



**Woodlane High School**

achieving success in a nurturing environment

# Safer Recruitment Policy

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**Next Update: January 2027**

Du Cane Road London W12 0TN

Tel: 0208 743 5668 | Fax: 0208 743 9138

Headteacher: Claire Maynard | E-mail: [admin@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk](mailto:admin@woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk)

Web: [www.woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk](http://www.woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk)

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for the recruitment of teaching and support staff to Woodlane High School. The aim is to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.

Decisions concerning the need to recruit staff are delegated to the Headteacher by the Governing Body. All decisions will be made with regard to curriculum needs and financial circumstances.

Decisions regarding remuneration for posts will be made in accordance with the school's Pay Policy.

## **2. Statutory Requirements**

The policy draws from the statutory guidance for schools and colleges 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' DfE document. The School will ensure that the statutory requirements for those engaged in management roles will be upheld.

Requirements will change from time to time and this policy will be updated accordingly.

## **3. Equal Opportunities**

The Governors of the school will abide by the existing legislation and, in particular, will not discriminate on the ground of any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act (2010), these being:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The governing body will promote equality in all aspects of school life, including in regard to the recruitment of staff.

#### **4. Identifying of Recruiters**

The School will ensure that the Headteacher, at least one other Deputy or Assistant Head and the School Business Manager have successfully completed accredited training in safer recruitment procedures. In line with the requirements, one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

#### **5. Advertising and Inviting Applications**

Advertisements for posts whether in newspapers, journals or online will include the following statements:

*“Woodlane High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects its entire staff to share this commitment. All post-holders will be required to hold an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).”*

*“As part of our shortlisting processes we will carry out an online search for each shortlisted candidate, this forms part of our due diligence checks.”*

*“References will be sought prior to interview.”*

*“Please apply at the earliest opportunity. We reserve the right to close the vacancy early should we receive applications from exceptional candidates.”*

**5.2.** Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, the following:

- Job description
- Selection Criteria
- The school’s Safer Recruitment Policy (this document)
- The school’s Staff Code of Conduct
- The most recent Ofsted report
- Induction Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy Statement
- Hammersmith & Fulham application form

**5.3.** Advertisements for teaching posts will usually be placed on a suitable national website and the LA website.

**5.4.** Advertisements for support staff posts will usually be placed on a suitable national website and the LA website.

**5.5.** In cases where a member of staff is employed on a fixed term contract for a post which then becomes available as a permanent post, that member of staff may be

offered the permanent post following an internal recruitment process, without further advertising subject to approval by Governors.

**5.6.** For temporary posts, such as those to cover maternity leave, the post may be filled by long term agency staff, or and in some cases through advertisement on LA and national websites.

**5.7.** Where staff are invited to take on a management or leadership responsibility for a fixed term in an acting capacity, the acting post will be advertised internally, or externally on suitable national websites.

**5.8.** Advertisements will specify: the main subjects to be taught and/or the nature of any leadership allowance; the start date of the appointment, and whether the post is permanent or fixed term and, in the case of fixed term contracts, the end date of the contract. Remuneration for the post will be expressed in terms of the applicable pay scales and the closing date for applications will also be stated.

## **6. Applications**

**6.1.** Prospective applicants will respond to the advertisement by requesting or downloading further information and an application pack from the school office/directly from the website. The application form will be returned to the school by the specified closing date or submitted directed on the relevant website. Other forms of curriculum vitae are not acceptable in place of a completed application form.

**6.2.** Applications received after the published closing date will not be considered unless there is clear evidence that the late receipt of the application has been caused by a postal delay or similar. Such evidence would generally be an application with franking showing that it was posted first class at least one day before the published closing date. Applicants are advised to submit their applications by e-mail/directly on the website to avoid late arrival.

## **7. Short-Listing and References**

**7.1.** Short-listing will take place against the personal specification for the post. References will be sought prior to interview so that any discrepancies can be probed during interview. The short list will be compiled by a similar panel to that involved in long-listing.

**7.2.** As part of our shortlisting processes we will carry out an online search for each shortlisted candidate, this forms part of our due diligence checks. Candidates will be informed of this practice via our advert.

**7.3.** In regards to references, we will:

- not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern

- not rely on applicants to obtain their references
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect of any disciplinary investigations)
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer
- always verify any information with the person who provided the reference
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post,
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

**7.4.** Referees will be asked to complete the school reference request form which asks for confirmation of:

- the candidate's suitability for working with children or young people;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children;
- the candidate's suitability for the post.

**7.5.** School employees are entitled to see and receive, if requested, copies of their employment references. Any reference produced by a member of staff at Woodlane High School, for another colleague or ex colleague, must be forwarded to the Headteacher for consideration and approval prior to issue and will be kept on a central file. Staff are not permitted to provide references without the explicit permission from the Headteacher.

## **8. The Selection Process**

**8.1.** Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post. Teaching staff will be required, in all circumstances, to give a demonstration lesson in front of school staff. Support staff will be required to complete a suitable written and practical task. Leadership posts will require the candidates to undertake a series of tasks and possibly a series of panel interviews.

**8.2.** In all circumstances, candidates that are successful in the initial phase of selection, will be required to attend an interview. Unsuccessful candidates will not be retained for interview.

**8.3.** Interviews will ideally be face-to-face but may on occasions be virtual. The school uses Microsoft Teams for this. Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage but are not an alternative to face-to-face/virtual contact.

**8.4.** Candidates will always be required to:

- explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters;
- declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure;
- demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

## **9. Employment Checks**

**9.1.** All successful applicants are required to:

- provide proof of identity (e.g. passport; driving licence photocard);
- complete a DBS disclosure application and receive satisfactory clearance;
- obtain a barred list check if the individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- complete a confidential health questionnaire to verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- provide actual certificates of professional qualifications (teaching staff or where required);
- provide proof of address (e.g. recent utility bill, bank or credit card statement); and
- provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK.

### **9.2. Single Central Record (SCR)**

A Single Central Record (SCR) will be maintained and regularly reviewed in line with statutory guidance.

The SCR will record who has been checked, when checks were completed, and the outcome of those checks, including (where applicable): enhanced DBS disclosure, Barred List check, prohibition checks, Section 128 checks (where relevant), verification of professional qualifications, right to work in the UK, and overseas checks.

### **9.3. Checks for Governors, Volunteers and Contractors**

The school recognises that safeguarding applies to all adults working with children, not just employed staff. Therefore:

- All governors will have an enhanced DBS check, including a barred list check where they will be engaged in regulated activity. A prohibition check will be carried out for those taking part in leadership or management roles.
- Volunteers undertaking regulated activity will have the appropriate level of DBS check and other safeguarding checks as required by statutory guidance.
- Contractors engaged in regulated activity will be subject to the same pre-employment checks as staff, including DBS and barred list checks. Contractors not in regulated activity will have an appropriate risk assessment and safeguarding arrangements confirmed.
- All checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record (SCR) and regularly reviewed in line with statutory guidance.

## **10. Confirming the appointment**

Documentation will be checked by a member of staff suitably trained in safer recruitment processes.

**10.1.** The final offer of employment will be subject to:

- a satisfactory enhanced DBS including barred list check;
- verification of the person's right to work in the UK;
- a check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order using the NCTL Teacher Services;
- where the applicant has lived or worked outside the UK, any further checks the school considers appropriate, which may include overseas criminal record checks, a Letter of Professional Standing or equivalent, in line with statutory guidance;
- receipt of a satisfactory health check questionnaire;
- receipt of final, satisfactory references from previous employers; and
- verification of professional qualifications as appropriate.

The school reserves the right not to proceed with, or to terminate employment with immediate effect if the DBS checks reveal convictions which have not been declared on the application form or if any of the documents referred to in section 9 have been falsified in any way.

## **11. Induction**

**11.1.** All staff who are new to the school will receive full induction training that will include the school's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices. Staff will be required to read and demonstrate understanding of the Staff Code of Conduct and the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

**11.2.** Staff will also be required to read and confirm that they have read and understood part one of the most recent edition of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. During

INSET the DSLs ensure staff have the opportunity to engage with the document by completing a series of tasks. Throughout the academic year the DSLs meet with a variety of staff to check their understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding practices.

**11.3.** Staff will also be required to complete Safeguarding in Education training, which will include training on the PREVENT duty and other training relevant to them on the first days of appointment.

**11.4.** Regular meetings will be held during the first three months of employment between the new employees and the appropriate line manager. Regular line management and appraisal meetings will continue throughout employment.