

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

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SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy statement

The safe recruitment of staff and volunteers in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education. This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

We fully recognise the value of, and seek to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with varied skills and abilities. Iqra academy is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within it is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, and effective; and promotes equality of opportunity all adults and young people. Iqra academy will uphold its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of any of the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2012. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation

This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in Iqra Academy's Equality Policy.

All posts within Iqra Academy are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare both spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-over, (including those regarded as spent) and undertake an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure. Posts that fall within the definition of Regulated Activity will also be checked against the government barred lists.

Iqra academy is committed to ensuring people who have been convicted are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.

Iqra academy will:

1. ensure that appropriate staff who undertake recruitment have received safe recruitment training and successfully completed the relevant safe recruitment training assessment
2. ensure every appointment panel includes at least one member who has received safe recruitment training
3. Implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working

with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role.

4. keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with DFE requirements
5. Ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. Iqra Academy will monitor the compliance with these measures.
6. Require staff that are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with Iqra Academy to notify Iqra Academy, in writing of the offence and the penalty.

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken wherever relevant:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer
- Verification of the candidate's identity in line with the requirements of The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
- Checks against the Government Barred Lists
- A satisfactory DBS clearance
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness after any offer of employment has been made
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers
- Verification of successful completion of induction period (for those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the governing body to:

- Ensure Iqra Academy has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DFE guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor Iqra Academy's compliance with them

It is the responsibility of principle teacher and other managers involved in recruitment:

- To ensure that Iqra Academy operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at Iqra Academy
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- To promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure

It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document.

It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.

It is the responsibility of Iqra Academy's HR provider to deal with the administration of the disclosure system for Iqra Academy or if Iqra Academy uses an external HR provider to carry out any administrative tasks on its behalf then the provider must comply with this document.

In accordance with Iqra Academy Staffing Regulations, the governing body has delegated responsibility to principle teacher to lead in all appointments outside of the leadership group

School governors may be involved in staff appointments but the final decision will rest with principle teacher. Principle teacher may delegate the selection process of staff outside of the leadership group to other managers in Iqra Academy, but remains responsible for the decision to appoint.

The Procedure

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, Iqra Academy will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible- normally this will entail an external advertisement.

The advertisement will include information about Iqra Academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the requirement for Criminal Record Checks

However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staffs are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

Applications

Iqra Academy will always use a standard application form for every applicant. CVs will not be accepted.

Iqra Academy requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on this application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps must be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in their application being rejected or in summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (e.g.: the Disclosure and Barring Service)

References

References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after short listing. The only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that 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 offer of employment being made. Where ever possible at least one reference will be sought prior to interview.

References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied - open references or testimonials are not acceptable. Iqra Academy will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend. Only references from a trusted authoritative source will be acceptable.

Reference requests will specifically ask:

- About the referee's relationship with the candidate
- Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes that the person might be unsuitable.

Referees will also be asked to confirm details of:

- The applicant's current (or last) post and salary
- Performance history and conduct
- Any disciplinary procedures in which the sanction is current
- Any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children, including any in which the sanction has expired. This should give details of the outcome.
- Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns that have been raised that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of these concerns.
- The use of the Peterborough City Council Reference Request Form is strongly recommended.

References should be compared to the application form to ensure that the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies should be taken up with the applicant at interview.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

Self-declaration of convictions by job applicants

Iqra academy's policy is to require shortlisted applicants for all posts (including volunteers) to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and include any cautions and pending prosecutions.

Such declarations will be made on an appropriate form and should be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked strictly private and confidential to the chair of the selection panel / head teacher, prior to the interview this information will not be considered until after short listing. The chair of the panel / head teacher will discuss relevant, positive declarations confidentially with the applicant at interview.

The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment but will be considered (via a formal risk assessment) in the same way as positive CRB disclosures.

Interviews

The selection process will always include the following:

- Face to face professional interview, including Warner interview style questioning
- Young people panel / activity

Personal interviewing aka Warner interviewing

These personal interviews have typically been used in residential social care settings following the Warner Report into abuse in children's homes in 1992.

Warner interviews are a preliminary interview conducted prior to the main interview to ask 'probing questions re: personal life, attitudes and motivation to establish a fuller picture and to assess suitability for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults' They are a one to one interview with another additional person to make a full record. The Warner interviewer should not be part of the main interview panel. Careful training for the Warner interviewer is essential as specialised skills are required. Any concerns should then be fed back to the main interview panel to enable them to ask for further clarification or to inform the appointment decision.

If a separate Warner interview is not relevant, it is still possible to include some "Warner type" questions as part of a general interview. Further guidance on this can be found in the Peterborough Safeguarding Board's Safe Employment Good Practice Guidance, Appendix B.

Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK

Shortlisted applicants for all posts will be required to provide proof of identity by producing documents on the day of interview in line with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Similar information is also required to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau check on the preferred candidate.

Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the chair of the panel / head teacher.

Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status

Short-listed candidates will also be required to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation on the day of interview. Iqra Academy will verify that candidates have actually obtained any qualifications legally required or deemed essential for the job and claimed in their application by asking to see the relevant certificate,

or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body / institution. If the original documents are not available, Iqra Academy will require sight of a properly certified copy. Where candidates have obtained qualifications abroad, a certified comparability check by NARIC will also be required.

Proof of qualifications and professional status will be verified by the chair of the panel / head teacher.

Commencement of Employment prior to DBS check being received

In extreme unusual circumstances, providing no criminal record has been disclosed, it is permitted to commence employment prior to receiving a DBS check. However a Government Barred List check and Risk Assessment must be completed. The result certificate must be obtained before or as soon as practicable after appointment. If employment is commenced prior to receiving a DBS check, the employee will be supervised until such time as one is received.

Employment Offer

It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred candidate. However, all the checks detailed above must be completed and agreed BEFORE a person's appointment is confirmed. Once all pre-employment checks (excluding pre-employment medical which will be completed after an offer of employment has been made) have been satisfactorily completed / received, an offer of employment will be made and the contract of employment issued. The contract will be issued as soon as possible but in all circumstances within 8 weeks of employment commencing.

Record Retention / Data Protection

Iqra academy will retain all interview notes on every applicant for a 6 month period, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e.: shredded). The 6 month retention period will allow Iqra academy to deal with any data access requests, recruitment enquiries or to respond to any complaints made to an employment tribunal.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, applicants have a right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. Applicants who wish to access their interview notes must make a subject access request in writing to the chair of the panel / head teacher within 6 months of the interview date.

Personal file records

For the successful candidate, Iqra academy will retain the following information which will make up part of their personal file:

- Application form – fully completed and signed by the applicant
- References x 2
- Disclosure of convictions form
- Proof of identification
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable)

- Evidence of medical clearance from Occupational Health
- Evidence of the CRB clearance (i.e.: the notification form from EPM or the CRB certificate reference number, NOT the actual CRB form or certificate)

Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks

In line with DFE requirements, Iqra academy will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The central list will record all staff who are employed at Iqra academy, including casual staff, supply staff when employed directly, volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, eg: specialist sports coaches or artists.

The central record will indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity checks
- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job
- Additionally for those applying for teaching posts, registration check with the GTC where appropriate
- Checks of right to work in the United Kingdom
- List 99 /Barred Lists checks
- DBS Enhanced Disclosure
- Further overseas records where appropriate

It shall also indicate who undertook the check and the date on which the check was completed or the relevant certificate obtained. Please see appendix 1 for a sample central record.

Iqra Academy will require written confirmation from a supply agency or employer of other staff who regularly visit Iqra academy that it has satisfactorily completed the checks described above. Iqra academy does not need to carry out checks itself except where there is information contained within the disclosure. However identity checks must be carried out by Iqra academy to check the person arriving is the person the agency intends to refer to them.

Probation periods

Newly appointed teachers who are new to the employment of the governing body will be subject to Iqra academy's probationary period.

School staff will be given a copy of the DFE guidance on Safe Working Practice and asked to sign a declaration that they have read and understood the document and will follow the guidelines required to maintain professional boundaries at all times

Whistle blowing and self-disclosure

Iqra Academy adopts a culture of vigilance where all concerns are listened to and taken seriously.

Iqra Academy has a specific safeguarding related whistle blowing policy which has been disseminated to all staff and volunteers.

Following appointment, all staff and volunteers have been advised of their responsibility to self disclose any changes of circumstance to principle teacher These include any criminal investigations, convictions or warnings they may become the subject of, or any other relevant information which a reasonable employer might consider to impact on their employment.

Staff should always discuss with their line manager any difficulties or concerns that may impact on their suitability to work with children; and plan can be put in place to support development.

Failure to notify principle teacher of any conduct that may or will result in being placed on one of the government barred lists will be treated as gross misconduct and may result in termination of employment.

Allegations management

Iqra Academy will refer any allegation against a member of staff or volunteer for initial consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer and then follow DFE and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board allegations procedures even if the member of staff ceases to work at Iqra Academy.

If there have been concerns about a member of staff's suitability to work in the children's work force Iqra Academy will not enter into any compromise agreements and will make a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority if appropriate.

(Policy updated in October 2020. To be reviewed and updated in October 2021)