# Bettws Lifehouse
# Recruitment and selection: policy and procedure

Adopted: June 2011 Last review: Sept 2022, June 2024, Sep 2026
Review date: Sep 2028

## 1. Aims and vision

This recruitment and selection policy has been produced in line with the Keeping Learners Safe Guidance document no: 275/2021 and section 113A of the Police Act 1997 and applies to all sections of the 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.

The school is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining the best possible employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to the school's performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.

The recruitment and selection process will identify the person best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualifications, experience and merit, measured against the job description and person specification.

## 2. Equal opportunities

The school is committed to providing the quality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection 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.

Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded unless the candidate is unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of his/her disability.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leaders to ensure the school 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 Headteachers, HR manager and others involved in recruitment to ensure that the school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, contractors who work at the school, 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.

All line managers should be aware that satisfactory enhanced DBS disclosures must be received for all new staff.

- the enhanced DBS disclosure has been applied for before the start date
- a satisfactory separate barred list check has been completed
- all other checks (including references) have been completed
- and a written risk assessment has been conducted, with satisfactory measures put in place to supervise the new member of staff. This risk assessment must be reviewed fortnightly until the satisfactory DBS disclosure is received.

## 4. Advertising and the initial process of recruiting

**Advertising**

The following procedures and practices are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and to ensure equality of opportunity.

The school will generally advertise vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible. Normally this entails internal and external advertisement in relevant publications or websites, including the school's own website. Any advertisement will include a clear statement of the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

**Job description**

The job description outlines the general nature of the post including the main duties and responsibilities and it will identify the line manager for the post. It also incorporates the person specification (qualifications, attributes and skills required) and it is these criteria that are used as short-listing criteria by those scrutinising the applications. Other information included is a description of the school and/or department, background information to the post, further details such as closing date, salary, accommodation etc.

**Application pack**

Prospective applicants are supplied with:
- acknowledging covering email or letter which explains the recruitment process
- school application form
- job description.

The school uses its own school application form. All applicants for employment are required to complete this form 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. CVs without an application form will not be accepted.

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 1974.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

The application form should be accompanied by a covering letter, when requested, outlining the applicant's suitability for the role.

## 5. Received applications and short-listing

**Handling applications**

- Applications submitted online will receive an automated acknowledgement email from the HR team.
- All applications should be initially scrutinised by a member of staff who has completed safer recruitment

training. Any applicant who has not completed the school's application form in full will be asked to do so if they wish to have their application considered further.

- It is not the school's usual policy to allow individual visits from prospective applicants prior to short-listing or interview. In some instances, all candidates may be offered the opportunity to visit as part of the short-listing process.
- All those involved in the short-listing process have a responsibility to scrutinise the application forms and letters of application carefully. In addition to judging the application against the criteria for the post, anyone noticing an anomaly should make a written note to that effect.
- The HR team will be responsible for collating a list of all applications as they arrive.
- The HR team will have specific responsibility for ensuring that a thorough scrutiny of the application has taken place, as per safer recruitment guidelines, prior to the interview. This should include a month-by-month record of employment since leaving school to the present date. Any gaps should be noted and followed up either immediately before or at interview. This scrutiny will form part of the specific questions regarding safeguarding during the formal interview process.

**References**

References of applicants who meet the short-listing criteria will be taken up, where possible, before interview. Referees are sent the following:

- standard letter via email
- a copy of the job description
- school standard reference template, which should be completed in addition to any written reference provided.

Referees must include the most recent employer as well as the most recent employer who has known the candidate working with children if relevant. Open references or references that are solely character references from close family members or friends are not acceptable.

Where a reference appears inadequate or incomplete, invites further contact, or contains conflicting information, contact should be made by a designated member of staff by telephone, to probe further. Contact will be made with the named reference when it is returned to ensure it is of that person.

The referee’s copy of the job description should not include the salary details where a precise figure or hourly rate is included (which is often the case in teaching support posts).

**Shortlisting**

Following the closing date, a panel will independently scrutinise applications further using a selection matrix when necessary (a simple format, cross-referencing candidates against the criteria in the job description and the person specification).

In addition to judging the application form against the criteria for the post, anyone noticing an anomaly in the information provided will make a written note to that effect to be followed up at interview if applicable.

The final shortlist will be drawn up by the panel at a short-listing meeting. In the case of a teaching vacancy this meeting will normally be chaired by the headteacher or the line manager of the relevant team. In the case of support staff, it will be the relevant team leader and the HR manager.

The short-listing meeting normally takes place within five days of the closing deadline. All those involved in the interview process should attend this meeting. Those unable to do so should send written recommendations to this meeting on the selection matrix.

## 6. Interview process

All short-listed candidates are contacted by telephone or email to invite them to attend an interview and to ensure their availability. This will be completed by the HR team.

**Interview programme**

The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification.

Each interview process must include at least one person who has successfully undergone Safer Recruitment training (e.g. the chair of governors, the headteacher, school business manager or the HR manager).

Core questions to be asked of all candidates will be agreed by all interviewers prior to interview, as well as any specific questions relating to an individual's application.

**During the interview**

Candidates will always be required to:

- explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment or significant periods of time working or living abroad
- explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the interviewers
- declare any information that is likely to appear on an enhanced disclosure
- demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

Notes are taken of responses and of any questions asked by the interviewee.

During the interview process relevant qualifications and ID etc. will be scrutinised and checked by the HR manager. Copies taken will be dated and initialled to show that originals have been seen.

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

## 7. Candidate selection

**Final selection meeting**

This is held as soon as possible after the interview candidates have departed. This meeting involves all those involved in the selection/interview process. A record of decision making to appoint an individual ahead of others must be noted, to ensure that there is a record to provide clear honest feedback to the unsuccessful candidate/s if required.

Interviewers bring any notes they have made with them (including lesson observations if applicable); these are collected and put with the application file at the end of the process. All notes are stored for a minimum of 6 months. Notes regarding the successful candidate are transferred to their personnel file.

**Contacting referees by telephone**

If there are any queries around information provided on a reference a verbal contact must be gained from the referee, ensuring that we are speaking directly with the referee, question the areas on the reference that require further clarification and evaluate the response.

Accurate notes of the telephone call should be made (the written references should be annotated, dated and initialled).

**Communicating the outcome**

The headteacher, school business manager or HR manager telephones the successful candidate ASAP.

If verbal acceptance is received, a formal offer is sent via email by the HR Manager.

The verbal and written email offers must state that it is a provisional offer, subject to the 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 the UK, original copies of any qualifications having been seen and confirmation of medical fitness for the post. When the written acceptance letter is received, regrets to non-shortlisted applicants will be sent by the HR department.

If the successful candidate declines the offer of the post, the selection committee reconvenes.

Unsuccessful shortlisted candidates are contacted with the panel's decision where feedback can be given if requested.

## 8. New employee administration and induction

A personal HR file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment guidelines. This checklist will be retained on personal files.

**Pre-employment vetting checks and commencing employment**

A new appointee should not commence employment until all criteria have been met. The process of checking qualifications, verifying identity and prohibitions, suitability of a newly appointed member of staff must be logged carefully on the Single Central Register. Vetting checks will be determined by whether an individual will be involved in regulated activity.

All teachers and managers will be checked for the following:

- those that have been prohibited from teaching
- those that have failed to successfully complete their induction or probation period
- those that may be the subject of a suspension or conditional order imposed by the General Teaching Council for England (prior to abolition) that is still current.

**The single central record**

In addition to the various staff records kept in school and on individual personnel files, a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with DfE requirements. This is kept up-to-date by the HR team.

The single central record contains details of the following:

- all employees who are employed to work at the school
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the school whether employed directly or through an agency
- all others who have been chosen by the school to have regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, governors, peripatetic staff and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members e.g. sports coaches etc.

**Education Workforce Council**

- It is a requirement that all workers (teachers, TA's, Well Being support) in any school in Wales should become members of the EWC. This will be outlined during the interview and induction period. Kayleigh Lewis (Finance Manager) will pass each staff members' name and job title on to the EWC.

**Vetting checks**

**Identity checks and right to work**

All employees of the school are in regulated activity and therefore the Enhanced DBS Disclosure, including barred list check will be required.

If the candidate does not have a DBS in place at their current employment that can be used (three-month rule), the HR manager should write directly to the successful candidate regarding arrangements for an enhanced disclosure application from the Disclosure and Barring Service. This is before any start date, and as soon as practical after an appointment, but no earlier than three months before employment commences.

It is the school's policy to re-check employee's DBS certificates for any employee that takes leave for more than three months (e.g. career breaks etc.) must be re-checked before they return to work. Parallel entries of subsequent DBS checks will be recorded on the Single Central Register.

Members of staff at the school should be made aware of their obligation to inform the headteacher, school business manager or HR manager of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

**Barred list**

A separate barred list check must be undertaken if an enhanced disclosure is not received in advance of a member of staff starting work in regulatory activity or where a 'portable' disclosure is used. It is illegal for schools to employ anyone who is on the barred list.

**Medical fitness**

There are certain questions the school may ask at an interview stage to determine whether applicants can undertake a function which is intrinsic to the job.

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 questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

**Qualifications**

If necessary, 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.

**Disqualification**

Under the Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 staff can be disqualified, including by association, 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 School informed of any changes in their personal circumstances. Annual written reminders of this requirement are sent.

**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 required to provide the school 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.

**Rehabilitation of offender's disclosure**

The school is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 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 fairly by reference to the school's objective assessment procedure.

Any employee who has a conviction or caution for any offence on their DBS will be considered on an individual basis in the context of the work they are applying for. This may relate to whether the work is directly with children, has access to the whole school, is likely to need to work alone or one to one with pupils and the level or responsibility within the position. Any caution or conviction that is in relation, but this is not an exhausted list, to

- violence
- theft
- drug offences

Is highly unlikely to be accepted for any capacity of work.

Any employee who is convicted of, or cautioned for, any offence during their employment with the school must immediately notify in writing the headteacher, school business manager or HR manager of the offence and penalty. The HR department, along with the Head Teacher and Directors will then follow Appropriate measures to safeguard the children and the reputation of the school.

**Induction**

All new staff new will be required to undertake induction training. This will include:

- induction meeting and briefing with their line manager and/or HR team
- safeguarding training
- provision of key safeguarding policies: Keeping Learners Safe; the safeguarding policy; the staff code of conduct; equal opportunities policy; and the whistleblowing policy
- health and safety training
- completion of a written induction checklist(s) for each role they take at school.

**Record retention/data protection**

All interview notes on all applicants will be retained for a period of 6 months after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The six-month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an employment tribunal.

**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 his/her criminal record gathered during the vetting process will not be transferred to his/her 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 school will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the annual review/appraisal procedure.

**Monitoring**

The HR manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the school. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly safer recruitment evaluation audit which will be presented to the headteacher to report to the governing body. The school business manager and the HR manager have the responsibility for monitoring this policy and the single central register.

**Leaving employment**

All staff leaving employment will be invited to attend an exit interview at which time an exit questionnaire will be completed by the employee and line manager. This will be forwarded to the HR manager for retention monitoring purposes and be included the individual's personnel file.

**Use of contractors**

Contractors that are used within the schools should comply with the schools safeguarding and safer recruitment regulations. The identity of contractors will be checked on arrival by the head of department that they will be working in, they will also require a risk assessment. Employees of contractors who work at school on a long-term basis will be subject to the same checks as school employees.

**Supply staff/agency workers**

Written confirmation is requested from supply agencies that it has satisfactorily completed all relevant checks for that post, including an enhanced DBS disclosure, and confirming whether the DBS discloses any information and that it is not more than three months old (or three years old if they have been in continuous employment with that same agency).

The agency and worker must provide to the school the following documents ahead of commencement:

- supply agency letter confirming that all relevant recruitment paperwork is in place
- copy of the DBS certificate
- photographic identification.

A record of the checks for supply staff will be included in the single central register. Access to the check is only required where there is information contained in the enhanced DBS Disclosure. Any such information would be treated as confidential and a documented risk assessment conducted.

Identity checks will be carried out to confirm that an individual arriving at the school is the individual whom the agency has referred and that any notes provided on the DBS of previous cautions or convictions noted are acceptable for the individual to be working within the school. This decision will be taken by the headteacher or school business manager.

**Volunteers**

Volunteers who are working within the school must gain the authorisation of the headteacher or school business manager. Volunteers are supervised and assessed to see whether they will be in regulated activity; if they are they will be asked to complete identity checks, a reduced application form, and an enhanced disclosure from the DBS will be applied for. They will also be asked for references and will require an informal interview. Where checks are carried out these will be recorded on the single central register.

One off volunteers for day outings, school concerts etc. do not require vetting checks but must never be left unsupervised or undertake personal care and must be risk assessed.

Regular volunteers receive a letter of agreement confirming that they will not be asked to take sole responsibility for any individual pupils or groups and that they should always expect to have the support of a member of staff and work under their supervision, support and guidance. This member of staff is identified in this letter.

All volunteers are asked to read the staff code of conduct and the safeguarding policy to acknowledge in writing that they have understood these and have no further questions.

**Visiting speakers**

As visiting speakers are not left alone with pupils they are not subject to safe recruitment vetting checks. However, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that visiting speakers are suitable and that they are appropriately supervised. Invitations to guest speakers must be agreed with a member of SLT before the invitation is confirmed.

**Visiting professionals**

The identity of visiting professionals should be checked on arrival. 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 school in letter form.

| **Date of amendments/Review** | **By whom** |
|---|---|
| 26/06/2022 | Fiona Davies |
| June 2024, June 2026 | Fiona Davies/Emma Jones HR |
| To be reviewed June 2028 | Fiona Davies |