the Protection of Children.

When the interviews have taken place, the interviewers will assess the candidates based upon:

- the Application Form
- the report on applicant's teaching observation
- the responses to the questions/scenarios/tasks, etc
- the knowledge, skills and experience they can offer
- the relevant qualifications (if required)
- the completed interview score sheet demonstrating the candidate's ability to meet the criteria and details of whether or not a position is to be offered.

The recruitment documentation will be retained for 6 months from the date of interview. Under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, applicants have the right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. After 6 months, all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

## **Successful Candidates**

The offer of employment by the Selection Panel and acceptance by the candidate is binding on both parties subject to verification of the right to work in the UK; qualifications requirements, satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure; teacher prohibition and barred list checks; pre-employment medical screening (if appropriate) and satisfactory written and verified references.

The successful candidate will be contacted by telephone followed by a Formal Offer Letter outlining the main terms and conditions of employment and informed that the appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of these checks. A copy of the Offer Letter is also enclosed with a request to sign the letter as acceptance of the appointment and returned to the school.

Also included in the Offer Letter are the following documents/instructions:

- an Occupational Health Medical Questionnaire (on-line)
- an opt in/-opt out Pension Form
- bank details form
- Enhanced DBS Application Form (on-line)

Completed forms/on-line documents, should be returned to the school or in the case of Executive Headteacher appointments, the Governing Body.

**A Pre-appointment Checklist** is completed prior to the formal processes by the School's Personnel Provider, before a start date can be offered.

At this stage of the recruitment process, all successful candidates, if applicable, will be asked to provide evidence of their entitlement to work in the United Kingdom.

All offers of employment are made subject to the receipt of satisfactory references and Enhanced DBS checks as detailed in Part 3 of the DfE Guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022'.

Upon receipt of the copy of the signed Offer Letter, all relevant documentation is forwarded to the School's Personnel Provider who will issue a formal contract. A start date of employment will not be offered until all the conditions under the Offer Letter have been fulfilled. Completed Enhanced DBS applications are forwarded to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) for processing.

## **Unsuccessful Candidates**

Unsuccessful candidates will be contacted by telephone followed by a formal letter informing them of the decision and thanking them for the interest they have shown. The SBM offers feedback to unsuccessful applicants, if requested.

## **Reference Requests**

Upon receipt of the copy of the signed Offer Letter each potential employee's references will be taken up using a standard format letter. Before employment can commence, Bowden House School/Bowden Primary School or the Governing Body (in the case of a Executive Headteacher appointment) must be in receipt of three satisfactory references.

The school will follow-up all written references with telephone calls to verify authenticity.

Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm:

- the referee's relationship with the candidate
- that the referee is authorised on behalf of the school or other employer, to provide an employment reference
- whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and if not, to give specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes that the person might be unsuitable
- any disciplinary procedures in which the sanction is current
- any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children, including any in which the sanction has expired and the outcomes
- details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of those concerns
- details of the applicant's current post
- performance history and conduct

In addition, the SBM will confirm with the school's HR Adviser (EPM) providing the reference, where applicable, whether there are or have been any disciplinary procedures relating to the applicant.

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 for any post. As references are taken up after interview, any discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate at a meeting before proceeding with the appointment.

## **Personnel File and Single Central Record**

In compliance with Part 3 of the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022', the SBM maintains a Single Central Record with name, address, date of birth, start dates, post and DBS/List 99/Overseas Certificate details, clearance/renewal date; disclosure number and in the case of teaching staff, a DfE number. The school complies with the requirement that Enhanced DBS checks are repeated every 3 years. The recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely



and confidentially for the duration of his/her employment with either school including;

- application form – signed by the applicant
- interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in employment history
- references including any information relating to concerns of the safety and welfare of children
- 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 (where applicable)
- evidence of Enhanced DBS clearance
- offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment.

The SCR is checked at every Standard 20 Inspection.

### **Start of Employment and Induction**

The pre-employment checks must be completed before the employee starts work.

All newly appointed staff will attend an Induction Programme which will cover all relevant matters of school policy/procedure but in particular, Safeguarding Awareness and promoting the welfare of the students/pupils of Bowden House School and Bowden Primary School. All staff will be expected to complete a 'Confidentiality Agreement'; a 'Code of Conduct' and an 'ICT Acceptable Use Agreement' during their Induction session and will receive guidance about safe working practices. Arrangements will be made for them to attend a range of statutory training courses including Safeguarding/Child Protection; First Aid and Behaviour Management/Positive Handling (Team-Teach). In compliance with Standard 19.3 of the Residential Special Schools, National Minimum Standards, 2015 **Bowden House School 'ensures that new staff undertake an Induction Programme designed and delivered to enable them to meet the range of needs of children at the school and fully equip them to identify and safely manage safeguarding issues. The programme should begin within 7 working days of starting their employment and be completed within 6 months'**.

Both schools comply with the statutory guidance that requires all its Governors to hold an Enhanced DBS certificate. The SBMI will process the applications on behalf of the Governors.

This Safer Recruitment Selection Policy and Procedure contributes to the school's Safeguarding Policies which are located on the school's network and should include reference to Part 3 of KCSIE, 2022.

Amended October 2013  
Amended April 2014

Up-dated September 2022



November 2014  
Up-dated April 2015  
Up-dated September 2015  
Up-dated July 2016  
Up-dated April 2018  
Up-dated October 2018  
Up-dated June 2019  
Up-dated October 2019  
Up-dated October 2021

**School:** Bowden House

**Policy:** Safer Recruitment Selection Policy & Procedure

**Agreed:** Autumn Term 2022

**Responsibility:** Governors

**Review Date:** Autumn Term 2023

**Signed by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_