

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy Owner	Applies to Prior Park Schools (Trust Wide)	Superseded documents
Associated documents Child Protection Policy Staff Code of Conduct Staff Recruitment Privacy Notice GDPR Data Protections Policy Equal Opportunities Policy	Review frequency Every two years (unless the legislation/regulations update before this time) Implementation date 1 March 2020	Legal Framework KCSIE 2019

1. Introduction

Prior Park Schools (PPS) comprises three schools. Two of those schools, Prior Park College and The Paragon School are incorporated in England as Prior Park Educational Trust Ltd. The third school, Prior Park School Gibraltar, is incorporated in Gibraltar as Prior Park School Ltd. Both are companies limited by guarantee and registered charities.

2. Scope

Prior Park Schools (PPS) are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. To assist in this PPS follows a formal Recruitment Procedure for the employment of all staff (including volunteers) and adheres to the schools' Child Protection (Part of Safeguarding) and other relevant Policies.

This procedure outlines those checks that are, or may be, required for any individuals visiting or working in any capacity at PPS, as outlined in the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

PPS will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of any prospective employees or volunteers based on checks and evidence including (as appropriate): criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with references and interview information.

All teaching staff and teaching ancillary staff are recruited by one of the Heads. Support staff are recruited on the authority of the Director of Finance and Operations [*the procedure is often carried out by the Head at The Paragon School assisted by the Deputy]

3. Policy Statement

- a. PPS will endeavor to advertise posts internally and in the local or national press and elsewhere (i.e. Job Centre's, agencies, recruitment websites, etc.) as appropriate.
- b. The post and salary proposed should be approved by the Director of Finance and Operations prior to the advert being placed.
- c. All candidates are to receive the following documents:
 - an application form,
 - a job description,
 - person specification and
 - policies on Recruitment; Child Protection, Equal Opportunities and a Privacy Notice.

Applications are to include a letter accompanied by a completed application form duly signed by the applicant.

- d. The application will be considered by appropriate senior members of staff. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment history are to be noted for thorough investigation at interview. A shortlist of candidates for interview will then be drawn-up using the person specification as guidance.

- e. At least two written references are to be obtained directly from the referees, one of which should be from the current or most recent employer. A covering letter and the appropriate reference form which includes specific questions regarding the suitability of the applicant for a post which involves contact with children, should be sent to each referee, along with the relevant job description and person specification for the role.
- f. The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered carefully when assessing the applicants' suitability for the post (including the Teaching Regulation Agency's Prohibition Registers).
- g. If the applicant has worked with children previously, whether on a paid or voluntary basis, each of these past employers must be contacted to establish the reasons for leaving, in addition to, or as part of any references sought. References are to be requested for internal and external candidates. References will be requested directly from the referee; PPS will not rely on open references (such as those which are issued on the basis of "To whom it may concern").
- h. Whenever possible, references should be obtained prior to interview and verbal contact is to be made with each referee to confirm the authenticity of their reference. All references will be scrutinised and concerns resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed.
- i. A set of questions and issues to be explored with each candidate is to be decided prior to interview. Candidate assessment sheets may be used and questions relating specifically to child protection will be asked, along with follow up questions (the latter are likely to be different for each candidate).
- j. Applicants for all posts are to be formally interviewed by no less than two people, one of whom will have completed the required Safer Recruitment Training. Interview and visit procedures will vary according to whether the vacancy is for an academic or support role, 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 under observation. A meeting will be held post interview to discuss the candidates' suitability for the role.
- k. Interview records of unsuccessful candidates should be securely filed for six months, after which, they should be destroyed. Copies of DBS certificates should not be retained.
- l. A formal job offer is made in writing but is conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. All new employees are usually asked to sign an employment contract prior to commencement of employment at PPS or within 2 weeks of their start date.
- m. When appointing new staff, PPS will carry out the following pre-appointment checks:
 - Verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address except where, for exceptional reasons, none is available;
 - Obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with barred list information where a person will be engaging in regulated activity;
 - Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
 - Check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Teaching Regulation Agency website;

- Check that the candidate who has been appointed (including internally) to a management position, is not subject to a prohibition from management order (s. 128 Direction);
 - Obtain a declaration from the new employee who will work in the early years provision (or childcare provision), later years provision for children who have not attained the age of 8 (including during outside school hours such as breakfast clubs or after school care) or who will be directly concerned in the management of such provision even though they may not work in the early years or relevant later years provision themselves, to ascertain whether or not they or others in their households are not “disqualified” from doing such work. For further details (i.e. grounds for disqualification), please refer to the Child Protection policy;
 - Verify the candidate’s mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
 - Verify the person’s right to work in the UK;
 - If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school consider appropriate; and
 - Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- n. Individuals who have lived outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools. In addition, PPS will make further checks as appropriate, so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. The school will typically obtain available evidence from the person’s Country of origin and/ or most recent place of residence. Guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>.
- o. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before the appointment. Occasionally a DBS certificate can be obtained as soon as practicable after the appointment. In those cases, the candidate will be appropriately supervised, and a risk assessment will be put in place. If the candidate has subscribed to it and gives permission, the school may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service. There is no requirement to obtain an enhanced DBS check if the candidate is able to present an existing DBS certificate issued in the three months prior to beginning work at PPS, and if in the three months prior to beginning work the applicant has worked:
- in a school in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children or in any post in a school since 12 May 2006; or
 - in a college in England in a position which involved the provision of education and regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or young people under the age of 18.

PPS however will then request a separate barred list check in addition to the existing DBS clearance. PPS may also request an Enhanced DBS check with barred list information should there be concerns (bearing in mind the duty PPS is under not to allow a barred person to work in regulated activity).

PPS will obtain a new certificate for an enhanced DBS check with barred list information or an Update Service check from an existing employee engaged in regulated activity after their absence from school of at least 6 months.

- p. For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be appropriate as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. A person will be considered in regulated activity if as a result of their work they:
- Will be responsible, on a regular basis, in any setting for the care or supervision of children; or
 - Will regularly work in a school at times when children are on school premises (where the person's work requires interaction with children, whether or not the work is paid, unless they are a supervised volunteer, or the person is directly employed or employed by a contractor).
- q. Regulated activity includes:
- Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children,
 - Work for a limited range of establishments (known as "specified places" which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work by supervised volunteers.

Work under these two points is regulated activity only if done regularly. Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of their frequency or whether they are supervised or not, which includes personal care or health care.

- r. A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity. "Regular" as the frequency of contact for the purpose of this policy is defined as at least once a week or more than three days in any 30-day period.
- s. The school will determine appropriate levels of supervision for volunteers or contract workers, dependent on the circumstances.
- t. PPS will not request an enhanced DBS check with barred list check for anyone working in the school who is not in regulated activity but may request an enhanced DBS check without a barred list check.

All successful applicants will be required to confirm the acceptance of their post in writing. They will then undertake a probationary period of work, depending on the role, from six months to three school terms.

PPS will obtain written notification from any agency, or third party organisation it uses that the organisation has carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school, that the PPS would otherwise perform (pre-appointment checks). For individuals involved in regulated activity this must include a barred list check, prior to appointing that individual. PPS will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. Written agreement will be obtained from the agency or other third party organisation that a disclosure must be shared with the school in order that the decision about suitability will be made by the school rather than the agency.

Applicants for initial teacher training who are salaried by the school will have all the necessary checks carried out by PPS. As trainee teachers can undertake regulated activity, sometimes unsupervised, an enhanced DBS certificate and barred list check will be obtained. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks. PPS will obtain notification that the training provider has carried out the necessary checks on the individual.

PPS has arrangements in place with contractors to make sure that the contractor, or any employee of the contractor, working at the school has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required (for example because the contractor is carrying out teaching or providing relevant types of care/supervision of children regularly). PPS will obtain written notification from the contractor that the organisation has carried out the checks on any individuals who will be working at the school that the PPS would otherwise perform (pre-appointment checks). Contractors and their employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken should be supervised if they will have contact with children. PPS will check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Governors or resident adults who do not work for PPS (who are not in regulated activity) will be treated on the same basis as other volunteers and an enhanced DBS check will be requested. An Enhanced DBS check with barred list check should only be requested if the Governor will be engaged in regulated activity.

For volunteers in regulated activity who will regularly teach or look after children on an unsupervised basis or provide personal care on a one-off basis PPS will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check. For volunteers not in regulated activity PPS will typically obtain an enhanced DBS certificate but will not request a check of the barred list. Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

If a person working at the school moves from a post that was not regulated activity, into work which is regulated activity, the relevant checks for regulated activity will be carried out. PPS reserves the right to carry out all relevant checks on any existing member of staff if there are concerns relating to their suitability to work with children.

Applications for posts within the schools that are considered fraudulent or to contain false information will be reported to the Secretary of State via the DfE and may also be reported to the Police or relevant Local Authority Department, if appropriate.

As part of the recruitment process, all information required for payroll should be submitted to the Trust Assistant Accountant prior to the employees' first day of work or at latest in the first week of employment.