STAFF SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

With regard to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

Approved by:	Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director)	**Date:** 1st September 2026
Last reviewed on:	1st September 2025	
Next review due by:	1st September 2027	

All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to:

- Keep children safe in education and to make safeguarding a priority in all recruitment procedures and practices
- Ensure all those involved in the recruitment process think about and include issues related to child protection and safeguarding at every stage of the process

2. Planning Stage:

Decisions are made about the mix of qualities, qualifications and experiences a successful candidate will need to demonstrate. The process to allow for references to be obtained on short listed candidates is organised. The person specification is drafted and application forms and job descriptions are updated.

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

3. Application Form:

The application form provides a common set of core data from all applicants. We will not accept a curriculum vitae drawn up by an applicant as this only contains the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

The application pack includes a statement saying that it is an offence for anyone who is barred from working with children to apply for, or work in our schools in any voluntary or paid capacity.

The application form will collect the following information from applicants:

- Current and former names
- Current address
- National Insurance Number
- Teacher registration number (if applicable)
- Educational and training history
- Details of academic and/or vocational qualifications with names of awarding bodies and dates of award
- Full employment history, including voluntary work as well as full-time employment
- Declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees or employers
- Details of two referees; one must be the applicant's current employer or most recent employer
- A personal statement of application

The application form will state that the successful applicant will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS with barred list check, that we will seek references on short-listed candidates before the interview, that if the applicant is currently working with children, the current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any for which the penalty is time expired.

The application form will state that as this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 the candidate will be asked at interview to disclose any criminal convictions including spent, unspent, or cautions. They are advised they are able to get independent, confidential advice on which cautions or convictions that they must disclose by contacting the following agencies:
NACRO: https://www.nacro.org.uk/criminal-record-support-service/
UNLOCK: https://www.unlock.org.uk/advice-support/

The application form states that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal following selection and possible referral to the police and/or DBS. Applicants are asked to declare that the information given in their application is true and that they are not banned or disqualified from working with children nor subject to any sanctions or conditions on employment imposed by any regulatory body.

If an applicant has signed their application form with an electronic signature, the candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at point of interview.

4. Job Description:
The job description clearly states the main duties and responsibilities, including the responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

5. The Person Specification:
The person specification includes the qualification and experienced needed and other requirements. It states which competences and qualities the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate. It includes specific reference to suitability to work with children.

6. Candidate Information Pack including Selection and Recruitment Statement:
The candidate application pack will include the application form, job description and person specification, information about the school and the Equality, Inclusion and Diversity statement.

The application pack includes a Selection and Recruitment Statement outlining the details of the application and recruitment process, the detail within which will highlight our commitment to safeguarding and ensure the applicant is aware of what checks will take place pre and post interview.

7. Short Listing

The interviewers will decide on a shortlist of applicants to interview. Short listing criteria will be based on the person specification and any relevant elements of the job description and these criteria will be applied consistently to all candidates' applications. Interviewers will ensure these include the specific criteria relating to working with children. The short listing process will be carried out by more than one person and they will identify any inconsistencies in the application and will look for gaps in employment and the reasons given for these, which would then need to be explored further with the candidates at interview. The shortlisting process will explore all potential concerns.

We will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Searches will be carried out using online search engines, such as Google, and social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube and TikTok. Profiles on social media accounts may be private so there might be no information publicly available. We will look for content that calls into question the applicant's suitability to work with children and/or causes harm to the reputation of On Track, for example content that evidences inappropriate or offensive behaviour, discrimination, drug or alcohol misuse and inappropriate photos or videos. We will look at content within the last ten years. If the search brings up any information that may cause concern, we will explore this further with the applicant at interview. If we determine that the content of the online search is so serious we may opt to bring the recruitment process to an end.

8. References:

We will always strive to obtain references before interview. The purpose of the references is to obtain objective and factual information by asking specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and follow up any concerns. Open references will not be relied upon.

The referee should be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the post and asked:

- about his/her relationship with the candidate, how long has the referee known the candidate, and in what capacity
- whether he/she is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job
- whether he/she is satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, for specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.

References from a candidate's current or previous employer in work with children should also include:

- confirmation of the applicant's current or previous post
- verification of the most recent relevant period of employment, if they are not currently employed
- seeking information about the applicant's performance history and conduct
- details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to related to children even if the disciplinary sanction has expired

We will check that references provided by a current employer are completed by a senior person and we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the head teacher as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations.

9. Checking References:

References are read carefully. All specific questions should have been answered satisfactorily; if all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee will be contacted for written answers or

amplification. This information will be compared with the application form. Any discrepancy in the information will be taken up with the applicant.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time would give cause for concern and will be included. More serious or recent concerns or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily are more likely to cause us concern.

The reference from an applicant's last employer will be followed up by a phone call to verify the identity of the author and to check any missing facts, if applicable.

10. Self-Declaration

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

We will ask them to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.

11. Invitation to Interview:

Information is given about time, place, membership of the interview panel and information about the style of the interview and will inform the candidate that there will be a formal interview. Candidates are asked to bring the evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements to the interview along with evidence of their qualifications and right to work in the UK.

12. Scope of Interview:

The face to face interview will explore the candidate's attitude to children and young people. Gaps in employment history and other concerns and discrepancies will be discussed and the reasons recorded. Any concerns raised in references will be explored further.

Interview questions will be agreed in advance and will relate to the requirements of the post. These will explore the information provided in applications and references, including in relation to their previous work experience, qualifications, knowledge and skills. The questions will explore the candidate's aptitude and ability to carry out the role.

These safeguarding issues will be explored with each candidate:

- Their attitude toward children and motivation to work with children
- Their ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children, attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline
- Their emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviour
- Their ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

The interviewers will use open questions to elicit information and opinions. Closed questions requiring a simple 'Yes' or 'No' reply will only be used for certain specific purposes and leading questions will be avoided.

As this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 the candidate will be asked again at interview to disclose any criminal convictions including spent, unspent, or cautions.

If an applicant has signed their application form with an electronic signature, the candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at point of interview.

13. The Conditional Offer

The offer of appointment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of all necessary pre-employment checks including:

- The receipt of two satisfactory references (all concerns must be resolved before appointment is confirmed)
- Verification of the candidate's identity from current photographic ID and proof of address
- A satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) certificate with barred list information. A check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition or interim prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State
- Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK
- 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.
- A section 128 check for a school management or governance position.

14. Induction:

Staff are only permitted to start work on site once their DBS certificate is available, including when using the DBS update service. All new staff are subject to a satisfactory probation period in order to ensure that they satisfy required standards. All new staff are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy, Behaviour Management Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

All new staff are asked to read and sign to say that they have understood the above policies and KCSiE – Part One. All new staff are informed of the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and given training on how to report any pupil related concern.

All new staff will follow a comprehensive induction programme carried out by their line manager, of no less than 4 months in length. The length of induction periods may be longer than 4 months, depending on the role and applicant. The induction programme, consisting of several structured review meetings, ensures that all new staff read, understand and implement all school policies and that they are suitable for the role. All new staff will undertake Level 2 safeguarding training. All new staff are offered support that is appropriate for the job and will be encouraged to ask questions and raise possible issues or concerns.

15. Disclosure and Barring Service:

No staff are permitted to commence work in regulated activity at the school without an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information.

This DBS check will be carried out for all staff except for anyone who, within the three months before his or her appointment, has worked in a school in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children and who is able to produce a DBS certificate with barred list information conducted at this school. In these circumstances, a separate barred list check will be carried out by On Track before the staff member commences work.

An enhanced DBS check will be completed for new staff who have not been working in a school, no more than three months prior to their start date.

Enhanced DBS with Barred List Checks will be completed on overseas staff; in addition, criminal records information will be sought from countries where individuals have worked or lived.

If an individual is registered with the Update Service, consent will be obtained from the applicant to undertake an update check, the original certificate will be checked to ensure that it matches the individual's identity and the original

certificate will be examined to ensure that it is enhanced and includes barred list checks. The school will then carry out the online check.

Information disclosed in DBS checks must be treated as confidential and it is an offence for information in a disclosure to be passed to anyone who does not need it in the course of their duties.

A criminal conviction does not automatically prevent an individual working in schools. Relevant factors include the seriousness of the offence, how recent it was and whether it was a one-off offence or part of a history of offending, whether the individual's circumstances have changed since the offence and whether they were open and transparent about their past and declared the conviction. In such cases a full risk assessment will be carried out and kept on the staff member's file. A decision to employ here can only be taken by one of the Directors.

The DBS certificate will be seen by the recruiting manager and the date it was seen and the relevant relating information will be recorded on the Single Central Register. Copies of DBS certificates will not be kept and, if held on file, these will be destroyed after six months.

16. Secretary of State Prohibition Orders

Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools and a person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher at On Track. A check of any prohibition will be carried out for all teachers using TRA Teacher Services' System.

17. Single Central Record

The school will keep a single central record which covers:

- All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the school, including volunteers
- All members of the proprietor body

The information to be recorded on these individuals is whether or not the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which the checks were completed:

- An identity check
- An address check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A Section 128 check for relevant positions, including if a school leadership position is taken on by an existing member of staff
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- For agency and third party supply staff, whether written confirmation has been received that the agency 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 of staff.

A copy of documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and required qualifications will be kept in a personnel file.

18. Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff. Further checks will be undertaken so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. 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.

Advice on the criminal record information which may be obtained from overseas police forces, published by the Home Office, is on GOV.UK

19. 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.

20. Existing Staff

We will carry out a new check on existing staff in the following circumstances

- When an individual working at the school moves from a post that was not regulated activity with children into work which is considered to be regulated activity with children
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more
- If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff.

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
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
- 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

21. Volunteers

All volunteers will be subject to the same pre-employment checks as other staff including obtaining an enhanced DBS check.

22. 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. 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 whose work brings them into regular contact with children. 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.

23. Review

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant if you have any comments or suggestions, please email directors@ontrackeducation.com