

Safer Staff Recruitment, Induction and Development Policy

September 2024

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Approved by:	Proprietary Board
Frequency of review:	Annually
Next review due:	September 2025

● Policy Statement

The aim of this policy is to create a structure and process to facilitate the recruitment and retention of high calibre staff to the school and to:

- Ensure that the recruitment processes are safe and fit for purpose.
- Appoint the best person for each position.
- Ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants.
- Offer career development prospects and create opportunities for employees to apply for internal promotion.
- Ensure compliance with the relevant employment legislation.
- Promote the school's values.
- Meet the school's operational requirements and strategic aims.

All staff involved in the recruitment process must have appropriate training and be aware of their responsibilities under the relevant legislation. It is recommended that at least one member of the recruitment panel should have carried out safer recruitment training.

The school aims to secure equality of opportunity in all its activities, and in this respect all staff should demonstrate a positive approach towards equality in employment.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familiar relationship with an applicant they must declare this relationship as soon as they are aware of the individuals' application. It will be necessary for the member of staff to avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection process.

We are committed to ensuring all recruitment adheres to employment legislation, safer recruitment guidelines and is fair and accessible to all. The safety of students and young people is paramount and we are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and young people. The recruitment panel will be required to act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of a prospective employee based on checks and evidence including DBS checks, barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with references and information obtained at interview.

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- **Agencies**

Before engaging in agreements with agencies it is important to be assured they have robust systems in place in terms of pre-employment checks. Each agency should be fully vetted to ensure that the appropriate checks are carried in terms of suitability and validity to work with students and young people, eligibility to work in the UK and past criminal convictions.

Agency staff are not employees of the school and are engaged as workers through the agency. Any agency providing workers also must adopt and implement the measures described in this guidance.

- **Vacancies**

A vacancy can arise when:

- A member of staff has left a post.
- A change in workload, departmental structure or job design is required.
- Cover for long-term sickness, maternity, paternity or shared parental leave is required.

On identifying a vacancy, Impact North West Schools will consider the following:

- Whether the vacant post is still necessary.
- How the post will be funded.
- Whether the post is established or outside of the agreed budget or structure.
- Whether the Job Description for the post needs updating. If so, the post may need to be re-evaluated or whether a new Job Description is required for a new post.
- Whether the post is appropriate for job share.
- Whether the post could provide an opportunity for secondment.
- Whether the post is suitable or appropriate for redeployment purposes in accordance within the organisation. Whether the post needs to be filled on a temporary basis due to the needs of the school.

- **Job Description and Person Specification**

Before the recruitment campaign can commence, the Job Description and Person Specification must be produced. The job description may need to be re-evaluated if necessary. The purpose of the Job Description and Person Specification is to provide information on the role and what skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours the successful candidate must have.

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The requirements listed in the Job Description and Person Specification must be clear, fully justifiable and associated to the role. These measures will help to increase the pool of potential applicants and reduce the risk of discrimination occurring.

All requirements must be realistic and justifiable and must observe equal opportunity provisions in terms of the language and criteria used.

- **Advertising**

The advertising of all vacancies to support Equalities Act 2010 and the content of advertisements will comply with anti-discrimination legislation.

The Headteacher and one other will be responsible for the shortlisting of applicants, the interviewing and if required, further testing of candidates.

The Headteacher has appropriate recruitment and selection training, so they understand:

- The legal impact and consequences of not following consistent recruitment and selection procedures.
- The school's Recruitment Policy and Procedure.
- How to draw up effective Job Descriptions, Person Specifications and adverts.
- The reasons for equal opportunities monitoring.
- The importance of developing the necessary skills for effective interviewing.
- The importance of safeguarding Students.
- Safer Recruitment Training.

- **Shortlisting of applicants**

In order to ensure fair and effective shortlisting, only those criteria listed on the Person Specification can be shortlisted. In all cases, candidates selected for interview must meet the essential criteria listed in the Person Specification of the Job Description.

If only one candidate meets the shortlisting criteria the selection process may still go ahead.

All applications should be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment. Reasons for obvious gaps in employment, a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent to a temporary post should be fully explored and verified.

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It is essential that all staff involved in the recruitment and selection process ensure the confidentiality of information supplied by applicants and referees.

Candidates can request feedback as to why they were not shortlisted for interview. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that feedback is provided.

• **Application Forms**

Shortlisted applicants will be sent a Job Application Form including questions relating to:

- Education and Training.
- Employment History.
- Disability Declaration.
- References.
- Criminal Offense Declaration.

Applicants will also be sent an Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form which they (voluntary) will complete. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be done as part of pre-recruitment checks.

• **Interviews**

The Recruiting Manager is responsible for compiling relevant competency-based interview questions. All interview questions asked must be relevant (and seen to be relevant) to the job.

Due to the nature of Impact North West School's work with students, the interview questions will need to explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Students. In accordance with the guidance defined in "Keeping Children Safe in Education", the interview questions must also explore:

- The candidate's attitude toward students and young people and their motivation to work in this area.
- The candidate's ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with students and young people.
- Their emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours.
- Their attitudes to the use of authority and maintaining discipline.
- Their ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

To ensure fairness each candidate should receive the same interview experience. The panel will be assessing the candidate and the candidate will be assessing the school as a potential employer. It is therefore advisable to ensure that candidates are made aware at the beginning of the interview:

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- What the selection process and methods are.
- How they will be assessed.
- That they will be given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Be advised on how and when they will be informed of the selection outcome.

The panel should also:

- Ensure that each candidate is greeted and escorted to and from the interview room.
- Ensure that the room is appropriate for the interview (free of interruptions, comfortable, etc.).
- Ensure that arrangements are in place for candidates with a disability. Due diligence is necessary to ensure that any additional needs are accommodated at the interview.
- Give all interviewees a comparable amount of time.
- Supplement their understanding of the candidate's responses by the use of probing questions.

Depending on the responses given, supplementary questions may be asked. These and the subsequent answers should be noted. Obvious gaps in employment or any history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career progression should be fully explored and reasons verified.

As references will have been obtained prior to the interview, ask the candidate if there is anything they would like to declare or discuss in light of the requirement for a DBS check (if applicable) and the questions that will be put to their referees.

The interview will need to explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

• **Choosing The Candidate**

If none of the candidates are considered suitable, thought should be given to reviewing the advertising/shortlisting/interviewing process and/or the Job Description itself and if, necessary re-advertising the vacancy.

The emphasis for filling a post should be on the putting the "right person" in the job and not the person being available at the "right time". Candidates should be appointed on their ability to do the job for which interviewed and not because of the need to fill the post.

Interview records for unsuccessful candidates must be retained for a period of six months following the interviews. Records for successful candidates will be filed on their personal file.

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The school will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing. If feedback is requested, the Headteacher should provide a valid reason for rejection and feedback to support the unsuccessful candidate to identify areas for development. Candidate details will be kept on file for six months.

Documentation relating to applicants will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance to the Data Protection Act (DPA). Applicants will have the right to feedback from the Recruiting Manager after interview and to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the DPA.

• Offer of Employment

A contract comes into being once a verbal offer has been made and accepted. The offer should be made verbally, followed up by a written conditional offer of employment. The successful applicant should receive a verbal offer no later than 5 working days after the interview.

Written offers of employment will only be produced by the school upon receipt of all required documentation and authorisation by the Headteacher.

In order to take a structured approach to recruitment across the school, to be able to audit outcomes of recruitment campaigns and for individual file management the following will be sent to the successful candidate:

- Conditional Employment Offer letter.
- DBS Application Form
- Job Description and Person Specification.

All offers will be conditional upon the school receiving all relevant pre-employment checks.

9. Pre-Employment Checks

The school should ensure all pre-employment checks are complete prior to the successful candidate starting employment. No-one is able to begin employment without all checks being clear. All offers of employment will also remain conditional until the following have been received:

- Two satisfactory references covering at least 5 years.
- Satisfactory DBS Enhanced Check for regulated activity and DBS Children's Barred List clearance (where applicable for the post).
- Prohibition from Teaching check (if applicable).
- Disqualification by association check (if applicable).
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK.
- Verification of the applicant's identity.

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- Evidence of qualifications required for the job.
- Verification of qualifications, where required.
- Verification of professional status, where required.

If any of the above checks are not satisfactory, the offer may be revoked. Where this is necessary, written reasons will be supplied.

All pre-employment checks will be confirmed in writing, documented and retained on the employee's personal file. Where they are unsatisfactory or there are any discrepancies in the information provided, these must be followed up with advice from ACAS.

If a candidate is found to be on the DBS Schools' Barred List, the Headteacher will be informed by the DBS Team and this person will **not** be able to be employed.

If a candidate has an unclear DBS Disclosure, advice will be sought by ACAS. Following this, the school will decide whether to continue with the offer of employment. The ultimate decision will be made by the Headteacher.

- **References**

Preferably, references should be received for all shortlisted applicants before interview. However, it is reasonable that there will be occasions when a candidate will request "no contact with current employer unless they are preferred candidate after interview".

References should seek objective, verifiable information and not subjective opinion.

- **Criminal Records**

Candidates who have access to students and vulnerable people will normally not be employed until a clear DBS Disclosure is received. In exceptional cases, candidates may commence employment prior to DBS clearance provided there is no unsupervised access to students or vulnerable people, and following a clear check of the DBS School's Barred List. The Headteacher is responsible for the final decision.

- **Convictions**

The Headteacher will be responsible for ascertaining whether a candidate's criminal record does or does not render them unfit for the post.

Posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (in which case criminal convictions never become "spent") should be identified as exempt when seeking references.

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- **Eligibility to Work in the UK**

Under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 it is a criminal offence to employ someone from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) who is subject to immigration control unless the person has permission to work in the UK. As an employer, the school is required to make basic document checks to make sure it does not break the law by employing illegal workers.

- **Evidence of Qualifications Required for the Job**

In posts where qualifications are an essential requirement, successful candidates must provide proof in the form of a certificate of achievement, membership number or other documentary evidence that may be relevant.

- **Commencement of Employment**

Prior to commencement of employment and once in receipt of satisfactory pre-employment checks, employment can be confirmed and the candidate can be sent the following:

- Confirmation of employment and start date.
- Contract of employment.
- New Starter form for payroll.
- Pensions form.
- P46 form.
- Job Description and Person Specification.

The Headteacher must complete the New Starter Form and forward to the Payroll/HR service.

Temporary to Permanent Staff Transition

Temporary staff transitioning to permanent roles within the school will be subject to specific procedures as outlined below:

Supply Agency Vetting: Temporary staff who are being considered for permanent positions within the school will not be required to complete a new application form or provide references if their employment records, including relevant checks such as DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and references, have been thoroughly vetted and verified by the supplying agency and verified by Impact North West Schools Leadership team (at time of initial agency worker recruitment)

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Continuity of Checks: It is understood that the supplying agency has conducted necessary background checks and vetting procedures in line with safer recruitment guidelines. Therefore, the school will rely on the validity and completeness of these checks for the purpose of transitioning temporary staff to permanent roles.

Role Change Application: Should a temporary staff member apply for a different role within the school than the one they have been engaged in as supply staff, they will be treated as a new applicant. In such cases, they will be required to complete the standard application process, including providing references and undergoing relevant checks as per the school's safer recruitment policy.

Review and Oversight: The school's designated safer recruitment officer will oversee the transition process for temporary staff becoming permanent employees, ensuring compliance with all relevant regulations and guidelines. Any exceptions to the standard procedure will be documented and reviewed to maintain transparency and accountability.

Induction

The Line Manager of the appointee will be responsible for the planning of the induction programme.

- **Evaluation**

It is extremely important to evaluate the success of the recruitment and selection process at each stage to see whether mistakes were made and whether a repetition of them can be avoided in the future. Effective monitoring is essential as a key element to inform the recruitment strategy and is an important tool in fulfilling the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity to all job applicants. Data collected for monitoring should not be used for any other purposes.

It is also advisable to monitor where applicants have heard about vacancies in order to identify which source is most effective.

- **Data Collection and Protection**

Special care should be taken regarding all information supplied by job applicants. Data must only be collected that is relevant to the purpose. In addition, any 'sensitive' data should only be collected where the applicant's express consent has been gained.

Therefore the school should ensure the following steps are taken:

- All information gathered is stored securely and used only for the stated purposes.

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- Applications are destroyed when they are no longer needed (it is recommended that this is done after six months).
- Names of unsuccessful applicants should only be kept on file if the applicants have been informed.
- Job applicants should be given a chance to provide an explanation if any checks on their application details produce discrepancies.

In addition, the interview panel should be aware that interviewees have the right to access their interview notes and therefore any opinions noted must be based on fact.

Candidates have the right to request feedback on the status of their application at any stage of the recruitment process.

- **Records and Monitoring**

All records in relation to recruitment and selection exercises must comply with the provision of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Records will be kept relating to all applicants, candidates interviews and new appointees in respect of:

- Internal applicants.
- External applicants.
- Grade (of vacancy).
- Gender.
- Disability.
- Age.
- Race/ethnic origin.

- **Staff Development**

Impact North West Schools are committed to the support and promotion of staff development and training for all its members of staff.

Staff development refers to the development of the individual's potential and career in terms of knowledge, skills, personal abilities, competencies and understanding, in line with the aims and objectives of the school. It embraces a wide range of learning experiences, both within and outside the workplace, and is a continuing process that can help individuals:

- Achieve agreed strategic, operational, team and individual objectives.

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- Acquire knowledge and skills which will enable them to fulfil their current responsibilities more effectively; to respond positively to change; to extend their range of performance.
- Benefit from highly effective teamwork.
- Continuously develop, personally and professionally by helping them to develop skills and/or gain qualifications which will equip them better for future career development.
- By acknowledging that staff who acquire new skills or knowledge should find appropriate opportunities to use them in their employment with the school; to identify and develop their potential; to increase their job satisfaction; to improve their self-confidence, motivation and initiative.

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