



Orchard Learning Trust

Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

May 2018

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1. Introduction

Orchard Learning Trust (“the 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.

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 Trust’s Equality and Diversity policy.

The Board of Directors 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.

The Trust 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

The Board of Directors delegates the power to offer employment for all posts below the level of Head of School to the Executive Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer. The Executive Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer may not delegate the offer of employment to any other senior manager.

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. In addition at least one member will have undertaken general recruitment or equalities training.

3. Internal and external advertising

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 as well as circulating vacancy details internally.

However, 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.

Existing employees are encouraged to apply for vacancies if they have the appropriate skills, qualifications and experience, and will be subject to the same selection process as external candidates, regardless of whether or not there are also external candidates.

4. Information for Applicants

All applicants for all vacant posts will be provided with:

- A job description outlining the duties of the post and an indication of where the post fits into the organisational structure of the Trust. A person specification may also be provided.
- An application form. CVs will not be accepted.
- An information pack containing:
 - a description of the Trust relevant to the vacant post.
 - reference to the Trust's policy on Equality and Diversity.
 - 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 Local Governing Body or Board of Directors, 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

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.

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

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 sanctions current active or disciplinary proceedings currently underway;
- any disciplinary sanctions 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 for the post;
- whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidates' suitability to work with children. If so, the Trust will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the candidate may be unsuitable to work with children.

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.

6. Interviews

The format, style and duration of the selection process are matters for the Executive Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer to decide in consultation with any directors involved in the process but 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.

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.

7. Offer of Employment by the Selection Panel

The offer of employment by the selection panel 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, normally by offer letter, that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks.

8. Personnel file and Single Central Record

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 - signed by the applicant
- 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

The Trust will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

The recruitment documentation will be retained for six months from the date of interview. Under the General Data Protection Regulation, 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.

9. Start of Employment and Induction

The pre-employment checks listed in paragraph 8 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.

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

10. Monitoring and Review of the Policy

The Executive Headteacher/Chief Executive Officer is responsible for monitoring the implementation, use and effectiveness of this policy/procedure and will report on safer recruitment to the People and Policies Committee.

This policy/procedure will be reviewed by the People and Policies Committee as necessary.