

Statement of Intent

The Ladies' College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its care. As an employer, the College expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This recruitment and selection policy has been produced in line with the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

It applies to the whole College, including Melrose and the Pre-School. Its purpose is to ensure the practice of safe recruitment of staff, ensuring the process is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner and to ensure those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to help deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

Equal Opportunities

The College is committed to providing the quality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment are fair. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership.

All candidates must meet the essential selection criteria and be able to perform the duties which are intrinsic to the role. Reasonable adjustments will be considered in discussions with the candidate as appropriate. Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that all applicants are treated equally and given a fair opportunity.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors to ensure the College has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff, contractors, volunteers and agency workers in accordance with legal requirements and guidance and monitor compliance.

It is the responsibility of the Principal and others involved in recruitment to ensure that the College operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, contractors who work at the College, agency workers and volunteers before the work or volunteering commences. Responsibilities also include monitoring contractors' and agencies'

compliance with this document and promoting the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

The Recruitment & Selection Process

Advertising for suitably qualified candidates

To ensure equality of opportunity, the College will generally advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible, this includes internal and external advertisement in relevant publications or websites, including the College's website.

Any advertisements will include the following statement:

'The Ladies' College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening including an enhanced criminal records bureau check and be able to prioritise the well-being of young people in our care. As part of the recruitment process, and once employed, there is a responsibility on an individual to disclose unlawful activity to the Principal, should this situation arise. There is also a requirement for all employees to seek permission for and disclose details of additional employment, and to disclose details of personal business interests (or those of a member of their immediate family or some other close personal connection) which may conflict with their role at the College. All requests and disclosures should be made in writing to the Principal in a timely manner, with permission being sought prior to any additional employment being taken up'

Application Forms

The College uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete this before their application can be considered. This form contains questions about their academic achievements and full employment history. All applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history and provide reasons for moving between posts.

All applicants are made aware that it is an offense to apply for a role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children or to provide false information, and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal of the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

The application form includes the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2002.

Job Description

The job description is drawn up and finalised ahead of any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role, and it will identify the line manager for the post.

Shortlisting

Applications submitted online or received in hard copy will receive an acknowledgement email from the HR Manager.

All applications will be initially scrutinised by two people, at least one of which will have completed safer recruitment training. Any applicant who has not completed the College's application form in full will be asked to do so if they wish to have their application considered further.

All shortlisted candidates will have an Internet Search carried out (online searches on a recognised search engine, social media and video networking sites) by the HR Manager. This will help to identify any incidents or issues that have occurred and are publicly available online, which the College may wish to explore with an applicant at interview.

References

References will only be sought for short listed applicants and will be sent for immediately after shortlisting. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two professional references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. In particular, references will establish:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people;
- Any substantiated allegations;
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people;
- the candidate's suitability for the post;
- current post and salary;
- attendance record;
- disciplinary record.

Interviews

The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.

The programme normally includes:

- a) tour of the College
- b) lesson (for teaching posts)
- c) 2 interviews

Each interview process must include at least one person who has successfully undergone Safer Recruitment training.

All interview questions will be agreed by the interviewing panel in advance and the same questions will be asked to each candidate unless there is a good reason to ask particular questions to one candidate rather than all of them. The College reserves the right to be flexible in asking questions if this is appropriate in the context of a particular interview and is necessary in gaining information needed to make an informed decision

Written records of all interviews and observations will be kept on the successful applicant's personnel file. Notes on unsuccessful candidates will be kept for six months.

During the interview process relevant qualifications etc. will be scrutinised and checked by the HR Manager.

Any information regarding past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstances of the individual case during the interview process.

Offer of Employment

The selection meeting is held as soon as possible after the interviews have finished. This meeting involves all those involved in the selection/interview process.

The Principal, Headteacher of Melrose, Bursar or HR Manager telephones the successful candidate as soon as a decision has been made to verbally offer it to them. On acceptance, the offer letter and the contract of employment is drafted by the HR Manager. The Principal, Headteacher of Melrose or Bursar approves and signs the letter.

The verbal and written email offers will state that it is a provisional offer, subject to the completion of standard employment checks (receipt of two satisfactory references (if both references not received prior to interview), and checks including a DBS enhanced disclosure, verification of identity, proof of right to work in Guernsey (where relevant), original copies of any qualifications having been seen, confirmation of medical fitness for the post and completion of a disqualification from childcare declaration, where applicable.) Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted once acceptance has been confirmed, at the earliest opportunity.

If the successful candidate declines the offer of the post, the selection committee reconvenes or has already agreed an alternative who is contacted.

On Appointment

The College follows the recommendations set out in the Independent School Standards Regulations with regarding to the recruitment of staff by undertaking the following checks **prior** to the first day of employment:

1. Career History

Candidates are asked for a full, chronological career history since leaving school. They are asked in interview to provide reasons for any gaps in the careers history section of the application form.

2. References

The College will request at least two references. Where a reference is incomplete, this will invite further contact with the person providing the reference, by the HR Manager to obtain further information. If the referee does not have a recognised business email address then contact may be made by telephone to confirm the identity of the referee.

3. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate

All staff at the College require an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee. The employee must bring their certificate to the College before commencing any form of regulated activity. The certificate will be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR) though copies will not be retained.

It is the College's policy to re-check employee's DBS certificates for any employee that takes non-statutory leave for more than three months (e.g. career breaks etc.) They must be rechecked before they return to work. Parallel entries of subsequent DBS checks will be recorded on the SCR. A return to work after a period of statutory leave is not a new

appointment, nor a break in service. Therefore, if the leave is statutory (e.g. maternity/paternity leave, etc.) a DBS check is not required.

Members of staff at the College are made aware in their contract of employment of their obligation to inform the Principal, Headteacher of Melrose or the Bursar of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

4. Identity Checks and right to work

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the College will be required to bring their identification documentation such as: passport; birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in the UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and the DBS Code of Practice Regulations. Copies of these original documents should be taken, dated and signed to verify that the originals have been seen and these should be retained on personnel files.

5. Additional checks on those who have lived abroad

The application for an enhanced DBS check may be submitted whilst an applicant is overseas so long as identity documents have been checked from a reliable source. If the applicant has lived abroad for more than three months in the last five years, they will be asked to provide the College with evidence, such as an official certificate of good conduct, or police or criminal record check from their country of origin. Extra references may also be required.

6. Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All successful applicants are requested to complete a confidential medical declaration including details of medication and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required which each applicant must have expressly consented to.

The College is an equal opportunities employer and adjustments to facilitate an applicant's ability to discharge their role will always be discussed and considered based on medical and other relevant information.

7. Qualifications

New employees will be asked to bring in original documents or certificates of relevant registration, training or qualifications so that copies can be lodged on their personnel file.

8. Disqualification

Under the Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 staff can be disqualified, from working in or being concerned in the management of childcare. Any employee likely to fall into this category completes a declaration form and is asked to keep the College informed of any changes in their personal circumstances.

9. Rehabilitation of Offenders disclosure

The College is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2002 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those considered as 'spent', must be declared. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar them from employment. Each case will be assessed individually and fairly.

Any employee who is convicted of, or cautioned for, any offence during their employment with the College must immediately notify in writing the Principal or the Headteacher of Melrose of the offence and penalty.

10. Online Checks

The online search helps to confirm a candidate's eligibility, and identify any potential safeguarding concerns or risks to the College. For example, attitudes or behaviour that suggest the candidate is unsuitable for the role or risks damaging the College's reputation. Candidates are advised at the application stage that they will be subject to an online check only if they are shortlisted.

11. Section 128

Confirmation that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent Trust;

12. Teacher Record Checks

To check qualified teacher status (QTS) or early years teacher status (EYTS), if they passed their induction, national professional qualifications (NPQ) or mandatory qualifications for teaching pupils with sensory impairments, been prohibited from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency, had sanctions or restrictions placed on them by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) or been found guilty of serious misconduct but not prohibited from teaching.

13. EYFS Staff

For staff appointed to work in the Early Years Foundation Stage who will count in the statutory staff to child ratios, the College must confirm that they hold a full and valid paediatric first aid certificate or ensure that this is completed within three months of starting work, in line with the EYFS Statutory Framework (effective September 2025).

The Single Central Record (SCR)

In addition to the various staff records kept in the College and on individual personnel files, we maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks that is kept up to date by the HR Manager. All individuals who work in regular contact with children, including governors, volunteers and those employed by third parties, are included.

The SCR contains details of the following:

- Proof of identity and address;
- Confirmation of reference checks;
- Child Protection Training records;
- Disqualification from childcare disclosure;
- Medical fitness disclosure;
- Enhanced DBS check;
- Professional qualifications;
- Overseas police checks where applicable;
- Right to work/housing licence check;
- Prohibition from teaching orders check where applicable;

- Teachers record check;
- Prohibition from Management (s.128) check where applicable.

Induction

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the College's policies and procedures and make clear the expectation and Code of Conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Data Protection

The organisation processes information about an individual's criminal convictions in accordance with its data protection policy / policy on processing special categories of personal data. Data collected during recruitment is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the recruitment process. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy, immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under this disciplinary procedure.

Once an individual is recruited, information about their criminal record gathered during the vetting process will not be transferred to their personnel file.

The organisation is also committed to going through the proper DBS channels to establish whether an individual has a criminal record. The organisation will not require job applicants or existing employees to use their subject access rights under data protection provisions to provide criminal record details.

Ongoing Employment

It is recognised that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The College will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the annual review/appraisal procedure.

Leaving Employment at the College

All employees who are leaving the College will have an exit interview carried out. An exit interview is our last opportunity to support our staff, help them feel valued and hear any safeguarding concerns. This can help improve safeguarding across the organisation.

Use of Contractors/ Visiting Professionals

Contractors or visiting professionals that are used within the College must comply with the College's safeguarding expectations. The identity of contractors will be checked on arrival by the College and may also require a risk assessment. Employees of contractors who work at the College on a long-term basis will be subject to the same employment checks as College employees, which may be confirmed in writing by their organisation via a signed Safer Recruitment Declaration, drafted and distributed by the HR Manager.

These include healthcare professionals, sports instructors, referees, consultants, trainee teachers etc. Appropriate checks should have been carried out by their employing organisation and confirmed to the College in letter form.

Supply staff

The College does not usually engage supply teaching agencies, preferring to engage supply teachers directly and conducting the same recruitment checks as would apply to fully-employed staff.

A record of the checks for supply staff will be included in the Single Central Register (SCR).

Volunteers

Volunteers are assessed to see whether they will be in regulated activity; if they are they will be asked to complete identity checks, a reduced application/ engagement form, an enhanced DBS disclosure will be applied for, and the appropriate supervision will be implemented where appropriate. They may also be asked for references and may require an informal interview. Where checks are carried out these will be recorded on the single central register.

One off volunteers for day outings, College concerts etc. do not require vetting checks but must not be left unsupervised or undertake personal care and must be risk assessed.

All volunteers are asked to sign our Annual Declaration, read the staff Code of Conduct, the Child Protection policy, the Whistleblowing policy, the Prevent Policy and the Health and Safety policy to acknowledge in writing that they have understood these and have no further questions.

Visiting Speakers

In line with Prevent statutory guidance, the College will ensure that any visiting speakers who might fall within the scope of the Prevent duty, whether invited by staff or pupils, are appropriately supervised. The College will, in line with regulation, also take action to ensure that each speaker is suitable