



Safer Recruitment Policy	
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Purpose	
Committees	
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Policy Statement

1. The safe recruitment of staff in Victorious Academies Trust academies is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education. The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers across all of our academies to share this commitment.
2. 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. It is also understood that sound recruitment procedures help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children.
3. The Trust recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce across our Academies which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. The Trust is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within Trust Academies is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity.
4. The Trust and our Academies will uphold our obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.
5. All posts within our Academies are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent and have an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure.
6. The Trust and our Academies are 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.
7. Our Academies will:
 - Ensure that staff who are involved in the recruitment process have received safer recruitment training and successfully completed the safe recruitment training assessment.
 - Work towards every appointment panel to include one member who has received safer recruitment training.



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- 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.
- Keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with DfE requirements.
- Ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. The Trust will monitor the compliance with these measures.
- Require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the Academy to notify the Academy, in writing of the offence and the penalty.
- Notify the Trust of any members of staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the Academy.

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8. The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken:

- 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
- A Barred List Check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- A satisfactory DBS clearance
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional registration as required by law for teachers

Roles and Responsibilities

9. It is the responsibility of our Academies to:

- Ensure they have effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- Work with the Trust to monitor their compliance with them.

10. It is the responsibility of the Principal / Headteacher and other managers involved in recruitment to:

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

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



12. It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.
13. It is the responsibility of the Trust Core Team to deal with the administration of a central disclosure system for the Academies.

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The Procedure

Advertising

14. The Trust will ensure equality of opportunity; in that our Academies will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible, normally this will entail an external advertisement. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

Applications

15. The application form – Trust Academies use a standard application form provided by the Trust. CVs will only be accepted as additional evidence with a completed application form. The Trust requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on its application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview.
16. Information provided to candidates as part of the application will include information about the Trust's requirements in connection with safer recruitment. See Appendix 1.
17. Applicants should be 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 (e.g.: National College for Teaching and Leadership).

References

18. References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after shortlisting. The only exceptions to this is where candidates have indicated on their application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted or the timescales between shortlisting and interview are too short. In such cases, references will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.
19. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied - open references or testimonials are not acceptable. Our Academies 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.
20. Reference requests will specifically ask:
 - About the referee's relationship with the candidate.



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- 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.

21. Referees will also be asked to confirm details of:

- The applicant's current post, salary and attendance record.
- 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 and the outcome of those.
- 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

22. Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns of allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in any reference.

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Self-Declaration of Convictions by Job Applicants

23. Our policy requires shortlisted applicants for all posts (including volunteers) to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and includes any cautions and pending prosecution. Such declarations will be made on an appropriate form and should be submitted in a sealed envelope, marked strictly private and confidential to the Principal / Headteacher, prior to the interview, who will then discuss it with HR. Principal/Headteacher will also discuss relevant, positive declarations confidentially with the applicant at interview.

24. The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment but will be considered in the same way as positive DBS disclosures.

Interviews

25. The selection process will always include the following:

- Face to face professional interview including a question related to safeguarding children (in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation).
- Young people panel/activity with children

Employment Offer

26. It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred candidate, however, with the exception of DBS disclosures, the checks detailed above must all be completed BEFORE a person's appointment is confirmed. In the case of DBS disclosures, the certificate must be obtained before or as soon as practicable after appointment and a risk assessment carried out.

27. Once all pre-employment checks 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.



Probation Periods

28. Where appropriate newly appointed staff who are new to the employment at our Academies will be subject to the Trust probationary period.

Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status

29. 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.
30. Short-listed candidates will also be required to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation on the day of interview. Academies 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, Academies will require sight of a properly certified copy. Where candidates have obtained qualifications abroad, a certified comparability check will also be required.
31. Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the Trust / Headteacher / Principal / Local Governing Board Chair as appropriate.

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Commencement of Employment Prior to DBS Check Being Received

32. In unusual circumstances it is permitted to commence employment prior to receiving a DBS check. However a Barred List check and risk assessment must be completed.

Record Retention/Data Protection

33. Academies will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a 6 month period, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie: shredded). The 6 month retention period will allow Academies to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal.
34. 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 / Headteacher / Principal within 6 months of the interview date. This must be discussed with the Trust Core Team prior to sending out any information requests.

Personal File Records

35. Academies will retain the following information which will make up part of the personal file, for the successful candidate:
- Application form.
 - References.
 - Disclosure of convictions form.
 - Proof of identification.
 - Proof of academic qualifications.



- Proof of registration with General Teaching Council (for teaching staff).
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable).
- Evidence of medical clearance from Occupational Health (where applicable).
- Evidence of the DBS clearance (ie: the notification form from previous employer (local authority) or the DBS certificate reference number, NOT the actual DBS form or certificate)

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Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks

36. In line with DfE requirements, Academies will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. The central list will record all staff who are employed at the Academies, including casual staff, supply agency staff whether employed directly or through an agency, volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, e.g.: specialist sports coach or artist. This information will also be shared with the Trust Core Team.
37. 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, confirmation they have not been prohibited from teaching by the NCTL.
 - Checks of right to work in the United Kingdom.
 - Barred List checks.
 - DBS Enhanced Disclosure.
 - Further overseas records where appropriate.
38. It shall also indicate who undertook the check and the date on which the check was completed or the relevant certificate obtained.
39. In order to record supply staff provided through an agency on the record, Academies will require written confirmation from the supply agency that it has satisfactorily completed the checks described above. Academies does not need to carry out checks themselves except where there is information contained within the disclosure. However identity checks must be carried out by the Academies to check the person arriving is the person the agency intends to refer to them.
40. The Trust has a specific safeguarding related whistle blowing policy which has been disseminated to all staff and volunteers.
41. The Trust promotes a culture of vigilance where all concerns are listened to and taken seriously.
42. Academies will follow the local authorities Safeguarding Children's Board allegations procedures and refer any allegation for initial consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer.



Appendix 1

Safer Recruitment Information for Applicants

Safer Recruitment Applicant Information

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The information contained within this document is aimed at helping applicants understand what is required should they be asked to attend for interview.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Victorious Academies Trust has a commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and/or young people. We have robust processes and procedures to reduce risk and continuously promote a positive culture of safeguarding amongst our workforce.

The post you are applying for involves working with children and/or young people and you will be subject to Victorious Academies Trust's safer recruitment process.

Pre- Employment Vetting

As part of its safer recruitment and selection process, Victorious Academies Trust operates a strict pre-employment checking procedure. All applicants will be required to undergo the checks outlined below.

Declaration of Previous Convictions

The **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended** makes certain regulated activity (i.e. work with children and/or young people) exempt from the Act and therefore requires individuals seeking to work with these groups to be subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure checks, amongst others.

This post is classed as exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended. Therefore, you are required to reveal all convictions, both spent and unspent, in your application.

Criminal Records Disclosure (DBS check)

Successful applicants seeking to work with children and/or young people will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check; this will include a check against the Children's Barred List maintained by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

For posts working with children and/or young people, Victorious Academies Trust policy requires all new employees to have an enhanced DBS check before your employment commences.

In addition to this all applicants will be required to complete a Disqualification by Association Questionnaire.



Where an applicant is not normally resident in the United Kingdom, or has been resident outside the United Kingdom for more than 6 months, an additional police check will be carried out with the normal or most recent country of residence.

Qualifications

If the post applied for requires a specific qualification, the applicant will be required to bring the original certificate along to the interview. If the original certificate is unavailable, a certified copy of the document must be provided by the issuing establishment.

Registration with a Professional Body

If the post applied for requires registration with a professional body, the applicant will be required to bring the original certificate along to the interview. If the original certificate is unavailable, a certified copy of the document must be provided by the issuing establishment.

Victorious Academies Trust will verify registration/membership with the relevant professional body.

References

Applicants are required to provide a minimum of two referees, one of whom must be your most recent employer. One reference must be from a referee where the employment involved working with children and/or young people.

If you have undertaken voluntary work with children and/or young people you should use the voluntary organisation employer as a referee.

If you have not previously worked with children and/or young people you must provide a character reference from someone who is able to confirm your suitability to work with children and/or young people. This would normally be someone in authority, e.g. a lecturer, doctor or community leader. Please note that character references are normally only accepted as a supplement to an employer's reference.

In addition, Victorious Academies Trust will seek references from educational establishments for those applicants with no previous employment history.

Under no circumstances will Open References (i.e. addressed "to whom it may concern") be accepted.

In all cases, Victorious Academies Trust will contact the referee prior to the interview, except if you have specifically indicated that you would prefer us to contact them only if you are made an offer of appointment.

Eligibility to Work in the UK

Victorious Academies Trust has a legal obligation to check documentary evidence to confirm that all potential employees are eligible to work in the UK.

Medical Assessment

All offers of appointment will be subject to the satisfactory outcome of medical checks where appropriate.



Disqualification by Association

On 26th February 2015, the government issued guidance, Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, which clarifies the position with regards to schools. The DfE advise that we:

“should ask employees working in Early and Later years settings and those who are directly concerned in the management of such provision to provide the relevant information not only about themselves but also about a person who lives or works in the same household as them”.

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Where appropriate staff joining the Trust will be required to complete and sign a declaration in connection with this. Copies of the policy, guidance and form can be provided upon request.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

As stated previously, all offers of appointment are made subject to the satisfactory outcome of the pre-employment checks for the post.