



# **Safer Recruitment Policy**

**September 2020**

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## Linton School

### Safer Recruitment Policy

**Adopted by:** Rebekah Dennett

**Review date:** September 2021

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**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020

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**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020

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**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019

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**If the child is at immediate risk, please call the police on 999.**

## Our School

Linton School is an independent special school for young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties for both boys and girls aged 8-18 years old. The school is registered for up to 12 learners and consists of 4 small classes to provide a nurturing environment to develop and progress throughout their learning journey. We are a trauma informed school that is able to support children and teenagers who suffer with trauma or mental health problems and whose troubled behaviour acts as a barrier to learning. Located in rural Preston we therefore benefit from some amazing outdoor space where we develop our outdoor, equestrian and horticulture skills. All the staff at Linton School are committed to creating a setting which not only focuses on academic success, but also provides our learners opportunities to develop their social, communication and independent skills.

## Culture and Ethos

We are committed to providing a nurturing, safe and ambitious learning environment that supports every young person to achieve lifelong skills through a diverse learner centred curriculum. Respectful and supportive relationships are at the heart of all we do; we value every member of the school community equally. Through bespoke curriculums tailored towards each individual pupil's needs, experiences, interests and strengths we foster a love for learning and support our young people to achieve their full potential. As an educational setting our main aim is to prepare our pupils to make a positive contribution towards society by giving our students the skills they need to be successful, resilient and inspirational young adults. Linton schools purpose is to improve the quality of life for our young people both now, and in the future, 'building our futures together'.

## The Vision

Linton School provides a safe, nurturing learning environment to provide skills for lifelong opportunities, which gives the young people an ambitious outlook towards their future.

The vision drives everything we do and will be achieved through:

- Outdoor enrichment activities to promote life skills through play, nurture and teamwork.
- Promoting independence, patience and listening skills through Equestrian lessons.
- Multi-disciplinary links from both internal and external companies to provide a bespoke, broad and balanced curriculum that develops the education of our pupils.
- Empowering each learner to achieve their personal goals and develop a lifelong love of learning.
- A positive and ambitious school environment that promotes learning for all.
- Offering a broad range of learning experiences within the curriculum that values academic attainment as well as developing social skills, experiences and resilience.

**More information about the school can be found in the school Prospectus.**

## 1. Aims

Safer recruitment is central to the safeguarding of children/young people. We have a duty to safeguard and promote children/young people's welfare. This includes ensuring that Linton School undertakes safer recruitment and selection procedures which prevent unsuitable persons from gaining access to children/young people.

Linton School is committed to providing the highest quality of education and care to the children/young people placed at our school. It is therefore important to attract the 'best people' to continue to provide the high level of education and care that children/young people, parents, carers and Local Authorities have come to expect. The process of recruitment will take into account a range of selection techniques in addition to direct interview. **See 'section 3 Recruitment procedures' for more details.**

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2020\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#), and the [Governance Handbook](#). We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

The Department for Education (DfE) has provided statutory guidance about disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools (DfE, 2018a).

[The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), which outlines when people with criminal convictions can work with children

Section 5 of the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), which defines what 'regulated activity' is in relation to children

The [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) provides detailed guidance for employers in **England** and **Wales** on the process of applying for DBS checks.

Information about how to apply to foreign countries for criminal records checks is available from the Home Office (2017).

In **England**, Regulation 9 of the [Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) states that if somebody lives in the same household as another person who has been disqualified from working with children, they can be disqualified from working with children in domestic premises. The Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools and local authorities on disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 covers disqualification by association (Department for Education, 2018a).

### 3. Recruitment process

1. All vacancies will be advertised internally, advertised on chosen job boards online, placed in local job centres and where appropriate in local newspapers as well as using online recruitment sites to ensure demographics do not restrict the equality and diversity of applicants. Applicants are managed through a separate recruitment department. Child protection and safeguarding issues highlighted in applications can be removed from the shortlist as a first stage.
2. Applicants will be sent an information pack, made up of a job description, person specification and a job application form. It is also important to confirm our commitment to safer recruitment. Therefore the job description details:
  - a) Main duties and responsibilities of the post;
  - b) The post holder's specific responsibility towards the promotion and the practice of safeguarding the welfare of children/young people that they come in to contact with through their job;
  - c) Qualifications required to do the job;
  - d) Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks required;
  - e) Defines the skills and competencies required;
  - f) Explores issues relating to the safeguarding of children/young people, such as:
    - g) Motivation to work with children/young people;
      - i. Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children/young people;
      - ii. Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
      - iii. Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.
    - h) Whistle blowing and complaints policies and procedures.
3. The Head Teacher and/or SLT will then shortlist those applicants who fill in the application form after they have read all the applications. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this should be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, and discussed at interview. Also taken into account should be a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post, which is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and/or SLT to check.
4. The request for references will be sent out together with a copy of the job description and person specification to the shortlisted candidates. The references will request information about the applicant's suitability to work with children/young people. Former employers will be contacted as well as referees; this will especially be done where there is a gap in the applicant's employment history. In addition to written requests, former employers will be contacted by telephone. When referees are contacted by phone, a written record of this will be kept, this record will be available to the interview panel.

5. Invitations will be sent to all applicants who have been shortlisted for an interview. The interview will involve a minimum of two staff members, one being a member of the SLT (who is safe recruitment trained) and the other an operations manager. The candidate will be asked questions surrounding the post that they have applied for, with an agreed scoring structure in place. If they do not reach the bench mark they are contacted and feedback is given over the phone by the member of the SLT who carried out the interview.
6. If the applicant is successful at formal interview an offer of employment is made by a member of the SLT, subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Where the applicant has worked in many educational/care settings, every attempt must be made to obtain references from these organisations. This must be approved by the Head Teacher before an offer letter is sent. The applicant will be placed on a 6 month induction period, which can be extended up to 1 year if the applicant probation appraisal is not satisfactory.
7. Where any applicant has disclosed any criminal convictions or otherwise, the interviewing panel must discuss the matter at interview, completing a DBS risk assessment form in as much detail as possible. The applicant must comment upon the full context of any offence, matter, outcome and any lessons arising. This statement must be reviewed and questioned during interview and latter cross referenced to references and a Disclosure and Barring Service. Following the risk assessment, the form must be signed off with the Head Teacher's decision of whether to employ; this must then be forwarded to recruitment who will need to get sign off from the Head of Education Services and Managing Director.

### **Application forms**

All application forms should be scrutinised by the Head Teacher and/or SLT to ensure:

1. They are fully and properly completed;
2. The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies;
3. Gaps in employment/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified.

Incomplete applications will be noted initially by recruitment, where further information will be requested from the candidate. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this should be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, as well as a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post. All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification, which will be the Head Teacher's responsibility upon receiving the application form.

### **Short listing**

A record will be kept of all meetings where shortlisting takes place. Whenever possible the short-list will have at least three candidates.

New workers will not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children/young people until they have undertaken the induction programme and the Company has received satisfactory references and a current Disclosure and Barring Service certificate.

It must be emphasised that continued employment in such circumstances is subject to the satisfactory outcomes of checks.

## **References**

In the application form, the applicant will be asked to provide the names of a minimum of three people to whom we may apply for a reference. One of the referees will be the applicant's current employer, and the timing of our approach will be upon the agreement of the applicant. Should the candidate have worked at a number of educational or care companies, every effort will be made to contact all of the care companies they have previously worked for to request a reference. Internal applicants must provide a reference from their current Head Teacher/manager.

The request for references will be sent out together with a copy of the job description and person specification. The references will request information about the applicant's suitability to work with children/young people. Former employers will be contacted as well as referees; this will especially be done where there is a gap in the applicant's employment history.

In addition to written requests, former employers will be contacted by telephone. When referees are contacted by phone, a written record of this will be kept, this record will be available to the interview panel.

## **Overseas applicants**

If the potential employee has lived abroad for 5 years or comes from another country prior to working in the UK, then a UK Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure will not give a full picture in respect of any criminal record they may have. In these cases an overseas Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure, or Certificate of Good Conduct will need to be applied for as well as a UK Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure. Details for each country's equivalent Bureau are available on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

## **Interviews**

During the selection process two members of full-time staff will conduct staff interviews. All of these staff will have a strong understanding of safer recruitment issues and be appropriately trained to conduct interviews. The interview assessment sheet will pay particular attention to our values and child protection and safeguarding issues, and will include a minimum of two safeguarding scenario questions. Each interviewer will complete their own assessment sheet of the candidate during the interview. They will score the candidate in terms of perceived abilities and these record sheets will be used in the decision-making process. Those sheets of successful candidates are kept in the employee's personnel record for the whole time they work for the school, if at any time they leave the



Company these are archived with all of the individual's other employment records at Head Office in secure locked cabinets fit for the purpose. For those that are not successful, the interview notes are kept for 6 months, then disposed of in a confidential manner.

### **Qualifications**

1. At interview, essential qualifications required for the post including those set by statute must be verified as a minimum, other qualifications stated on the application form may also need to be verified.
2. A clear photocopy of all the original qualification certificates should be taken, verified and dated and if the candidate is successful, these should be placed on their personal file. If the candidate is unsuccessful, these should be destroyed.

### **Identity checks**

It is vital that we evidence the identity of all staff e.g. by requesting an original birth certificate and passport, along with further documents for the DBS checks. The ID documents must be photocopied clearly, signed and dated by the Head Teacher and/or member of the SLT to agree that the original ID has been seen and that any photographic ID is a true likeness of the candidate.

### **Right to work in the UK**

1. It is a legal obligation that every employer in the UK verifies whether a potential employee has the right to work in the UK. For information about this, <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk>
2. Checks will be made using the guidelines from <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk> using original documents only, which photocopies must have been taken by the Head Teacher and/or member of the SLT for them to verify. If there is any reason for doubt the application will be referred to HR for in-depth investigation before rejecting/accepting the applicant into the shortlist process.

### **DBS checks**

Any person who applies to work, or who moves from one post to another within the Company, must be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

### **Physical and mental fitness**

A health declaration form must be completed and signed by the applicant if successful at interview and after a provisional offer of employment is confirmed, to ensure that all staff have the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness to fulfil their proposed role.

### **Probationary period**

1. All workers will undertake a probationary period. For education staff the probationary period will start at the onset of the employment period and is 6 months. A probationary review meeting will be held with the new member of staff

which will decide either to pass the probation, extend the probation or fail the probation. The Head Teacher must discuss with the operations manager any actions prior to the meeting.

2. The probationary period will be used as a way of assessing if the new worker demonstrates the right qualities for working with children/young people.
3. During the probationary period the trainee will undertake a training programme. During the probationary period, the Head Teacher / SLT will supervise these staff on a fortnightly basis.
4. If the probationary period does not proceed to both parties' satisfaction, then the contract can be terminated with the usual period of notice given on both sides. This will be governed by employment legislation.
5. The probationary period can be extended. The Trainee will be informed of this during the supervision sessions and this will be confirmed in writing to the Trainee if an extension is required.

### **Induction training**

The Head Teacher must:

1. Ensure each employee completes an appropriate induction;
2. Ensure each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation;
3. Provide each employee with a job description outlining the employee's responsibilities.

A period of induction is crucial for new staff, if they are to make a satisfactory start.

1. All new staff will undertake an induction programme. This programme is orientated to reflect our own specialism as well as the ongoing changes in the requirements of legislation.
2. The induction programme has been designed to equip the new employee with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to quickly enable the employee to contribute to the education and safeguarding of children/young people;
3. A well-constructed induction programme ensures the lessening of errors made by unprepared employees which could result in putting children/young people and staff at risk;
4. The organisation is able to accurately gauge the knowledge and skills the employee has acquired;
5. A period of induction lessens the likelihood of damaging disciplinary and equal opportunity issues arising;

Formal supervision will be undertaken every two weeks for the first six months, then termly thereafter.

The new member of staff will also be asked to become familiar with the following documents and where to find the documents:

1. Policies and Procedures;
2. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

3. Child Protection Procedures;
4. Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
5. Whistleblowing policy

The Head Teacher must ensure that all employees:

1. Undertake appropriate continuing professional development;
2. Receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.

## 4. New staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will not keep a copy of this for longer than 6 months
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

We will ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested will ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children.

**Regulated activity** means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

## 5. Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and

The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left.

## 6. Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

## 7. Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check.

This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

## 8. Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

## 9. Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

## 10. Governors

All governors will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

They will have an enhanced DBS check with barred list information if working in regulated activity.

The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the secretary of state.

All proprietors, trustees, local governors and members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)). [Section 128 checks are only required for local governors if they have retained or been delegated any management responsibilities.]
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

## 11. Staff working in alternative provision settings

Where we place a pupil with an alternative provision provider, we obtain written confirmation from the provider that they have carried out the appropriate safeguarding checks on individuals working there that we would otherwise perform.

## **12. Adults who supervise pupils on work experience**

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

## **13. Single central record**

Keeping children safe in education (2020, sets out the school's responsibility to keep all staff details on the Single Central Record. This will cover the following:

- All staff (including supply staff, and teacher trainees on salaried routes) who work at the school: and
- All members for independent schools, including academies and free schools, and the proprietor body.

Safer recruitment means that all applicants will (appropriate to the role & responsibility):

Have the following:

- Their identity checked;
- A barred list check;
- An enhanced DBS check/certificate;
- A prohibition from teaching check;
- A section 128 check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK;
- A check of professional qualifications: and
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK

School has a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to a child (or vulnerable adult). School will follow DBS guidance on referrals as per the GOV.UK website.

## **14. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher every 12 months. The date of next review will be **September 2021**.

## **15. Links to other policies**

For further information on aspects of this policy please refer to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy