



The Dover Federation

For The Arts Multi Academy Trust

Safer Recruitment Policy



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Statement of intent

The Dover Federation for the Arts Multi Academy Trust has implemented this policy to assist with recruitment and employee selection. It outlines the Trust's recruitment procedure and how the Trust ensures safer recruitment is considered at all levels of the recruitment process.

The safety and protection of pupils is always at the forefront of the Trustees concerns, which is why this policy aims to embed a robust safeguarding culture into the recruitment practices across the Trust.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Children Act 1989
2. Children Act 2004
3. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
4. The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
5. Sexual Offences Act 2003
6. The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
7. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
8. Education and Skills Act 2008
9. Data Protection Act 2018
10. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
11. Education Act 2002
12. Equality Act 2010

This policy has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

13. **[Updated]** DfE (2020) 'Keeping children safe in education'
14. DfE (2018) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
15. DfE (2019) 'Governance handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

16. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
17. Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy
18. Single Central Record Policy
19. DBS Policy
20. Records Management Policy
21. Data Protection Policy
22. Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy

2. Definitions

Regulated activity – includes:

23. Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children.
24. Working for a limited range of establishments (known as ‘specified places’, which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work undertaken by supervised volunteers.
 - The above definitions are classified as regulated activity if they are undertaken regularly. Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes relevant personal care, or health care provided by, or under the supervision of, a health care professional. Personal care includes helping a child with eating or drinking for reasons of illness or disability, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing for reasons of age, illness or disability. Health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional.
25. A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is **not** in regulated activity.

Teaching role – refers to a role involving planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; and assessing and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils. These activities are **not teaching work** for the purposes of ‘Keeping children safe in education’ (KCSIE) if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the headteacher to provide such direction and supervision.

Standard DBS – this provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer, regardless of whether or not they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Enhanced DBS – this provides the same information as the standard DBS, plus any additional information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed.

Enhanced DBS with barred list check – this check is required for when people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children. This check allows for additional checks to be made as to whether the person appears on the children’s barred list.

Children’s barred list – the DBS maintains a ‘barred list’ of individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. In addition, where an enhanced DBS including a barred list check is obtained, the certificate will also detail whether the applicant is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 167A of the Education Act 2002.

Section 128 check – this provides for the Secretary of State to direct that a person may be prohibited or restricted from participating in the management of an independent school (which includes academies and

free schools). A person prohibited under section 128 is also disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school.

Safer recruitment – this is the safeguarding and protection of pupils during the recruitment and selection process. Its overall purpose is to help identify and deter or reject individuals who are deemed to be at risk of abusing children

3. Roles and responsibilities

The **Board of Trustees** is responsible for:

26. Agreeing and monitoring effective policies to ensure recruitment is in accordance with the legislation outlined in [section 1](#).
27. Ensuring that staff recruitment is as safe as possible, as well as fair and compliant with the relevant legislation.
28. Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the schools.
29. Ensuring that all **recruitment panel** (Interview Panel) members have undertaken unconscious bias training before the selection process begins.
30. Appointing an appropriate **recruitment panel**.
31. Ensuring that at least one member of the **recruitment panel** has undergone safer recruitment training.
32. Ensuring that all members of the **recruitment panel** understand their role, i.e. advisory or decision making.
33. Monitoring the advertising of vacancies, assessing how they are being advertised and whether the adverts are maximising all of the opportunities to attract the appropriate candidates.
34. Benchmarking the success of any advertising methods used, as well as the overall success of the recruitment process.
35. Ensuring a member of the board is on the **recruitment panel** for a new **Headteacher** or appointment to senior roles on the **Executive Team**.
36. Ensuring that all members of the **recruitment panel** are familiar with their obligations with regards to safer recruitment, as set out in KCSIE.
37. Monitoring each school's SCR to ensure that the necessary vetting checks for employees are carried out.
38. Ensuring that equal opportunities are established and implemented throughout the recruitment process.
39. Ensuring that the salary of the successful candidate is determined.
40. Accommodating the needs of new employees and making reasonable adjustments when necessary.
41. Ensuring that the **DPO** reviews this policy and that any recruitment data that is kept is in accordance with the **Records Management Policy**.

The **recruitment panel** (Interview Panel) is responsible for:

42. Creating the advert and ensuring it meets all the necessary requirements.
43. Shortlisting the potential candidates with the aim of reducing the application field and identifying those with the potential to effectively undertake the role.
44. Appropriately delegating responsibility for recruitment to the **headteacher** or the **CEO**
45. Setting appropriate recruitment procedures, as per the scheme of delegation.
46. Ensuring that the interview addresses leadership ability, team working skills, reasons for interest in joining the Trust, integrity, understanding of the Trust's ethos and vision, and why the candidate believes they would be a good fit for a school or Trust post.
47. Ensuring that the interview addresses safeguarding practices.
48. Appointing an **appointing officer** who will be responsible for the entire management of the recruitment process.
49. Agreeing with the successful candidate when other members of the school community will be informed about their appointment, including staff members and parents.

The **headteacher** is responsible for:

50. Ensuring appropriate checks have been carried out on prospective staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the Trust or its schools.
51. Ensuring that appropriate supervision of employees/volunteers is organised, and for promoting the safety and wellbeing of pupils generally and throughout the recruitment process.
52. Leading the interview when the candidate is at a lower level than **headteacher**.

During the recruitment process, and especially during the initial stages, the **recruitment panel** and the **headteacher** will be watchful of candidates displaying the following characteristics:

53. No understanding or appreciation of children's needs
54. Expressing that they want the role to meet their needs at the expense of children
55. Using inappropriate language in relation to children
56. Expressing extreme views or views that do not support safeguarding practices
57. Displaying unclear boundaries with children
58. Providing vague answers when asked about their experience and being unable to explain gaps in their employment

4. Equal opportunities

When recruiting, the Trust will adhere to its **Single Equality Plan**.

The Trust will not discriminate against any protected characteristics, such as disability or gender, and will always promote difference and inclusion throughout the Trust.

The Trust will, where necessary, make reasonable adjustments to ensure the interview is accessible to all candidates. Candidates should inform the Trust of any reasonable adjustments they need when they receive the invitation for an interview.

The **Board of Trustees** will review recruitment procedures **annually** to ensure they are accessible and do not directly or indirectly discriminate against candidates.

Candidates will not be asked about their health or any disabilities before a job offer is made, unless one of the following exemptions applies:

59. Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments)
60. Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment
61. Positive action to recruit people with disabilities
62. Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process)

5. Planning, advertising and shortlisting

Once a vacancy has been identified, the Trust/school will allow an appropriate amount of time for planning and structuring the recruitment process.

The **Board of Trustees, CEO** and **headteacher** will:

63. Decide on the recruitment timeframe.
64. Decide who will be involved in the process and what their roles will be, e.g. who forms the **recruitment panel** and who will lead interviewing.
65. Prepare the documents that will be provided to applicants, including the job description, person specification and application form – ensuring that these documents contain a clear message about safeguarding, the checks that will be carried out and that references will be sought.
66. Ensure that application packs, where relevant, state that applicants must be willing to sign the staff disqualification declaration.

The job information and associated documents will be published online.

The full requirements of the role will be clearly explained, including any employment vetting requirements such as a DBS check.

The **recruitment panel** will comprise an **appointing officer**, who is responsible for the management of the entire recruitment process, and at least two other members of staff, with the **headteacher** usually being one of these.

The **recruitment panel** will be an odd number so majority votes can be cast.

At least one member of the recruitment panel will have successfully completed up-to-date safer recruitment training.

The recruitment panel will create the advertisement.

The recruitment panel will ensure the advertisement includes the following requirements:

67. Information specific to the role on offer and the school as a whole
68. The benefits of the role are highlighted
69. The advertisement is relevant to the target audience
70. The advertisement is communicated directly and concisely, and includes a clear call to action
71. Applications can be submitted electronically

Requests for further information from applicants are replied to promptly.

All applications are replied to with a letter notifying candidates whether they have been shortlisted or not.

Interviews are arranged for the shortlisted candidates.

Vacancies will be advertised through external media, such as the local newspaper, with due consideration to the school's Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy, ensuring that the advertisement reaches a wide range of groups.

Advertisements will contain a statement of commitment to ensuring equal rights.

Advertisements will include a job description, person specification and detail the closing date.

The contact numbers of the appointing officer and details of the application process will be clearly outlined.

Application forms will be accessible on the school's website.

The school may utilise social media for recruitment, and if doing so, will create a social media recruitment strategy to ensure that the advertisement is reaching the right people and is communicating the ethos of the school effectively.

When an advert receives a response, the recruitment panel will ensure that candidates receive the application pack.

The school will never accept a CV alone, only completed application forms.

When shortlisting candidates for an interview, all application forms will be considered.

At least two members of the recruitment panel will be involved in the shortlisting process.

Candidates who are shortlisted will meet all the essential aspects of the person specification requirements.

The school will ensure that the shortlisting process is as systematic as possible, and that the recruitment panel read through all applications. Each member of the panel will create their own shortlist which will then be collated and discussed.

Applicants will be assessed against the same shortlisting criteria to ensure a fair process.

6. Invitation to interview

Before interview invitations are sent, the **recruitment panel** will ensure that application packs are sent and include the following:

72. A copy of the advertisement
73. A comprehensive job description
74. A comprehensive person specification
75. Any equal rights material, e.g. an equal opportunities statement
76. A brief outline of the school, its values and aims

Once a shortlist has been confirmed, the applicants to be invited for interviews will be contacted by the **appointing officer** and suitable interview times will be decided.

The **recruitment panel** will ensure that all shortlisted candidates receive information about the interview arrangements, how they will be conducted, the areas that will be explored and what documents they should bring.

The **recruitment panel** will send shortlisted candidates the self-declaration of criminal record form, alongside a copy of the school's disqualification form, where appropriate.

Upon inviting candidates to interview, the **recruitment panel** will state that the successful candidate's identity will be checked and, where appropriate, the necessary pre-appointment checks will be carried out.

Where possible, the **recruitment panel** will obtain **two** references before interviewing candidates to allow for any concerns to be explored with the referee and discussed with the candidate.

One of the references will be from the candidate's most recent employer.

Where a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving will be obtained from the employer.

References will be from a senior member of staff and not a colleague.

Open testimonials will not be relied upon, nor will information that has been provided by the candidate without verifying the information.

Electronic references will be vetted to ensure they originate from a credible source.

References from internal candidates will also always be scrutinised before interview.

Permission will be sought from the candidates before the **recruitment panel** contacts referees.

Structured questionnaires will be used to question referees and the **recruitment panel** will determine the questions on a case-by-case basis.

Information about past disciplinary action or allegations that are disclosed will be considered carefully when assessing the applicant's suitability for the post.

The candidate's current employer will be asked for details of any capability history in the previous two years, including the reasoning.

7. Pre-interview checks

The recruitment panel will complete the necessary pre-interview checks.

Pre-interview checks will include the following:

77. Requesting two work-based references from each shortlisted candidate directly from the referees – where possible, one reference will be obtained relating to the role in which the candidate worked with children, one should be from the current/most recent employer within the last two years. In certain cases, dependant on the role advertised, a third reference can be requested.
78. Verifying that the candidate has qualifications or experience relevant to the post
79. Checking references against application forms and noting down discrepancies or concerns, and following up these concerns with referees
80. Checking and, where necessary, following up candidates' self-declaration forms

8. Digital footprints

The Trust is committed to ensuring that safeguarding is a top priority; therefore, where appropriate, the Trust may check candidates' social media or other online activity prior to interview.

This process may include a search for the candidate via:

81. Google

82. Facebook

83. LinkedIn

Any concerns will be addressed during the interview process.

9. The interview

During the interview process, candidates will be asked standard questions and their responses will be recorded for ease of comparison.

Any concerns raised through contact with referees will be discussed with the candidate at this stage.

The recruitment panel will ask open questions to assess the candidate's experience and suitability for the post, and to explore the candidate's motivation towards safeguarding and their suitability to work with children.

Candidates shortlisted for interview will be given the opportunity to complete a self-disclosure form upon arrival for their interview. The form is placed in a sealed envelope and given to the recruitment officer prior to the candidate entering their interview.

The candidate will be given the opportunity to discuss any concerns or ask any questions.

The interview will comprise a face-to-face interview; however, the recruitment panel may also request that candidates complete one of the following exercises:

84. Role play exercises
85. Presentations
86. Group exercises
87. Written exercises
88. Aptitude/ability tests
89. Personality questionnaires
90. Getting the candidate to work in supervised activity with pupils

10. After the interview

After the interview has been completed, the **recruitment panel** will:

91. Assess all candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria.
92. Ask the successful candidate to provide proof of identification and qualifications, and to complete the DBS check as soon as possible.
93. Contact and provide feedback to the unsuccessful candidates – feedback will be verbal and based on evidence of their performance against the person specification for the role.

Interview notes and assessment materials will be held securely for an appropriate amount of time after the interviews, in line with the **Records Management Policy**, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged.

After choosing a successful candidate, the Trust will:

94. Make a conditional offer of employment to the candidate.
95. Ask the successful candidate to provide identification and proof of qualifications, if this has not already been done.
96. Complete the relevant pre-appointment checks.

Once an offer of employment has been made, the candidate's self-declaration form will be reviewed. If a conviction has been declared, and it is spent or filtered, the offer of employment will not be retracted based on this; however, the Trust will undertake the relevant assessments to determine whether the candidate is suitable to work in a school.

11. [Updated] Pre-appointment checks

All appointments will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-appointment checks.

When appointing new staff, the school will complete the following checks:

- a) Verify the candidate's identity

- b) Obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (via the applicant) and, for candidates engaging in regulated activity, barred list information
- c) Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- d) Verify a candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their role
- e) Verify the person's right to work in the UK
- f) Make further checks on any individual who has lived or worked outside the UK
- g) Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate
- h) For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check will be carried out

The **recruitment panel** will ensure any candidate employed to carry out teaching work is not subject to a prohibition order or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012.

If the Trust has reason to believe that an individual is barred, it is an offence under section 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 for the Trust to allow the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

Volunteers

For volunteers, if they are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check will be obtained – a barred list check will not be required.

If volunteers are engaging in regulated activity and are new to the school, an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check will be required.

Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not need to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (including barred list information); however, the school may decide to conduct a repeat DBS check.

If a volunteer is not in regulated activity, the school will use its professional judgement, after conducting a risk assessment, to determine whether to seek an enhanced DBS check, but no barred list check will be required.

Candidates who have lived outside the UK

No exceptions will be made for candidates who have lived outside of the UK. All mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary.

The DfE's [guidance on the employment of overseas-trained teachers](#) will be consulted should an overseas candidate apply for a teaching position.

Agency and third-party staff

In the case of any employee working at the school who is sourced from an agency or third-party organisation, confirmation must be obtained from the organisation, in writing, that all necessary checks have been completed.

Confirmation will also be obtained that the individual who presents for work is the same person on whom all checks have been completed. A copy of photographic identification will generally be kept where appropriate.

Trainee/student teachers

The school will ensure that enhanced DBS certificates and barred list checks are obtained on all salaried applicants for initial teacher training who are in regulated activity.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks.

The school will obtain written confirmation from the agency that the checks have been carried out.

Existing staff

If a member of staff moves from a post that was not regulated activity to one that is, the relevant checks will be carried out.

The recruitment panel will carry out further checks where there is a concern about a member of staff's suitability to work with children.

An investigation will be carried out to gather enough evidence to establish if an allegation has a foundation. The employer of the school will ensure they have sufficient information to meet the referral duty criteria in 11.23 of this policy.

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

97. The harm test is satisfied in respect of that harm.
98. The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence.
99. The individual is deployed to another area of work not in regulated activity, or where they have been suspended.

Referrals to the DBS will be made on conclusion of an investigation where an individual has been removed from regulated activity.

Referrals to the DBS will be made as soon as possible after the resignation, removal or redeployment of the staff member.

Contractors

The Trust will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information).

For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including barred list information) will be required.

Under no circumstances will a contractor in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

If a contractor is self-employed, the school will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

The school will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival.

Adults who supervise children on work experience

If a school is organising work experience placements, they will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm.

Barred list checks by the DBS might be required on some people who supervise a child under the age of 16 on a work experience placement. In such cases, the school will consider the specific circumstances of the work experience. Consideration will be given in particular to the nature of the supervision and the frequency of the activity being supervised, to determine what, if any, checks are necessary. These considerations will include whether the person providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision to the child on work experience will be:

100. Unsupervised themselves.
101. Providing the teaching/training/instruction/supervision frequently (more than three days in a 30-day period or overnight).

If the person working with the child is unsupervised and the same person is in frequent contact with the child, the work is likely to be regulated activity. In this case, the school will ask the employer providing the work experience to ensure that the person providing the instruction or training is not a barred person.

If the activity undertaken by the child on work experience takes place in a 'specified place', such as the school, and gives the opportunity for contact with children, this may itself be considered regulated activity. In these cases, and where the child is 16 years of age or over, the work experience provider will consider whether a DBS enhanced check should be requested for the child/young person in question. DBS checks cannot be requested for children/young people under the age of 16.

Children staying with host families

The school may make arrangements for a child to have learning experiences where, for short periods, the child may be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to whom they are not related. In these circumstances, the LA will be consulted.

Governance

Trustees and members will be subject to a section 128 check.

Newly appointed chairs of trustees will be subject to a suitability check, which includes:

102. An identity check.
103. Confirmation of the right to work in the UK.
104. An enhanced DBS check.
105. Where required, additional information if the individual has lived outside the UK for a period of 12 months or longer.

12. After the pre-appointment checks

Once the pre-employment checks have been completed, the recruitment panel will:

- 106. Agree a start date with the candidate.
- 107. Destroy the completed self-declaration forms.
- 108. Submit contractual paperwork, including the completed DBS check, copies of identification, references, proof of qualifications, pre-employment medical enquiry form, P45, application/equal opportunities and emergency contacts.
- 109. Add the required details of the checks carried out to the school's SCR.

13. Single central record (SCR)

The Trust will maintain and regularly update the SCR.

All new employees will be added to the record, which will include:

- 110. All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school.
- 111. All others who work in regular contact with children in the school or college, including volunteers.

The bullet points below set out the minimum information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- 112. An identity check
- 113. A barred list check
- 114. An enhanced DBS check
- 115. A prohibition from teaching check
- 116. Further checks on people living or working outside the UK, including checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions
- 117. A check of professional qualifications
- 118. A section 128 check
- 119. A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- 120. For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check

For supply staff, the school will include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

If checks are carried out on volunteers, this will be recorded in the SCR.

The Trust will not keep separate SCRs for each academy; however, it will ensure that all those who need to see the central SCR can easily do so and that the SCR can easily be filtered by academy.

14.Safer recruitment training

At least one member of the recruitment panel will have completed formal safer recruitment training.

As a measure of good practice, the Trust will ensure that this training is renewed every five years.

15.Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees **delegated Trustee for Safeguarding**.

Any changes made to this policy by the Board of Trustees will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy as part of their induction programme.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2021

Flowchart of Disclosure and Barring Service Criminal Record Checks and Barred List Checks

