

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The safety of children and young people is paramount, and this school is committed to implementing the Disclosure and Barring (DBS) procedures and arrangements. We will comply with the DBS Code of Practice and National Care Standards guidance regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificates.

The DBS (formerly the CRB Agency) was set up by the Home Office to improve access to criminal record checks for employment related purposes and to help organisations make safer recruitment decisions; this applies to staff with access to children under 18 years of age, vulnerable adults or other positions of trust that fall within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The DBS and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) both became part of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in December 2012.

The DBS Code of Practice requires the school to have a written policy and procedure on the recruitment of people with a criminal record and to ensure anyone applying for a job at the school receives a copy. The School is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and, subject to the overriding consideration of protecting children, we will endeavour to prevent unfair discrimination against those with a criminal record.

PROCEDURE

There are two different levels of Certificate:

Standard Certificates contain details of all convictions² on record (including spent convictions³) plus details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings. Information obtained on the government lists is of people considered unsuitable to work, or gain access to sensitive information relating to children/young people.

Enhanced Certificates involve an extra level of check with local police force records in addition to checks with the Police National Computer and the government department lists held by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Department of Health, where appropriate. The government's safer recruitment initiative stipulates that all staff in an educational establishment must have an enhanced Certificate.

Recruitment of staff

Job applicants will be asked to state any convictions on their application form. Those invited to attend an interview will be advised in writing that relevant criminal convictions will be discussed at the interview in order to assess job-related risks. Applicants are encouraged to submit written details, dates and any other relevant information, in confidence, to the Principal who will ensure the security of this sensitive information. The School will apply for a DBS Certificate only for applicants offered a position. The information obtained will be used to help establish whether that person has a background that might make him/her unsuitable for the job or voluntary position in question. The School will not apply to the DBS Certificate to run a check without the knowledge and consent of the person concerned.

If a DBS Certificate reveals any convictions, the person concerned will be invited to attend an interview with the Principal and Governors to discuss the conviction(s) and circumstances. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar applicants from working at the School. This will depend on the nature, circumstances and background of the offence, and the time elapsed since the offence. However, failure to reveal information directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the withdrawal of any offer of employment.

Check on staff recruited from abroad

If an applicant has not previously lived in the UK, no purpose will be served by seeking a DBS check on arrival. The person will not have a criminal record in this country, nor will he/she appear on List 99 or the Protection of Children's Act List. The School will comply with the National Minimum Standards recommendations for the recruitment of staff from overseas.

Volunteers

The same recruitment considerations should be given to volunteers as paid employees. Checks are required for all volunteers who have regular and unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.

Contractors and Agency Workers

Contracts and agency workers that undertake 'regular activity' must present a valid DBS certificate before commencing their activity. Regulated activity will be being undertaken if:

- the individual has a frequent presence on site (on 4 or more days in a 30 day period), and
- their services involve 'teaching, training or supervision of children' or
- their services are contracted on an ongoing basis.

These checks should be carried out by the contractor or agency.

Renewal of DBS Certificates

The DBS Certificate does not recommend a specific renewal interval for DBS checks.

Usage

Certificate information is used only for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Lettings and Early Years providers

All organisations involved with early years must satisfy the school's criteria regarding DBS checks and disqualification by association.

Any external organisation letting part of the school estate shall ensure that where a hiring involves activities aimed predominantly at children, and/or the activity is positively supported by the school for the attendance of children, they have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

The hirer and those persons likely to have contact with children are required to hold a Disclosure and Barring Service certificate.

The Governors reserve the right to require the Hirer to produce evidence that DBS checks have been carried out on all persons and to review safeguarding policies and procedures and to impose any additional requirement they consider appropriate in connecting with the hiring. If for any reason the Governors are not satisfied then they have the right to cancel any hiring and there shall be no liability to the Hirer other than to refund any hiring fee or deposit paid.