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| Herne Bay High School’sSafer Recruitment Policy Statement | | | | | | |
| **Policy reviewed by** | Jemma Lowry | July 2025 | **Date of next review** | July 2026 | **Date of last ratification by Governors** | August 2024 |
| **Purpose of policy** | | | | | | |
| The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout the school in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 3. If there is any conflict between this policy and KCSIE, the statutory provision in KCSIE will prevail. This policy will be used to ensure Safer Recruitment in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy Appendix 2 and the Safeguarding Recruitment Statement which is shown as Appendix 1 of this policy. | | | | | | |

**INTRODUCTION**

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

This school recognises the value of and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. The school is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. The school will uphold its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, age, marriage or civil partnership or disability.

This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in the schools Equal Opportunities Statement. The practices described in this document are designed to ensure a fair and objective process.

All posts within the school are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent after shortlisting and successful candidates will have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check with Barred List checks. A previously issued Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate will only be accepted in certain restricted circumstances.

The school is committed to ensuring that people who have been convicted of a crime are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position. This will depend on the background, nature and circumstances of the offence(s). The School’s Recruitment Procedure outlines the considerations that will be taken into account when determining the relevance of a criminal record to the post.

The Disclosure and Barring Service has published a Code of Practice and accompanying explanatory guide, [DBS code of practice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice). This School is committed to ensuring that it meets the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to the processing, handling and security of Disclosure information.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**The School will:**

Implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role.

**Advertising for Vacancies**

All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statement:

***Safeguarding Commitment:  
At Herne Bay High, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As such, all applicants will be required to undergo comprehensive child protection screening, including checks with past employers, the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), and Barred List Checks. If you share our commitment to safeguarding and child welfare, we encourage you to apply.***

All job advertisements will include the following attachments when applying for a post:

* Job Description & Person Specification
* The School’s Safer Recruitment Policy, which includes our safeguarding recruitment statement

**Note:** The only exception to this is when advertising on mainstream job sites (e.g., Indeed), which do not allow attachments. In such instances, the aforementioned documents will be sent directly to applicants once they apply, ensuring they have received all relevant information.

**Use of CVs in Recruitment**

In line with the safer recruitment principles, from December 2024 onwards, the school will accept CVs for shortlisting and interview purposes only. This decision is based on identified needs and relevant data.

* **CV Review:** All CVs will be thoroughly reviewed. Candidates must provide a full employment history, including details of any gaps. The school’s HR team will ensure that the information is consistent and complete.
* **Safer Recruitment Checks:** Safer recruitment checks will be completed before interviews, including verifying the CV and addressing any discrepancies or concerns.
* **Post-Interview:** If a candidate is successful in the interview, they will be asked to complete a full application form. This application form will be scrutinized by HR to ensure there are no gaps or inconsistencies when compared to the CV. The form will also be used as part of the compliance file and must be signed by the candidate to confirm its accuracy.

**Reference Checks**

If shortlisted, candidates will be asked to provide reference details as part of the interview process. These references will be requested before the interview, and further information on reference checks can be found in the ‘Shortlisting and References’ section of this policy.

**Compliance and Documentation**

Once the successful candidate has been selected, the application form, references, and all relevant documentation will form part of their compliance file. This will be reviewed to ensure all safeguarding checks have been completed and are fully compliant with the school’s safeguarding policy.

**IDENTIFICATION OF THE RECRUITMENT PANEL**

At least one member of the Selection and Recruitment Panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment. All interviews will include either HR, a member of the SLT or Principal. The Safer Recruitment Lead MUST be Safer Recruitment trained in order to act in this capacity.

**SELF-DECLARATION CRIMINAL RECORD FORM**

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete and sign a self-declaration form of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. It will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended) since it involves working with, or having access to children, and so applicants are required to declare:

* All unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
* All adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not ‘protected’ as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended)
* Prohibition from teaching (for teaching roles)
* Inclusion on the children’s barred list
* Section 128 orders (for management and Governor roles)
* If they are known to the police and children’s local authority social care
* Relevant overseas information

The amendments to the Exceptions Order provide that certain ‘spent’ convictions and cautions are ‘protected’ and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account.

If the form only has an electronic signature, a written hard signature will be required at interview.

**SHORT LISTING AND REFERENCES**

Candidates will be short listed against the person specification for the post.

Herne Bay High School will carry out an online search as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, might be explored with the applicant at interview.

Two references, one of which must be from the applicant’s current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the procedure.

References will be sought directly from the referee, and where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

Where deemed appropriate, eg if one of the above references is incomplete or contains anomalies and/or discrepancies, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:

* The candidate’s suitability to work with children and young people
* Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people
* The candidate’s suitability for the post

Reference requests will include the following:

* Applicants current post and salary
* question regarding the applicants suitability to work with children
* question regarding the applications disciplinary record

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

**INVITATION TO INTERVIEW**

Candidates called to interview will receive:

* A letter or email confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
* Disclosure of convictions form
* Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
* The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview

**THE SELECTION PROCESS**

The selection techniques used during the recruitment process will be determined by the nature and duties of the post, but all vacancies will require an interview for shortlisted candidates.

**Shortlisting and Safeguarding Recruitment Statement**

Candidates who are shortlisted for a vacancy will be sent a copy of the **Safeguarding Recruitment Statement** to review prior to the interview. This ensures that all candidates are aware of the school's safeguarding expectations and policies.

**Interview Stages**

Depending on the role and the volume of suitable candidates who apply, interviews may be conducted in either one or two stages:

* **Two-Stage Interviews:**
  + **First Stage:** The first stage will act as an additional shortlisting exercise and will be conducted via Microsoft Teams in a group setting. Candidates will be asked to participate in group discussions and complete written tasks. This stage allows the panel to assess the candidates' abilities for the role and their communication skills with peers.
  + **Second Stage:** If applicable, the second stage will be face-to-face. This stage is **mandatory** and will involve a formal interview with an appropriate panel. A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be present at all stages to ensure the process is consistent and aligned with the school's safeguarding and recruitment policies.
* **One-Stage Interview:**
* If only one stage is necessary, the interview will always be **face-to-face**, with no exceptions. During this stage, candidates will complete specific tasks relevant to the role and participate in a formal interview with the panel.

**Panel Composition and Consistency**

At least one member of the **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** will be present during all stages of the interview process to ensure consistency and fairness in the selection process. This is crucial in maintaining transparency and ensuring that the recruitment process adheres to safer recruitment principles.

During the formal interview candidates will be required to:

* Explain any gaps in employment
* Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel
* Declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure
* Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.
* Answer screening questions regarding extremism

**EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

An offer of appointment will be conditional, and all successful candidates will be required to:

* Provide proof of identity
* Complete an enhanced DBS and barred list application and receive satisfactory clearance
* Provide proof of professional status
* Provide actual certificates of qualifications
* Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK
* Provide details of relevant overseas checks in line with KCSIE 2022 Section 232
* HBHS requires that overseas checks are provided for any staff member who has lived or worked outside of the UK 3 years prior to their commencement of employment with HBHS

In the offer letter, it also explicitly outlines the requirement for them to complete an official application form as part of the final hiring process. This form will be used to verify details provided in their CV and ensure compliance with safeguarding protocols.

All checks will be:

* Documented and retained on the personnel file electronically, from December 2024, we do not keep paper files.
* Recorded on the school’s Single Central Record
* Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received.

Employment will commence subject to all checks and procedures being satisfactorily completed. When a person begins work prior to the satisfactory clearance of a DBS check, a separate barred list check will be carried out and the person will remain supervised whilst in regulated activity.

For information: Successful candidates need to be aware that Common Law Police Disclosure, 2015 places a duty on police under notifiable occupations to inform the employer (via the umbrella organization that undertook the check) if a member of the children’s workforce, who has been DBS checked, subsequently commits an offence.

All new starters are asked to complete two online training courses prior to the commencement of their employment. These are An Introduction to Safeguarding and Prevent Awareness and full details will be provided within the ‘Welcome to Herne Bay High’ email.

**INDUCTION**

All staff and volunteers who are new to the school will receive information on the school’s safeguarding policy and procedures and guidance on safe working practices as part of their induction training.

All successful candidates will undergo a period of monitoring and will:

* Meet regularly with their induction tutor
* Meet regularly with their line manager
* Attend any appropriate training

**SUPPLY STAFF**

Herne Bay High School is committed to working only with agencies that adhere to a Safer Recruitment Policy. Starting in December 2024, we will require all agencies we partner with to provide complete compliance documentation. We will no longer accept forms verified by agencies that outline completed checks.

In addition, as an added precaution, Herne Bay High School will conduct identity verification upon the individual’s arrival at the school.

**DUTY TO REFER**

Herne Bay High School has a mandatory duty to refer to the Disclosure and barring Service when a member of staff has been dismissed for a safeguarding related breach, or a member of staff has resigned pending an investigation.

Herne Bay High School must refer a teacher to the Teaching Regulation Agency if they have been dismissed for serious misconduct, or if they resigned due to an investigation of serious misconduct.

**Appendix 1** - **Safeguarding Recruitment Statement**

**Safeguarding Recruitment Statement**

* At Herne Bay High School, the safety and well-being of our students is our highest priority. We are committed to the safe recruitment of staff, ensuring that all those who work with our students are thoroughly vetted and suited to their roles. We follow a rigorous recruitment process that is fully compliant with safeguarding and child protection laws, and we expect all staff, volunteers, and agencies we work with to share this commitment.
* Our recruitment procedures are designed to ensure the appointment of staff who are not only competent but also demonstrate a strong commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As part of this process, we undertake comprehensive background checks, including an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, reference checks, and a self-declaration form regarding criminal convictions. This ensures that only individuals who meet our high standards for working with children are employed.

**Key Recruitment Requirements:**

* **Full Employment History:** When applying, you must provide a full employment history, including periods of unemployment, with dates (to the nearest month) and the names and addresses of previous employers.
* **Reference Checks:** Herne Bay High School reserves the right to contact your present employer and any previous employer. Employers will be asked about disciplinary offences, including those which have expired.
* **Criminal Convictions Disclosure:** The post for which you are applying is exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, so all criminal convictions must be stated, with dates. If you are shortlisted for interview, you will be sent a form requesting this information. Failure to disclose relevant details will disqualify you from the appointment and may lead to immediate dismissal if appointed.
* **DBS Check:** If successful in the selection process, you will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check to confirm that you are a suitable person to work with children. Further checks will be made at regular intervals thereafter.
* **Identity and Qualification Verification:** Confirmation of your identity will be undertaken through the production of documents such as a birth certificate, marriage or divorce certificate, passport, and educational or professional qualifications will be verified.
* **Regulated Activity Compliance:** An individual disqualified from working with children is guilty of an offence if they knowingly apply for or accept any work in a regulated position. Herne Bay High School will not offer an appointment unless all checks are satisfactory and will not allow unsupervised access to children before the completion of all checks.
* **Probationary Period:** A probationary period of six months is standard practice for all new appointments to Herne Bay High School.
* **Safeguarding Commitment:** Herne Bay High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all applicants to undergo comprehensive child protection screening, including checks with past employers, the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), and Barred List Checks. If you share our commitment to safeguarding and child welfare, we encourage you to apply.
* We also ensure that recruitment decisions are based on the suitability of the candidate for the role, not on any unlawful discriminatory grounds. Herne Bay High School values diversity and aims to create a workforce that reflects a range of backgrounds, experiences, and skills.
* All staff, whether permanent, temporary, or volunteer, must adhere to our safeguarding policies and undergo regular safeguarding training. Our recruitment process is transparent, fair, and aligned with the highest standards of child protection, ensuring that our students are always in safe hands.
* Herne Bay High School is an equal opportunities employer, and we are proud of our inclusive recruitment practices that ensure all applicants are treated fairly and with respect.
* If you have any queries regarding our recruitment process or safeguarding policies, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to receiving your application and to you potentially becoming part of our safeguarding commitment at Herne Bay High School.