



Name of Policy:	Safer Recruitment (for the whole school including EYFS)
GHS Policy Number:	63
ISI Regulation:	Welfare, health and safety of pupils (Part 3) Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors (Part 4)
Linked Policies:	Security, Access and Visitor Policy Data Protection Policy Data Retention and Destruction Policy Health and Safety Policy Induction Policy Managing Contractors Policy Privacy Notice for Staff Safeguarding Policy
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Date of review:	July 2025
Date of next review:	July 2026

Introduction

Garden House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We therefore adopt recruitment and selection procedures and other human resources management processes that help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. The safer recruitment practices are rigorously followed to reflect the school's commitment to safeguarding children.

The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand this commitment and it aims to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly for any reason whatsoever.

All staff who regularly come into contact with pupils, including support staff such as cleaners and caterers, will be required to have an Enhanced DBS check on appointment. An Enhanced DBS check will also be carried out on existing staff with a break in service of more than three months. We follow the list of checks provided in the regulations for each new member of staff.

An entry will be made on the Single Central Register for all current members of staff, the Principals and all individuals who work in regular contact with children including volunteers, supply staff and those employed as third parties. The Single Central Register is overseen by the Principals and is checked every six months.

Scope of This Policy

This policy sets out procedures and practices that are to be followed for the safe recruitment of all staff. Staff includes any person working at the School with the exception of supply/agency staff and volunteers.

Specific provisions apply to agency/supply staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors. These provisions are set out at the end of this policy.

Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of recruitment. It requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants.

The Senior Leadership Team, Bursar and Head of HR complete safer recruitment training, which will be renewed as necessary.

We will:

- ensure the job description refers to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- ensure the job description includes reference to suitability to work with children.
- obtain comprehensive information from applicants.
- Conduct social media and on-line checks as necessary.
- obtain independent professional and character references that answer specific questions about suitability to work with children.
- ask the candidate to attend a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post.
- verify the identity of the successful candidate.
- verify that the successful candidate has the academic or vocational qualifications necessary. Qualifications for overseas candidates must be equivalent to UK trained teachers and checked using the UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (UK Naric).

- check of candidate's previous employment history and experience and follow up on any gaps in employment.
- obtain an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which includes a children's barred list check for all staff in regulated activity before appointment, or as soon as practicable after the person's appointment.
- obtain appropriate child protection checks in writing for any staff employed by another organisation working with our pupils in advance of employment or as soon as practicable after appointment. This checklist will be retained as a permanent record.
- verify the candidate's right to work in the UK. From 1st January 2021, EU citizens moving to the UK to work need to obtain a visa in advance. If an EU citizen has decided to continue living in the UK after 30th June 2021, (having lived and worked in the UK for 5 consecutive years), they will need to have registered to the EU Settlement Scheme. Their right to work can be checked using the employers' online service using a shared code.

Advertisement

Any advertisements will refer to our commitment to safeguarding and will refer to the requirement to obtain enhanced clearance by DBS.

We are also committed to increasing and promoting diversity at all levels within the school. Any advertisements will refer to this by stating that we warmly welcome applications from candidates from the widest possible range of backgrounds.

The Initial Application

1. All applicants for a position at Garden House will be sent a Job Description and an Application Form. They must complete the Application Form before they attend an interview. A Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted instead of a completed Application Form but it can be submitted in addition to a completed Application Form. A Personal Statement should accompany the Application Form.

The Application Form will ask for:

- Personal details (full name, address, contact telephone numbers, email address).
 - DfE number (where applicable).
 - Academic qualifications and the awarding institution and the date awarded.
 - Teaching qualification, the awarding institution and the date awarded, (where applicable).
 - Employment history.
 - Details of two referees (including last employer). References, (see details below), will not be accepted from relatives or persons only known as a friend.
2. Applicants shortlisted for interview, must disclose any unspent convictions or cautions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice website.
 3. Completed Application Forms together with any supporting material will be kept by the Head of HR.

Interview

1. As often as is deemed necessary, the Heads will go through the pending applications in order to shortlist applications for interview. The process of selecting applicants will include the scrutiny of their application forms for evidence of employment history gaps, unusual movement between jobs, unclear reasons for leaving previous employment and any significant demotions without explanation as well as a social media and online search. Concerns raised in relation to these areas may or may not warrant rejection of applications at this stage but will be considered as a matter of course and logged for discussion at interview, where appropriate.
2. Applications that are not selected for the shortlist or which are ultimately unsuccessful will be dealt with in the following way:
 - If the candidate is deemed unsuitable for working at Garden House or if it is unlikely that any suitable roles will become available for the candidate in the near future, the Head of HR will email and inform them and their details will be shredded within six months of their application. Please refer to the School's data retention and destruction policy for more information.
 - If the candidate is not suitable for the role currently being considered but might be suitable to work elsewhere in the School or for roles that might become available in the near future, the Head of HR will contact them and ask whether their details can be kept on file.
3. If the candidate is shortlisted for interview, the Head of HR will contact the candidate and arrange an interview.
4. Prospective teachers will be invited for an interview and to teach an observed lesson, (to be observed by a Head and at least one other senior member of staff), and to meet some of the other members of staff. They may also be asked to complete a variety of 'in tray' exercises, such as marking some work, responding to emails, producing a hand-written note, etc.
5. Prospective teaching assistants will be invited to spend a morning with a class observed by the relevant class teacher. This will be followed by an interview with the Heads and or another member of the SLT.
6. Other prospective staff, e.g. admin, will be invited for interview with the Heads and or Bursar/Head of HR.
7. Candidates who are not able to attend an interview in person will be interviewed initially via zoom. Depending on the outcome of the zoom meeting they will be asked to attend a further interview in person if possible. Teachers living abroad will be asked to send a recording of a lesson which will be viewed by the Heads.
8. Candidates selected for interview will be asked to bring proof of identity (passport/driving licence), proof of address, and documentation evidencing any relevant qualification(s). Original documentation is required, copies will not be accepted. These will be checked by the Head of HR on the day of the interview. Candidates who work with children will be asked to bring their original Enhanced DBS certificate.

9. Candidates who have lived and worked abroad for more than 3 months within the last five years will be asked to supply a Police Certificate/Check. Teachers will also be asked to supply a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the candidate worked as a teacher.
10. Candidates will also be sent a copy of the school's *Safeguarding Policy* and the most recent version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education, part one, annex B*, and asked to sign a form to confirm they have read them.
11. Candidates will also be sent a convictions and declaration form to be completed and signed prior to interview.
12. Where possible, references will be obtained prior to interview so that concerns can be discussed.
13. The interview panel will consist of at least two senior members of staff, one of whom will be a Head or Bursar/Head of HR in the case of non-teaching staff. The panel will agree a set of core questions in advance and will, where possible, use similar questions for each candidate for the post. Any concerning social media or online content should also be discussed at interview. As long as these core questions are asked the interview discussion will be allowed to evolve naturally. Any disclosed criminal record should be discussed during interview.
14. Notes will be written up to record the discussion and the performance of the candidate at interview. Consideration will be given to safer recruitment concern areas (if evident) and whether satisfactory explanations are provided at interview when deciding whether to take an application further.
15. As per KCSIE 2023 and 2024 recommendations, the school will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates. All searches will be proportionate and non-discriminatory. They will also be conducted in accordance with GDPR and data protection principles.

Conditional Offer of Employment: Pre-Appointment Checks

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon:

1. Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if not already received) (see "References" below).
2. Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK (if not already received).
3. A satisfactory enhanced DBS check to include, a check of the Children's Barred List.
4. For a candidate to be employed as a teacher or teaching assistant, a check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order.

Any such checks as the School deems appropriate for candidates who have lived or worked overseas. This will include a Police Certificate/check and a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the candidate worked as a teacher.

5. Verification of professional qualifications including QTS and, where relevant, the successful completion of the statutory induction period for QTS.
6. It is the School's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the School in strictest confidence and processed in accordance with the Staff Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, and/or layout of the School. The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.
7. Completion of a Staff Suitability Declaration form to confirm they are not disqualified from providing childcare (as set out in the Disqualifications under the Childcare Act 2006).
8. Where the candidate will be taking part in the management of the School a check that they are not prohibited from management under S.128 of the Independent Educational Provision in England Regulations 2014.

References

- Two written references are required, the first of which must be from the current employer, or the most recent employer if the person is not currently working.
- If there is no current employer, verification of the most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving should be obtained. (This recognises that, in effect, not all employers will provide a substantive reference.)
- References should be from a senior person with 'appropriate authority'.
- The purpose of receiving references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.
- References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and we will not rely on references provided by the applicant or open references.
- The reference request will ask for a range of specific comments related to the post, including whether the candidate has ever been the subject of any disciplinary procedures where the disciplinary sanction is still imminent or current, whether he/she meets in full the criteria for the post, and whether there is any known reason why the person should not be employed to work with children. If a reference is taken over the telephone, detailed notes will be taken, dated and signed.
- Referees will be contacted by the Heads or Head of HR to obtain more information if required. Notes of these conversations will be kept on the candidate's file. These will be signed and dated.
- References received electronically will have their source authenticated by the Head of HR by email.
- If a candidate refuses to allow us to take up a relevant reference, whilst being sympathetic, we would explain that we could not recruit them without the reference.

The Successful Candidate

1. Successful candidates will be sent a conditional offer letter enclosing the appropriate contract and information relating to DBS clearance.

2. Candidates will be given a provisional start date on condition that all the relevant checks have been performed and the appropriate paperwork received. If an urgent start is deemed necessary, a barred list check and additional measures to protect children, (such as no unsupervised contact) may be permissible by the relevant Head/Head of HR. Any such additional measures will be discussed with the candidate (whose employment will not be confirmed until receipt of DBS clearance) and will be reviewed by the Head/Head of HR every 2 weeks until DBS clearance is received.
3. Successful candidates will be required to complete a Staff Suitability Declaration Form prior to appointment.
4. Privacy Notice for Staff – successful candidates will be given a copy of this document on an offer of employment. This specifies the personal data the school holds about a member of staff and how they can expect it to be used and for what purposes. See Privacy Notice for Staff.

Other Staff

The above also applies to all peripatetic music staff, part-time staff, administrative staff, maintenance and other ancillary staff.

Contract Staff (caterers, cleaners, ballet staff)

The School will set out its safeguarding requirements in the contract between the supplying organisation and the School. Written confirmation of safeguarding checks is sought by the School and provided by the supplying organisation. The School carries out its own identity checks on all contract staff on arrival.

Self-employed contractors are also checked by their professional associations and written confirmation is sought by Garden House prior to their start.

Where necessary, Garden House will carry out its own checks on contract staff.

Supply Staff

Garden House School rarely has the need to use a supply agency for teaching staff as cover teachers are employed by the School. However, should the need arise the supply agency is required to confirm in writing that teacher checks have been carried out with regard to identity, Enhanced disclosure, right to work in the UK, barred list, prohibition, qualifications, overseas checks, disqualification under Childcare Act 2006. In addition, the school carries out its own identity and check of their DBS. The agency also confirms references, medical fitness and previous employment history. Any teachers working for an agency should have a fresh disclosure every three years (or earlier if there are grounds for concern or a break in service of three months or more).

If an enhanced disclosure is delayed, at the Heads' discretion supply staff may be allowed to commence work under controlled conditions e.g. supervised at all times by a member of Garden House School staff.

In the case of any other supply agency staff (e.g. bus drivers), the relevant checks with regard to identity and an enhanced disclosure will be sought by the Head of HR. The supply agency will be required to confirm these checks in writing. In addition, the school carries out its own identity check.

Volunteers

The Heads, in conjunction with the Head of HR, will carry out a risk assessment to assess whether the individual will be in regulated activity in order to ascertain whether an enhanced DBS check with barred list information should be sought – see appendix one. If not, discretionary checks will be carried out and the volunteer will always be supervised by a member of Garden House School staff.

Visitors

All visitors should have made an appointment with a member of staff prior to visiting the school. On arrival they will be greeted at reception and asked to sign in using the Visitor Management System.

Visitors will also be issued with a Visitors Badge which also gives details on Safeguarding Children etc on the back of the badge. Visitors must wear their badge at all times whilst visiting the School.

All visitors will be notified of certain important criteria to note before their visit continues:

- Emergency – in the event of a fire, evacuation procedures and assembly point
- Mobile phones and cameras – their use is strictly forbidden whilst visiting the school

They will be escorted by a member of staff at all times. They will be accompanied to Sedding Street, (Kindergarten), if their visit involves a tour or meeting at this site.

Visitors will be required to sign out on departure by returning their Visitors Badge and signing out using the Visitor Management System in reception at Turks Row. Visitors departing from Sedding Street (Kindergarten), will return their badges to the member of staff accompanying them and the member of staff will inform the School Office that the visitor has left the School premises.

Visiting speakers/ invited guests

To satisfy the Prevent Duty we will assess the suitability of any visiting speakers. This will include obtaining formal or informal background information via internet searches or through asking staff, parents or volunteers, to ascertain if they are suitable. They will be asked to complete a 'Speaker Declaration Form' - see appendix two. In addition, the school will carry out an identity check on arrival.

We will ensure any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised. The Heads will be made aware of any visiting speakers by the member of staff arranging their visit and records will be kept by the Head of HR.

If a visitor is carrying out other duties for the school e.g. examiner, visiting accompanist/pianist, on a paid or unpaid basis, more robust vetting checks will be carried out and recorded. This will include a risk assessment to assess whether the individual will be in regulated activity.

Induction for New Staff

All new staff should complete a proper induction. Please refer to the Induction Policy for further information.

Personal Data

Any personal data collected as part of the application process will be used only for the purposes of that application. In the case of unsuccessful applicants, personal data will be destroyed in the appropriate manner as soon as possible after the application process. Please refer to the Data Retention and Destruction Policy for further information.

Appendix One

Risk Assessment for Volunteers

This risk assessment should be completed when considering whether a person working as a volunteer at the school should be asked to apply for an enhanced DBS certificate.

Name of Person

Is the volunteer in 'Regulated' Activity? (e.g. a weekly club) Yes No
If 'yes', an enhanced DBS with Barred list check is required.

Is the volunteer not in 'Regulated' Activity? (e.g. a one-off activity) Yes No
If 'no', an enhanced DBS without a Barred list check *may* be obtained

Areas to consider

What is the age group of the pupils that the volunteer will work with?	
Are these pupils regarded as particularly vulnerable?	
How frequently will the volunteer be in school?	
What is the connection of the volunteer to the school?	
Does the volunteer work in any capacity elsewhere with children?	

What information does the school already know about the person?	
Has the person's identity been verified?	
Is the person aware of any reason why they should not volunteer to work with children?	
Is the school aware of any reason that the person should not work with children?	
Is this volunteer with children between the hours of 2am and 6am? (This is regulated activity and the person must have an Enhanced DBS check)	

Decision

- ☐ **High Risk** – the person has no previous connection with the school AND cannot provide references from elsewhere.
There is no statutory reason why this person needs to apply for an enhanced DBS Certificate. However, the school should consider whether the person's uncorroborated background would raise an unacceptable risk.

- ☐ **Medium Risk** – The person has a connection to the school, and no issues have come to light that would mean they would be unsuitable.
There is no statutory reason why this person needs to apply for an enhanced DBS Certificate. However, the school may wish to do so, as no enhanced DBS has been seen.

- ☐ **Low Risk** – The person is signed up to the DBS Update Service and the checks reveal no negative information OR The person is employed or volunteers elsewhere and has a recent enhanced DBS and can provide references OR the school knows the person well (e.g. may be a former employee)
There is no statutory reason why this person needs to apply for an enhanced DBS Certificate. However, unless the person uses the DBS Update service, the school may decide to obtain a new enhanced DBS.

Decision

- ☐ Application for enhanced DBS check is not needed. State reason(s) below:

- ☐ Application for an enhanced DBS check is needed. State reason(s) below:

- ☐ Application for an enhanced DBS check and a Barred List check is needed because the person is in Regulated Activity

Head (Print Name)

Head (Signature).....

Date



Appendix Two

Visiting Speaker Self-Declaration Form

Individuals who are invited to speak at Garden House School are asked to complete this Self-Declaration Form to ensure a safe learning environment for our pupils. This form should be completed, signed and returned **prior to you speaking at school**.

If you are **not** already directly known to the school then, prior to or on the first day that you are engaged to speak at the School, please provide the School with an original, current photo document confirming your identity. Examples of documents that may be provided are a passport or a photocard driving licence. Please speak to the Head of HR regarding other documents that may be provided if required. (N.B. Parents and ex-pupils or staff known to the school do not have to provide this.)

To be completed by the visiting speaker

- ☐ I am not banned or disqualified from working with children nor subject to any sanctions or conditions on my employment imposed by the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Secretary of State or regulatory body.
- ☐ I am not currently undergoing any criminal investigation or safeguarding enquiry involving children.
- ☐ I understand that, where appropriate, my sessions should actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these.
- ☐ I understand that it is the School's intention for all who study and work at the School, regardless of their age, race, social and cultural background, linguistic background, gender, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), religious views and beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, political views or trade union membership to have equality of opportunity.
- ☐ I understand that while on the School site I must be supervised by an employee of the School.

I declare that the information I have given on this form is complete and accurate.

Name:..... Date in School:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Please return completed form to the relevant / organising member of GHS staff.

GHS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; speakers must be willing to complete this self-declaration form before speaking at the School.

To be completed by GHS organising member of staff:

☐ **Identity Check**

An original and current document including photograph, such as a passport or photo-card driving licence, has been provided by the visiting speaker and has been photocopied for our records and is attached. (Not applicable to parents and ex-pupils or ex-staff known to the school)
