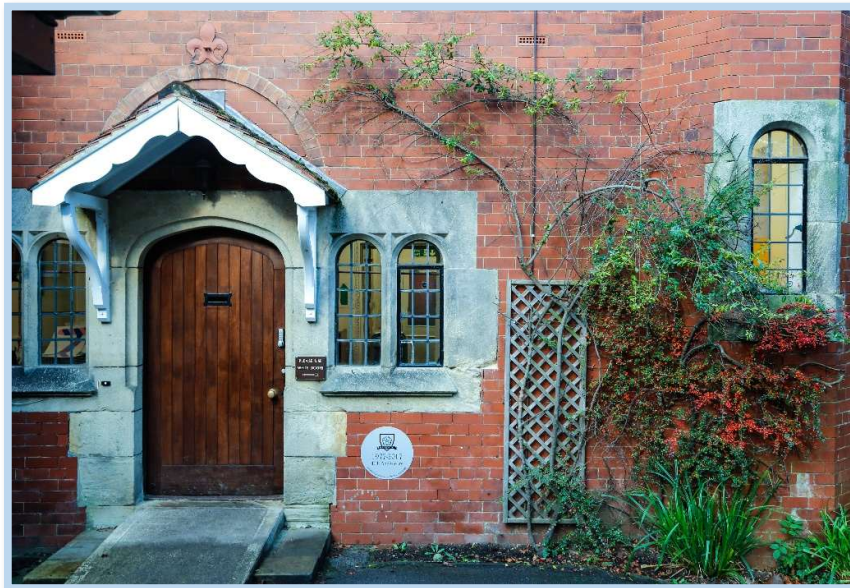




# SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY



|                    |                |                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| <b>Approved by</b> | Joe Masterson  | Headmaster                                                                                                                      |
|                    | Fiona Carter   | Group Director of Education                                                                                                     |
|                    | John Forsyth   | Chairman of the Forfar Education Group<br>Governance Board for Harrogate Preparatory School Ltd, trading as Brackenfield School |
| <b>Next review</b> | August 2026    |                                                                                                                                 |

## AIMS

The Headmaster, Compliance Manager and the Proprietor of Brackenfield School are aware of their responsibilities for safer recruitment as outlined in the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE).

They aim to appoint appropriate teaching and support staff, ensuring that all staff have the health and qualifications for the post and are proper and fit persons to be in charge of children and young people.

Brackenfield School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. To assist in this, the school follows a formal recruitment procedure for the employment of all staff and adheres to the statutory guidance outlined in:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) (latest version) - This policy reflects the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and will be reviewed whenever statutory safeguarding guidance is updated.
- The Equality Act 2010
- Brackenfield School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Subject to statutory provisions, no applicant will be treated less favourably than another because of their sex, parental status, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or age. Their ability to perform the job will be the primary consideration.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in addition, when regulatory updates are published.

## TRAINING

The Headmaster, Compliance and Facilities Manager and relevant members of SLT have completed Safer Recruitment Training and follow the procedures with due regard and care. Brackenfield School ensures that sufficient relevant staff are trained in safer recruitment processes. At least one person conducting the interview will have successfully completed Safer Recruitment Training in accordance with KCSiE requirements. The School will ensure that sufficient senior staff maintain current safer recruitment knowledge through regular refresher training.

The Compliance and Facilities Manager supports the Headmaster to ensure that appropriate child protection checks, and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the school's pupils either at Brackenfield School on another site (for example, Peripatetic Teachers, volunteers, contractors, visitors).

## RESPONSIBILITIES

**Teaching & Support Staff** – All teaching and support staff are appointed by the Headmaster in consultation with senior staff. It is their responsibility that these guidelines are followed and to identify any training needs for senior staff in recruitment/selection procedures.

**Kitchen & Site Staff** – All kitchen and site staff are appointed by the Compliance Manager in consultation with relevant staff. It is their responsibility that these guidelines are followed and to identify any training needs for the individuals appointed.

All paperwork is managed by the Headmaster or the Compliance Manager.

### **DETERMINING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POST**

In consultation with senior staff, the Headmaster will decide upon the timetable of the selection process, draw up a job description, and other documents to be provided to applicants before the job advert is prepared.

### **ADVERTISING**

All temporary and permanent vacancies will be advertised both internally and/or in the local or national press (often using the TES online service) and elsewhere (i.e. Job Centres, agencies etc.) as appropriate. All vacancy advertisements will include an appropriate statement on equal opportunities and child protection. The Safeguarding statement will use appropriate wording, for example, *“Brackenfield School is committed to safer recruitment practice and pre-employment checks will be under taken before appointment is confirmed. All posts are subject to enhance disclosure and barring service checks. We expect all adults to share our commitment to safeguarding and the health & wellbeing of our pupils.”*

In some circumstances, advertising will be restricted to internal applicants in the first instance. This may include the following situations:

- A reorganisation of work in a department is being carried out
- An existing temporary position is to become permanent.

Any advert will have the following information clearly communicated:

- Relevant skills, abilities, experience and attitude as required for the post
- Safeguarding requirements for the post in relation to regulated or unregulated work
- A safeguarding statement making any applicant aware that the post will require an enhanced DBS check including a barred list check

### **CONTENTS OF THE APPLICANT’S PACK**

All candidates are to receive: an application form and any explanatory notes about its completion, the job description, outlining the duties and responsibilities of the post and stating that applicant’s motivation and ability to create and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children are essential qualities for the post.

It will identify the qualities required in the ideal candidate for the post, specify the essential and the desirable criteria in relation to experience, qualification and training, skills and abilities, special knowledge and any relevant additional requirements for the post.

Further particulars on the conditions of service, information on the school and department, timetable for selection process and other relevant information as required, will be included

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All staff involved in the recruitment and selection process should treat all information related to applicants in the recruitment and selection process as confidential.

### **RELATIONSHIPS WITH APPLICANTS**

In order to avoid possible conflict of interest, employees must not be involved in the recruitment and selection process where they are related to an applicant or have a personal relationship with them.

If such a situation arises, the member of staff should declare the relationship to the Headmaster who will make alternative arrangements for another colleague to undertake the selection process.

#### **APPLICANTS WITH DISABILITY**

The needs of applicants with disability will be taken into account during the recruitment and selection process. Such applicants who meet the essential criteria in the person specification will be equally considered for a call up to interview. The application form asks candidates to make the selection panel aware if any reasonable adaptations are required for the candidate attending interview.

#### **INITIAL CONTACT**

The Headmaster or Compliance Manager will deal with all formal enquiries from applicants. The initial contact that an applicant makes with a school is important in deterring applications from unsuitable parties.

A clear message should be sent out that appointments are conditional on DBS, other relevant clearance checks and satisfactory references.

- that referees will be asked to comment on the suitability of the candidate to work with young people
- that the completed application form must describe the employment record in months as well as years (to reveal any gaps)
- and that referees should include a referee who is able to comment on the candidate's suitability to work with children.

#### **REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICATIONS**

Applications are to be by application form. A CV is not acceptable on its own but can be submitted alongside a fully completed application form. The application form will include a declaration that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and that all convictions must be declared. A separate declaration form is only requested to those applicants who have been successfully shortlisted.

It will state that giving false information is an offence and may result in summary dismissal.

#### **NUMBER OF REFEREES REQUIRED**

References are sought directly from at least two referees on all short-listed candidates following a successful interview prior to start date, but where possible prior to interview, including internal ones, one of which should be from the current or most recent employer.

Where the applicant currently works with children in a regulated capacity, a reference must include this employer. Or if currently employed in a different employment sector the reference should be from the last childcare related employment. If no previous work within childcare/education, the references must be obtained from the current employer.

### **INFORMATION TO BE REQUESTED IN REFERENCES**

References requested are to include specific questions regarding the suitability of the candidate for a post which involves extensive contact with children. Referees will be asked to declare that they believe the applicant to be entirely suitable to work with children and to give factual information on any allegations, disciplinary action or expressed concerns about the candidate's behaviour towards children. Incomplete references should be followed up by telephone enquiry.

All references obtained should be treated as confidential. No open references (often headed 'To whom it may concern') or testimonials will be accepted.

All references will be verified to ensure:

- that the reference has been completed by the named person
- to clarify their position
- to reinforce that there is no known reason why the candidate should not work with children and to check that there have been no previous Safeguarding or Child Protection issues.

This should be signed and dated by the Headmaster or Compliance Manager.

### **SHORT-LISTING PROCEDURE**

All applications are considered by appropriate senior members of staff. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment history are to be noted and are to be thoroughly investigated at interview. Incomplete application forms will be returned for completion. All candidates will be assessed equally against the criteria contained of the job description without exception or variation, using a standard assessment form.

A shortlist of candidates for interview will then be drawn up. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the process.

Following shortlisting all candidates going through to interview will be asked to complete the disclosure of convictions and cautions form against the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2014. This remains confidential until interview and if anything is declared it will be fully explored at interview.

### **ONLINE SEARCHES**

An online search of all shortlisted candidates will be undertaken in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). The purpose of the search is to identify any incidents, information or publicly available content that may indicate an applicant is unsuitable to work with children or may present a safeguarding risk.

Online searches will be undertaken by the School's appointed external provider, SP Index. Any information identified through the online search process which raises concern regarding a candidate's suitability to work with children will be reviewed by the Headmaster and/or Compliance and Facilities Manager. Relevant concerns will be risk assessed and, where appropriate, discussed with the candidate before any appointment is confirmed.

The School will only consider information that is relevant to the candidate's suitability to work with children and in accordance with data protection legislation.

### **INVITATION TO INTERVIEW**

All candidates invited to interview for a post are entitled to full professional information. In addition to the arrangements for interviews - time and place, directions to the venue etc, the invitation will remind candidates about how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore including suitability to work with children.

Information about the interview schedule, who will undertake the interview and the timescale for decisions about the post and for communicating them, will be provided, where possible. Before the interview any gaps in employment history will be identified and checked. During the interview they will be explored. When the interview process is to include observed teaching by the candidate, it is good practice that full and clear details of the teaching task(s) and the evaluation process to be given to the candidate as far in advance as possible.

All candidates will be instructed to bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements, i.e. either a current driving licence or passport including a photograph, a birth certificate, plus a document such as a utility bill or financial statement dated within the last 3 months, that shows the candidate's current name and address, and where appropriate, change of name documentation. Candidates will be asked to bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his/her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

Applicants will be asked to specify any particular support that they may need in order to attend and participate without disadvantage.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept by the Headmaster in the confidential staff files.

### **COMPOSITION OF THE APPOINTMENTS PANEL**

The selection process for people who will work with children will always include a face-to-face interview. Interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements and explore their suitability to work with children. At least one member of the interview panel will hold a Safer Recruitment qualification.

A set of questions and issues to be explored with each candidate is decided prior to interview and the structure of the interview is agreed in advance. Follow up questions will be asked at interview and these are likely to be different for each candidate.

Applicants for all posts are formally interviewed by no less than two people (either separately or as a panel). Interview and visit procedures will vary according to the post, but will include a tour of the school, introduction to relevant members of staff and, in the case of teachers, will usually include teaching a lesson. Candidate assessment forms are to be completed by all interviewers and a meeting held post interview to discuss the candidates. These forms will be signed and dated by each member of the interview panel and will form part of the candidates file.

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

It is important that the interview is structured and at least these questions are asked and answered satisfactorily:

- What is their motivation for applying for this job?

- What is the explanation for any gaps in employment?
- What experience has the candidate had in relation to the post?
- Have they had any problems with their relationship with children and young people?
- Have they had any involvement with the police?
- What is an appropriate pupil / adult relationship?
- What is their understanding of British Values?
- What would the candidate do if they had any concerns about a child?
- What is your understanding of professional conduct online, including appropriate use of social media, technology and artificial intelligence when working with children?

## **INTERVIEW RECORDS**

All interview records, including interview notes, are securely filed for six months after which those for unsuccessful applicants are destroyed. No offer of employment will be made during the interview. However, applicants must be given an indication of when and how they will be advised the result of the interview/selection process. The successful candidate will usually be contacted by telephone as soon as is practical once a decision has been reached.

## **CONDITIONAL OFFER OF APPOINTMENT**

A formal job offer is made in writing but is subject to verification of identity and the satisfactory completion of all the preemployment checks. No-one will be allowed to commence employment unless all checks have been completed. A contract will then be drawn up and issued digitally, once all checks have been satisfactorily completed and qualifications and references checked. All appointments are conditional on a satisfactory probationary period.

## **PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

To comply with the requirements of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 for all staff appointed the following checks are carried out and recorded in the Single Central Register (SCR) prior to the member of staff starting work.

- Verification of identity
- References
- Sight of Birth Certificate
- Verification of employment history
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure
- A Barred List check for those engaged in regulated activity
- A prohibition from teaching check for all staff engaged in teaching activities
- Verification of professional qualifications, where applicable
- For management positions, including School Governors, a section 128 check
- For those who have been resident in an EU country, a check of the European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions
- Medical fitness declaration
- A declaration by the candidate that he/she is not disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period for teaching posts: this applies to those who obtained qualified teacher status after 7 May 1999

- Where the candidate has been resident overseas such criminal record checks and confirmations as the school may consider appropriate will be made so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered
- A social media check completed by SP Index (third party provider) on the individual will take place. Shortlisted candidates will be informed of this at the point of invitation to interview.

Following NSPCC guidelines, the school will usually require checks to be made from any country where a person has been resident for three months or more in the five years prior to applying to the school.

The Compliance and Facilities Manager and Headmaster are responsible for maintaining the School's Single Central Record and ensuring that all required recruitment checks are accurately recorded and subject to regular review.

### **SELF-DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL MATTERS**

All applicants will be required to disclose any relevant convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings, arrests, charges or investigations which may affect their suitability to work with children in line with current safeguarding requirements.

### **ACTION IN THE CASE OF A LATE DBS DISCLOSURE**

Usually, no member of staff is allowed to begin work without a satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosure. However, if a DBS disclosure is late, he/she may begin work as long as the following conditions are met.

- The application for the DBS has been made
- A separate barred list check has been made
- All other recruitment checks listed above have been completed and are satisfactory
- A senior member of staff has conducted a risk assessment
- The member of staff is supervised
- He/she will not undertake one-to-one work, personal care activities or residential visits
- Other staff are aware that there should be no unsupervised contact
- The risk assessment is reviewed every two weeks until the DBS is received

### **ACTION WHEN PORTING A DBS**

A previous DBS may be accepted by the school subject to the three-month rule. This states that members of staff in schools must be subject to an enhanced criminal record check on entry to the school's workforce and, thereafter, may move between schools without requirement on subsequent employer schools to carry out further DBS checks unless they leave the school's workforce for three months or more. If Brackenfield School accepts a pre-existing check under this rule, they carry out a separate barred list check and check the original certificate of the DBS enclosure before the person starts work.

Sight of the original DBS certificate must be made prior to employment commencing.

### **OVERSEAS CANDIDATES – RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK**

Where an applicant who does not have permission to work in the UK has been appointed, the offer will also be subject to obtaining a work permit.

## **UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES**

In the interests of open professionalism, all unsuccessful candidates for posts will be entitled for feedback on the reasons why they were not selected for the post and on their performance during the interview process.

## **POST APPOINTMENT INDUCTION**

Please see separate Staff Induction Policy.

There is an induction programme for all newly appointed staff and volunteers, including teaching staff, regardless of previous experience.

A mentor is appointed for the first year of employment.

In line with KCSiE, staff inductions will include information on understanding roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

All documentation relating to the recruitment and selection process should be returned to the Headmaster at the end of the process. For unsuccessful candidates, records will be kept for a period of 6 months after the appointment has been made, this should include all the notes made. Destruction of the unsuccessful candidates paperwork will be logged on the school's Destruction of Data records log, for GDPR purposes.

## **VOLUNTEERS/CONTRACTORS**

- In accordance with KCSiE 2026, volunteers engaging in regulated activity must obtain an Enhanced DBS certificate with children's barred list information before undertaking such activity.
- Volunteers who are not engaged in regulated activity will be subject to a risk assessment and appropriate supervision arrangements determined by the School.
- All volunteers will receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role and will be made aware of their responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding.
- Contractors who have not undergone appropriate safeguarding checks will be supervised at all times when pupils are present.
- Alongside Contractor safeguarding checks, as of October 2026 Contractors may be subject to Right to Works checks. Examples of a Right to Work check are: UK Passport, Irish Passport alongside proof of National Insurance, UK Birth Certificate, or a Right to Work Share Code check for non-UK/Irish born Nationals.

## **REPORTING TO THE DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS) AND/OR TEACHING REGULATION AGENCY (TRA)**

Any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student) whose services are no longer used for regulated activity and the DBS referral criteria are met, that is, they have caused harm or posed a risk of harm to a child, will be promptly reported to the DBS:

DBS customer services  
PO Box 3961  
Royal Wootton Bassett  
SN4 4HF

Email [customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov](mailto:customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov)

DBS helpline 03000 200 190

Ceasing to use a person's services includes: dismissal; non-renewal of a fixed-term contract; no longer engaging/refusing to engage a supply teacher provided by an employment agency; terminating the placement of a student teacher or other trainee; no longer using staff employed by contractors; no longer using volunteers; resignation; and voluntary withdrawal from supply teaching, contract working, a course of initial teacher training, or volunteering. It is important that reports include as much evidence about the circumstances of the case as possible. Failure to make a report constitutes an offence. 'Compromise agreements' cannot be used to prevent a referral being made to the DBS when it is legally required nor can an individual's refusal to cooperate with an investigation.

Proprietors of independent schools have a legal duty to respond to requests from the DBS for information they hold already, but they do not have to find it from other sources. Brackenfield School will be asked, as part of routine inspection, to confirm that they have disclosed to inspectors all instances of action in relation to safeguarding concerns. Brackenfield School will make a referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: "unacceptable professional conduct", "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute" or a "conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence".

Advice about whether an allegation against a teacher is sufficiently serious to refer to the TRA can be found in Teacher Misconduct: disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession, (April 2018). Further guidance is also published on the TRA website.

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|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of policy</b><br>Safer Recruitment Policy | <b>Policy reviewed/amended date</b><br>September 2021 (V2)<br>September 2022 (V3)<br>August 2023 (V4)<br>Sept 2024 (V5)<br>August 2025 (V6)<br>June 2026 (V7) Minor Updates<br>October 2026 (V8) Minor Updates |
| <b>Original policy date</b><br>September 2020     | <b>Current version</b><br><b>V8</b>                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Date of new review</b><br>August 2026          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                |