



# Recruitment and Selection Policy 2024-25

## Introduction

This recruitment and selection policy has been produced in accordance with the guidance *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* (2011) and the latest updated *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. This policy aims to ensure that safer and fair recruitment and selection is always conducted at Northleigh House School. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection at Northleigh and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people.

Northleigh is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

Northleigh is committed to attracting, selecting, and retaining employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience, and ability to do the job is critical to our performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.

## 1. Purpose

To ensure the recruitment of both permanent and fixed-term staff (including voluntary staff) is conducted in a fair, effective, and economic manner. To achieve this, those who are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently, and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Northleigh employees and Trustees responsible for and involved in the recruitment and selection of all staff. The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the Trustees. The Trustees have delegated the responsibility to the School Director for appointing staff other than those to the leadership group.

## 3. Aims and Objectives

- to ensure that the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people takes place at each stage of the process;
- to ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the appointment of all school staff;
- to ensure all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, and sexual orientation;
- to ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

## 4. Principles

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment and a high-quality service.
- The job description and person specification are essential tools and will be used throughout the process.
- Employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job.
- Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members of staff. At least one panel member will have received appropriate training on the recruitment and selection process as recommended by the Department for Education.
- Selection will be based on a minimum of completed application form, shortlisting, and interview. Shortlisting will take place if there are a significant number of applicants and completed in line with the appropriate knowledge and skills of the applicants, having regard to the job description and personal specification.
- Monitoring and evaluation are essential for assessing the effectiveness of the process.
- All posts will normally be advertised. The following will be carried out in connection with the advertising of vacancies:
  - a) All vacancies for permanent posts will be advertised.
  - b) All posts must be advertised internally and externally.
  - c) Advertisements will not be confined unjustifiably to those geographical areas or publications that would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants from a particular racial group.
  - d) Advertisements shall not state a specific length of residence or experience in the United Kingdom as a requirement for a vacancy.
  - e) Advertisements shall not differentiate between qualifications obtained in the UK and those that are fully comparable but obtained outside the UK.
  - f) All applicants for posts will be sent a copy of Northleigh's equal opportunities policy, if requested.
  - g) Where an advertisement contains an informal contact point, this shall be for the purpose of expanding on the job details and requirements and not as an informal selection procedure.
- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

## 5. Equal Opportunities

Northleigh is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, nationality, gender, religion, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation. Northleigh acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the equal opportunities policy is the foundation for all its activities.

## 6. Safer Recruitment – Recruitment and Selection Training

At least one member of the interview panel will have completed the Safer Recruitment programme training successfully prior to the start of the recruitment process.

## **7. Pre-Recruitment Process**

When a post is vacated, the School Director will decide whether it is essential to fill the post. If it is to be filled, the School Director will review the job requirements, job description and person specification to ensure that they are not unlawfully discriminatory, directly, or indirectly, on the grounds of race, sex, age, disability, religious belief, or sexuality. **There is a standard application form, which must be filled in, in English, by all applicants.**

### **7.1 Objective**

The objective of the recruitment process is to attract, select and retain staff who will successfully and positively contribute to the future development of Northleigh. The first experience an individual has is important, so the experience should be positive and all those responsible for recruiting will:

- leave a positive image with unsuccessful applicants;
- give successful applicants a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them;
- strive to reduce the risk of a bad selection decision that can be expensive and may cause line-management problems in the future or may not meet Northleigh's commitment to safeguard children and young people.

### **7.2 Application Form**

A standard application form will be used to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants.

### **7.3 Job Description and Person Specification**

An accurate job description and person specification is required for all posts.

### **7.4 References**

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.

Two references will be obtained preferably before interview which allows us to discuss the content with applicants and ensures best practice is observed in relation to Safer Recruitment. However, it is acknowledged some applicants may not want referees approached prior to interview, particularly a current employer, who they do not want to alert to the fact that they might be leaving their current role. Both references must be received, verified, and found to be acceptable before employment commences, where possible to do so.

## **8. Interviews**

### **8.1 Objective**

The interview will assess the merits of each applicant against the job requirements and explore their suitability to work with children and young people. The selection process for people who will work with children and young people will always include a face-to-face interview, even if there is only one applicant.

### **8.2 Interview panel**

A minimum of two interviewers may form the interviewing panel.

The members of the panel will:

- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments;
- be appropriately trained (one member of interview panel will have undertaken training in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Programme training);

- meet before the interviews to:
  - reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing;
  - consider the issues to be explored with each applicant and who on the panel will ask about each of those;
  - agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification.

Where an applicant is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

### **8.3 Scope of the Interview**

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the post, the interview panel will also explore:

- the applicant's attitude towards children and young people;
- ability to support Northleigh's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- gaps in the applicant's employment history;
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the applicant and/or a referee;
- whether the applicant wishes to declare anything considering the requirement for a DBS check.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the applicant will also be asked at interview if there is anything they wish to declare/discuss considering the questions that have been (or will be) put to his/her referees. (It is vital that the references are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed and before they start work, where possible to do so.)

Appointments should be based on merit and the suitability of each applicant for the job and demonstrated by the selection method(s). The selection method(s) must not disadvantage any group. All applicants must be treated in a consistent and a non-discriminatory manner. A range of selection methods may be considered in order to test applicants' suitability for the role. For example, teachers could be observed teaching as well as attending an interview.

## **9. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks**

**An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional on:**

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
- verification of the applicant's identity;
- verification of eligibility to work in the UK;
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness;
- verification of qualifications;
- (for non-teaching posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period;
- a check of the Children's Barred List and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) enhanced disclosure;
- prohibition check;
- S128 Direction check (if appropriate);

- overseas check (if appropriate – applicant lived or worked for over 3 months within 5 years of any start date);

**All checks will be:**

- confirmed in writing;
- documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information imposed by DBS regulations);
- recorded on Northleigh’s Single Central Register;
- followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

**The facts must be reported to the police and/or the Children’s Safeguarding Operations Unit at the local authority where:**

- the applicant is found to be on the Children’s Barred List, or the DBS disclosure shows they have been disqualified from working with children by a court;
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of their application;
- there are serious concerns about an applicant’s suitability to work with children.

If either a DBS and/or two satisfactory references have not been received prior to the commencement of employment, a ‘buddy’ system will be put in place whereby the new employee will always have another member of staff with them. This system will remain in place until all the paperwork has been received and signed off by the School Director.

## **10. Post-Appointment Induction**

There will be an induction programme for all staff, Trustees, and other volunteers newly appointed to Northleigh regardless of previous experience.

## **11. Complaints Procedure**

If a member of the public or an employee has a complaint concerning unlawful discrimination in respect of the recruitment, selection, appointment, or promotion process, then they have the right of reference to the civil courts and industrial tribunals.

Northleigh has formal grievance procedures outlined in the school’s **Complaints Policy** to which such complaints by employees should be referred in the first instance. The school also has formal disciplinary procedures.

## **12. Staff Development**

Once appointed, staff are encouraged to keep up to date with common professional development courses. Staff take part in an appraisal system every twelve months, where objectives are set.

**Review Date: September 2025**