SHERBORNE
SCHOOLS GROUP

Recruitment, Selection & Disclosure Policy and Procedures

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Executive Summary

This policy is for staff and its purpose is to create structure and process to facilitate the fair resourcing of high calibre staff, whilst ensuring compliance with legal obligations in relation to recruiting staff to work with children and young people.

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Introduction

The Sherborne Schools Group[1] (hereafter referred to as 'the Group' or 'SSG') is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Furthermore, the Group is committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its employees. The Group recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The Group is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aims to select people for employment on the basis of their skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and, where appropriate, qualifications and training.

The aims of the Group's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to create structure and process to facilitate the recruitment of high calibre staff;
- to ensure compliance with legal obligations in relation to recruiting people to work with children and young people;
- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds, including gender, transgender status, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership.
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 (DUCA), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and

[1] The Sherborne Schools Group includes Sherborne Boys, Sherborne Girls, Sherborne Prep, Hanford Prep, Sherborne International and their trading subsidiaries.

- to ensure that the Group meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff must have appropriate training and are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy and the relevant legislation. At least one member of every recruitment panel should be safer recruitment trained. An entry will be made on the Single Central Register for all current members of staff at the Schools, the proprietorial body and all individuals who work in regular contact with children, including volunteers, agency staff and those employed as third parties.

If a member of staff involved in a recruitment process has a close personal or familiar relationship with an applicant, they must declare this relationship as soon as they are aware of the individuals' application.

Scope of this Policy

This Policy refers and applies to staff directly recruited and employed by the Group. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, staff are defined as:

Any person working at the School whether under a contract of employment, under a contract for services or otherwise than under a contract, but does not include supply staff or a volunteer.

In the case of agency or contract workers, the Group's safeguarding requirements will be set out in the contract between the organisation and the Group. Written confirmation will be obtained from the agency or company that it has carried out the same checks as we would otherwise perform on any individual working at the Group (or who will be providing education on the Group's behalf, including through online delivery). The Group conducts identity checks on agency and contract workers on arrival and, in the case of agency workers (which includes supply staff), the Group must be provided with a copy of the appropriate level of DBS check.

The Group will check with the relevant supply agency that the required checks have been carried out (identity, enhanced disclosure – renewed every 3 years, right to work in the UK, barred list, prohibition, qualifications, overseas checks plus those checks set out in KCSIE as 'pre-employment' checks). The Single Central Record shows these checks have been made and the Group carries out its own identity check and has seen a copy of the disclosure (whether or not it discloses any information).

Certain individuals are automatically disqualified from acting in senior management positions within a charity. Whether an individual falls into the category of a senior management position is judged using the following criteria:

- A person who is accountable only to the governors, and who carries overall responsibility for the day-to-day management and control of the charity. At SSG, this would be the Heads of the Schools.
- A person who is accountable only to the Head or the governors, and who is responsible for the overall management and control of the charity's finances. At SSG this would be the Chief Operating Officer.

Being disqualified means that a person can't take on, or stay in, a senior manager position – even on an interim basis, unless the Charity Commission has removed (or 'waived') the disqualification.

In respect of contractors, unchecked contractors will under no circumstances be allowed to work unsupervised in the Schools. The Group will determine the appropriate level of supervision

depending on the circumstances (see SSG Supervision of Contractors and Visiting Professionals Policy for more detail).

Any staff who TUPE transfer into the Group's staff will be required to undertake the statutory requirements with regard to safer recruitment checks.

If staff are transferred under TUPE (gap of three months or less and information complete) information will be passed to the new employer and a note made on the Single Central Record that details have been accepted under TUPE.

Identification of a Vacancy

A vacancy may arise when:

- A member of staff has left a post
- A change in workload, departmental structure or job design is required
- Cover for long-term sickness, maternity, adoption, paternity or shared parental leave is required

On identifying a vacancy, the following considerations should be made:

- Whether the vacant post is still necessary
- How the post will be funded
- Whether the post is established or outside of the existing budget or staffing structure
- Whether the Job Description for the post needs updating or whether a new job description is needed
- Whether the post is appropriate for job share or other flexible working type of arrangement
- Whether the post is suitable or appropriate for redeployment purposes in the event of organisational change
- Whether the post needs to be filled on a temporary or permanent basis based on the needs of the Group

Where a vacancy is identified, approval to proceed with recruitment should be sought from the relevant Head, or the COO for Support Staff vacancies.

Organisational Change

If the Group is going through a period of organisational change, prior to advertising, appropriate consideration should be given as to whether the vacancy is suitable to redeployees. Redeployees are employees who:

- For medical reasons are not able to fulfil requirements of the role for which they were employed;
- Due to organisational change no longer have a substantive role and are looking for a new role within the Group.

Secondments/Acting Up

Where a secondment or temporary 'acting up' arrangement is being considered, the process should be treated as an internal vacancy. Therefore, the interim position should be advertised internally. This may be internally across the whole group or internally at one particular site, based on the business need. It must be stated that the position will be offered on a fixed-term basis.

The seconded employee is entitled to return to their substantive post (or, in exceptional circumstances, to a comparable post of equal pay and status) at the end of their time in secondment.

Initiating Recruitment

The advert, department/supplementary information, job description and person specification should be drafted/reviewed as necessary. The requirements listed should be clear, fully justifiable and associated to the role. These measures will help increase the pool of candidates and minimise the risk of discrimination. An effectively written job description and person specification will aid effective evaluation of applications during the shortlisting process and identification of appropriate interview questions.

In the interest of ensuring equality, the job description and person specification should be evaluated under any job evaluation scheme the Group may have in place and this would be facilitated by the HR department.

Where the Recruiting Manager (the designated individual overseeing the recruitment episode) is not the Head or COO, the job description and person specification should be submitted to the Head (or COO for Support Staff) for approval. The Recruiting Manager will then liaise with HR to agree a recruitment timeline. The HR Department will then proceed to appropriately advertise the vacancy.

Advertising of all Group vacancies should support the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring that:

- In most circumstances, posts will be advertised internally and externally concurrently;
- Only in specific circumstances (such as during organisational change, the allocation of additional responsibilities or where the vacancy is short term or urgent) it may be appropriate to only advertise internally;
- The content of the advertisement will comply with anti-discrimination legislation;
- Advertisements will be placed in media that will reach a wide, diverse audience.

The Application Process

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Should there be any gaps in academic or employment history, a satisfactory explanation must be provided. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

The SSG Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and SSG Staff Privacy Notice will be available for applicants to download from the Group's website.

Internal Applications

Internal candidates are defined as staff who are employed on either permanent or fixed-term contracts.

Where a post is advertised as internal only applicants may be asked to complete a shorter application form or submit a letter or application outlining their suitability for the role.

Internal candidates will be required to undergo additional employment checks to meet the recommendations set out in KCSiE, DUCA and the requirements of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS).

The Selection Process

Shortlisting

The Recruiting Manager is responsible for identifying the shortlisting panel and communicating this to the HR department. The HR department will circulate shortlisting information to all panel members, usually at least 24 hours before the shortlisting meeting is due to take place, or on an alternatively agreed date.

In all cases, it is recommended that the shortlisting panel should consist of **at least two** people who hold enough knowledge of the Group and the post in order to objectively assess the suitability of each candidate.

Where possible, all the panel members should have appropriate recruitment and selection training and understand:

- The legal impact and consequences of not following consistent recruitment and selection procedures;
- The Group's Recruitment Policy and Procedure;
- Equality and Diversity requirements;
- The importance of developing the necessary skills for effective interviewing;
- The importance of safeguarding children.

In order to ensure fair and effective shortlisting, only those criteria listed on the Person Specification can be used for making shortlisting assessments. It is unfair and unethical to introduce new criteria at this stage. In all cases, candidates selected for interview must meet the essential criteria listed in the Person Specification of the Job Description. If only one candidate meets the shortlisting criteria the selection process may still go ahead.

All applications should be scrutinised by both the Recruiting Manager and the HR department to ensure that they are fully complete, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment. Reasons for obvious gaps in employment, a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent to a temporary post should be fully explored and verified. As part of the shortlisting process, the Group will consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of the due diligence process. This may help to identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the Group may want to explore with an applicant at interview. This forms part of the Group's wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working in a school environment.

It is essential that all staff involved in the recruitment and selection process ensure the confidentiality of information supplied by applicants and referees.

Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. Candidates can request feedback as to why they were not shortlisted for interview. It is the responsibility of the Recruiting Manager or interview panel chair to ensure that the documented shortlist includes clarity on why applicants did not meet the selection criteria. At risk candidates and disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria must be shortlisted.

Shortlisted candidates should be asked to complete a self-declaration form in relation to their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that the information they have

provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

The Group will, where possible, obtain references prior to interview. This allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and can be taken up with the shortlisted candidate at interview.

Preparing

In most cases, the Group will take a multi-assessment approach to the selection process. The selection process will be appropriate to the role and may include: a main panel interview, smaller panel interviews to explore specific areas, a lesson observation (where appropriate), a written, computer or group task and informal activities such as meetings/lunch/coffee with department members or pupils and a tour of the site.

The Recruiting Manager is responsible for making arrangements for the selection process, they should identify the activities required and the members of staff to be involved and liaise with the HR department to make sure that appropriate arrangements are in place. The Recruiting Manager is responsible for compiling relevant competency-based interview questions which must be relevant to the job.

Suitability to Work with Children, Young and Vulnerable People

For all School based posts, the interview questions will need to explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The depth of the Safeguarding questions will depend on the amount of contact the post is likely to have with pupils.

In accordance with the guidance defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), the interview questions must explore:

- The candidate's attitude towards children and young people and their motivation to work in an educational setting;
- The candidate's ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
- Their emotional resilience in working with children and young people;
- Their attitude to the use of authority and maintaining discipline;
- Their ability to support the Group's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Invitation to Interview

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc.). where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by the candidate from the awarding body.

All candidates will be asked to bring to the interview:

- Current photographic identification e.g. a driving licence or a passport
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address.
- Where appropriate, any documentation evidencing a change of name
- Where applicable, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the Group of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Conducting the interview

To ensure fairness each candidate should receive the same interview experience. In most cases the panel/s will be assessing the candidate and the candidate will be assessing the Group as a potential employer.

The panel should:

- Ensure that each candidate is greeted and escorted to and from the interview room;
- Ensure that the room is appropriate for the interview (free of interruptions, comfortable, etc.);
- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for candidates with a disclosed disability. Due diligence is necessary to ensure that any additional needs are accommodated at the interview;
- Give all interviewees a comparable amount of time;
- Supplement their understanding of the candidate's responses by the use of probing questions.

The Panel should follow a consistent set of pre-agreed questions that are relevant and applicable to the post. Supplementary questions may be asked in order to explore more detail and clarify understanding. Interview notes should always be taken and passed to HR after the conclusion of the process

Obvious gaps in employment or any history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career progression should be fully explored and reasons verified.

Where possible, references will be obtained prior to the interview and shared with the Head, or Recruiting Manager if the Head is not involved.

Candidates will be asked if there is anything they would like to declare or discuss in light of the declarations completed on the application form.

Identifying the Preferred Candidate

The preferred candidate should be identified based on the amalgamation of the panel/s scoring sheets and any selection testing results. Where the Head or COO are not involved, the Recruiting Manager should communicate the preferred candidate to the HR Department.

If none of the candidates are considered suitable, thought should be given to reviewing the advertising/shortlisting/interviewing process and/or the Job Description itself and if necessary re-advertising the vacancy.

Making a Conditional Offer

A contract comes into being once a verbal offer has been made and accepted. The Head or the HR Department should make the offer verbally followed by a short confirmation email detailing simply that the position has been conditionally offered and that full details will be confirmed in writing.

All interview documents should be returned to the HR department who will then send a formal written conditional offer of employment and progress appropriate checks.

All offers will be conditional upon the Group receiving all relevant pre-employment checks (as detailed below).

Unsuccessful Applicants

The Head or HR Department will inform unsuccessful applicants who have attended for interview. If feedback is requested by the unsuccessful candidate, a valid reason for rejection along with additional information to support them in identifying areas for development should be given. The details of unsuccessful candidates will be kept on file for six months.

Pre-employment Checks

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSiE, DUCA and the requirements of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations and the NMS, the Group carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees. All pre-employment checks should be complete prior to the successful candidate commencing employment.

All offers of employment will remain conditional until the following have been received:

- A minimum of two satisfactory references covering at least 3 years (one of which must be from the applicants most recent employer where applicable);
- Satisfactory online searches;
- Satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Check and DBS Children's Barred List clearance (where applicable for the post);
- Self-Declaration of physical and mental medical fitness;
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK;
- Verification of the applicant's identity;
- Declaration of Personal and Pecuniary Interest (where required);
- Verification of professional qualifications which the Group deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where they have not been previously verified);
- Verification of professional status, where required;
- Prohibition for Management - Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from providing education at a school, taking part in the management of an independent school or working in a position which involves regular contact with children;
- Section 128 Direction Check (Management Positions Only) - Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under Section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school;
- Prohibition from Teaching Check – Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and is not prohibited from carrying out teaching work, where applicable;
- Any further checks which are necessary as a result of the applicant being born outside of the UK or having lived or worked outside of the UK.

All pre-employment checks will be documented and retained on the employee's personal file. If any of the above checks are not satisfactory, the offer of employment may be revoked. Where this is necessary, written reason/s will be supplied.

If a candidate's DBS includes any previous convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings a risk assessment will be undertaken to decide whether to continue with the offer of employment. The ultimate decision will be made by the Head.

References

Every effort will be made to obtain references for all shortlisted applicants before interview wherever practical to do so.

References will seek objective, verifiable information and not subjective opinion. Where an applicant has previously worked with children at least one reference must be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Referees should not be relatives or individuals known to the applicant solely as friends.

All referees will be asked to provide a reference using a format and method determined by the Group. The information requested will be designed to meet current safeguarding requirements, recruitment best practice and relevant legislation.

The Group will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and will not rely on references, testimonials or open references supplied by the applicant.

References will be obtained from the applicant's current employer wherever possible and verified upon receipt. The Group will take reasonable steps to confirm the referee's identity, position and authority to provide a reference on behalf of the organisation. Where the referee is employed by a school, college or other educational establishment, verification will be undertaken to ensure the reference has been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority.

References will seek confirmation of the applicant's employment history, suitability to work with children and young people, and whether there are any safeguarding concerns, allegations, disciplinary findings or ongoing investigations relating to the safety and welfare of children. The Group will also seek any other information relevant to the applicant's suitability for the role.

The Group will compare all references with the information provided on the application form and during the selection process. Any discrepancies, inconsistencies, omissions or areas of concern will be explore with the applicant, and where appropriate, ~~the re~~feree before any appointment is confirmed.

The Group may contact any referee by telephone, email or other appropriate means to verify the authenticity and content of a reference. A written record of any verification undertaken will be retained on the recruitment file.

Online Searches

Online searches will be undertaken for shortlisted candidates.

The search will be undertaken by an individual not involved in the interview panel (normally by someone in the HR department). The individual will use an internet search engine to undertake a search of the candidate's current and previous names, their current and previous places of work (including previous employers) and current and previous places of residence.

Searches will not be excessive and the individual undertaking the search will not normally go further than the first page of results or search for locations or employers from more than 10 previous years unless particular areas of concern are noted.

The individual undertaking the search will keep a note of the date the search was undertaken and the criteria used. Any concerns identified through the online search process will be raised and considered as part of the recruitment process prior to any appointment being confirmed.

Data relating to search criteria, results of searches and decisions will be held securely on the recruitment file during the process and where necessary transferred to the successful candidate's file on appointment.

The individual undertaking the search will be mindful of the requirements under the Equality Act.

Criminal Records

Candidates will not normally commence employment until an appropriate DBS certificate is received. In exceptional cases, and subject to a risk assessment approved by the Head, candidates may commence employment prior to DBS clearance provided there is no unsupervised access to pupils, that other pre-employment checks are satisfactorily complete, that the DBS application has been submitted and where a clear check of the DBS Children's Barred List has been obtained.

The DBS issues a DBS certificate to the subject of the check only, rather than to the Group. It is a condition of employment with the Group that the original disclosure certificate is provided to the Group by the applicant. Employment will remain conditional upon the original certificate being provided and it being considered satisfactory by the Group.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including a criminal record check from the relevant jurisdiction(s). The applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by the Group.

The Head will be responsible for ascertaining whether a candidate's criminal record does or does not render them unfit for the post.

Medical fitness

The Group is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the Group. Medical fitness will be verified after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

Following an offer of employment, it is the Group's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the Group in strictest confidence and processed in accordance with the SSG Staff Privacy Notice and SSG Data Protection Policy. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirement of the role i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, and/ or layout of the premises.

The Group is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence, considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

Verification of Identity and the Right to Work in the UK

Under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and the Immigration Act 2016, the Group has a legal responsibility to ensure that all employees have the right to work in the UK. Checks on the right to work must be carried out for every person the Group intends to employ regardless of their race, ethnicity, or nationality **before** they begin any work.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be asked to bring with them evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications. Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change. Where an individual is subject to UK immigration control they will require a visa permitting them to live and work in the UK and, at the point that permission expires further checks are required.

Qualifications

Successful candidates must provide proof of all relevant qualifications in the form of a certificate of achievement, membership number or other documentary evidence that may be relevant.

Agency Staff

Agencies who supply staff to the Group must complete the pre-employment checks which the Group would otherwise complete for its staff. The Group requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work at the Group.

The Group will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by an agency before agency staff can commence work at the Group.

Volunteers

A similar recruitment process is adopted for volunteers (including Governors and Independent Listeners) as would be used to recruit a paid member of staff. The application process is slightly adapted, but the principal safeguards and features of the recruitment and selection process should be the same.

The process should include:

- information about the Group's commitment to safeguarding children;
- completion of an application form;
- obtaining references;
- a face-to-face interview;
- pre-employment checks similar to those which would be applied in the case of paid employment including a DBS certificate and, if the volunteer will be in regulated activity, a check of the DBS barred list; and
- evidence of identity and eligibility to undertake voluntary activities in the UK.

Under no circumstances will the Group permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with pupils.

It is the Group's policy that, where not signed up to the update service, a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with the Group for three consecutive months or more. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with the Group on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits the Group to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

Interviewing Volunteers

Safeguarding principles should also apply when interviewing volunteers, but it is important to make interviews more informal than for paid staff. They should be very much a two-way process. However, this does not mean that the interview should not probe into candidates' attitudes and motives and their suitability for work with children. This is even more important for candidates who perhaps have no previous experience of working with children.

Induction for Volunteers

Volunteers should be given a clear induction programme which includes their responsibilities for safeguarding, what is and what is not acceptable behaviour towards children, what to do if

they believe there is a safeguarding concern and what reasonable steps they can take to avoid creating concerns themselves.

Volunteers should be provided with a copy of the SSG Staff Code of Conduct.

Pupils Undertaking Internal Work Experience or Voluntary Activities

Sherborne Schools Group pupils who undertake work experience, volunteering, mentoring, leadership activities or other educational placements within the Group are not subject to the recruitment and selection arrangements for staff and external volunteers set out in this Policy.

Such activities must, however, be planned and managed in accordance with the Group's safeguarding procedures and any specific arrangements for pupil volunteering and work experience. Appropriate arrangements must be in place for the safeguarding of both the pupils undertaking the activity and the children with whom they may work, including appropriate induction, supervision and risk assessment. The member of staff responsible for the activity should ensure that these are carried out.

Contractors and Self Employed

Safeguarding principles apply in the processes of engaging contractors, including individuals engaged on a self-employed basis. This is detailed in the SSG Supervision of Contractors and Visiting Professionals Policy. The process will normally include:

For small scale contracts, including self-employed:

- Manager/individual requesting the service to gain approval as appropriate from either the Head, COO or a Deputy Head, including providing an outline of why a contract for service is appropriate.
- Manager/individual to get quotes (ideally at least 2) for the service.
- Proposed contractor to provide details of service and comprehensive details of their previous experience.
- Manager/individual to meet the proposed contractor with a member of SLT, notes should be taken and appropriate Safer Recruitment questions asked.
- As appropriate, paperwork sent to HR/Facilities to process appropriate checks.

Large scale contracts

Where the contract is large in scale, the project should be referred to the COO who will identify and coordinate the appropriate process.

Checks for Contractors and Self Employed

All regular contractors engaged by the Group must complete legally acceptable checks, including for their employees, as the Group is required to complete for its staff.

Such checks will need to be complete and confirmation that such checks have been complete will need to be received by the Group before the Contractor or their employees can commence work at the Group. Please refer to the relevant “Contractors Policy” for more information.

Irregular contractors should be supervised appropriately.

IR35 Status Assessment

Under the IR35 rules (also known as the off-payroll working rules) the Group is required to assess the employment status of contractors/self-employed individuals that it engages. The

Group will therefore undertake an assessment and issue a status determination statement before engaging a contractor. The responsibility for ensuring this is carried out lies with the Head of the Department buying in the service.

Visitors and Speakers

The Schools are required to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visitors and speakers, whether invited by staff or by pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised (see the individual School policies for more detail).

All visitors and speakers will be required to sign in and out at Reception, wear a visitor's badge at all times and will be escorted by a fully vetted member of staff between appointments.

Recruitment of Ex-offenders

The Group will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment based on conviction or other details disclosed. The Group makes appointment decisions based on merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar them from employment with the Group. Each case will be decided on its merits.

All positions within the Group are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must therefore declare all previous convictions and cautions, including those which would normally be considered "spent" except those received for an offence committed in the United Kingdom if it has been filtered in accordance with the DBS filtering rules.

A failure to disclose a previous conviction (which should be declared) may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

It is unlawful for the Group to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the Group. The Group will make a report to the Police/DBS/Local Authority Designated Officer if:

- it receives an application from a barred person;
- it is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

Assessment Criteria

If relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Head will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the applicant.

- If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the Group's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:
- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence; or
- serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud
- If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the Group's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.
- If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the Group's policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving.

If relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Group will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Head of the relevant School before a position is offered or confirmed.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Group is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion at all stages of the recruitment and selection process and always carries out shortlisting, interviewing and selection without regard to an applicant's sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, skin colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership.

We will never exclude any candidate with a disability unless it is clear that the candidate is unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments. Questions will only be asked about a candidate's health in advance of an offer being made where this is directly necessary for a particular role and, in any event, only once they have been shortlisted.

To prevent any candidate from being disadvantaged because of a disability, when communicating with applicants the HR team will ask each candidate whether or not they require reasonable adjustments to be made. Where appropriate adjustments will be made to application and selection processes, examples may include; access to premises, adapting tests, providing an alternative methods to interviews and providing suitable equipment.

Retention of Records

If an applicant is successful in their application the Group will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This documentation will be retained by the Group for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the Group. It will be retained in accordance with the Group's policies on Information and Records Management after employment terminates.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.

The same retention periods apply to any suitability information obtained about volunteers and contractors involved with Group activities.

The Group's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use and retention of disclosure information.

Referrals to the DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency

The Group has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS in circumstances where an individual has applied for a position at the Group despite being barred from working with children or has been removed by the Group from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child.

It may also be appropriate for the Group to make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) from information arising from recruitment and selection processes.

Induction

For staff commencing employment at the beginning of the academic year all induction activities will be planned as part of INSET. As a minimum, all inductions will include a Line Manager Induction, Safeguarding Induction and mandatory training (see SSG Staff Induction Policy for more detail). The Line Manager of the appointee will be responsible, with the support of the HR Department, for the planning of induction activities within the department and for overseeing a smooth induction period for the staff member.

Data Collection and Protection

Special care should be taken regarding all information supplied by job applicants. Data must only be collected that is relevant to the purpose. In addition, any 'sensitive' data should only be collected where the applicant's express consent has been gained.

Therefore, the Group will ensure the following steps are taken:

- All information gathered is stored securely and used only for the stated purposes.
- Applications are destroyed in accordance with the retention periods set out in this procedure.
- On completion of the recruitment process all panel members will return their panel packs and any other interview related information they hold to the HR department.
- Job applicants should be given a chance to provide an explanation if any checks on their application details produce discrepancies.

In addition, the interview panel should be aware that interviewees have the right to access their interview notes and therefore any opinions noted must be based on fact.

All records in relation to recruitment and selection exercises must comply with the provision of the Data Protection Act, the Data Protection Policy and the Privacy Notice.

Appendix 1: Summary of Changes

In Issue 1.1

- New subsection added: Pupils Undertaking Internal Work Experience or Voluntary Activities.

In Issue 1.2

- Wording in the section on 'Pre-employment Checks' strengthened, particularly regarding references and online searches.
- Minor drafting errors corrected.

Appendix 2: Employed, Self Employed and IR35

Employment status is not a matter of choice
Whether working arrangements are treated as self-employed or employed is not a choice, it is the circumstances of the working arrangement that determine its status. In addition, the Sherborne Schools Group (the Group) has a legal responsibility to review all workers associated with the Group to determine if they are inside IR35 (off-payroll worker rules).

In most cases, deciding a worker's employment status and whether they fall within IR35 will be straightforward but sometimes it can be more difficult.

Workers are generally self-employed if they are in business on their own account and bear the responsibility for their business's success or failure. There are a number of factors which can indicate whether or not a worker is self-employed, as follows:

Right of control – the degree of control or direction a school has over a worker is an important factor to consider. The greater the degree of control by the school, the more likely it is that the worker is an employee, so it is important to establish who has control over:

- what work is done
- when it is done
- how it is done.

The Group should consider not just the degree of control, but also their **right to direct the worker** if they so choose.

Supplying equipment - If a worker is required to, and does, supply any equipment that is necessary to do the work, this suggests self-employment. On the other hand, if a school engages workers to operate such equipment that has been hired from another source, it is much more likely that the worker will be regarded as an employee.

The greater the degree of financial risk for the contractor, the more likely it is that he or she will be self-employed. The basis of payment and the surrounding financial circumstances of the arrangement will therefore be important. For example, if a school pays a worker for all hours of attendance at an hourly rate, the contractor faces little, if any, financial risk, and is therefore more likely to be an employee. On the other hand, a worker may be contracted to carry out a defined task or activity at a fixed price. If the completion of this task is vulnerable to delay, for example, because of bad weather or it proves more difficult than expected, and the worker bears the financial risk of such delays, it is more likely that the worker will be self-employed.

Other relevant factors include the nature and degree of expenditure that the worker incurs on his or her own account, and whether the work contract was won as a result of a competitive tendering process.

If a worker has the right to substitute (freedom to hire and pay) someone else to do the work, that suggests self-employment.

Common indicators of employment:

- The Group has the right to control what the worker has to do - where, when and how it is done – even if the school rarely uses that control.
- The worker supplies only his or her equipment.
- The worker does not risk their own money and there is no possibility that they will suffer a financial loss.
- The worker has no business organisation, for example, an office, yard, stock, materials, or workers. (These examples are not exhaustive.)
- The worker is paid by the hour, day, week or month.

Common indicators of self-employment:

- Within an overall deadline, the worker has the right to decide how and when the work will be done.
- The worker supplies the materials, plant or heavy equipment needed for the job.
- The worker bids for a job and will bear the additional cost if the job ends up costing more than the worker's original estimate.
- The worker has a right to hire other people who answer to them and are paid by them to do the job.
- The worker is paid an agreed amount for the job regardless of how long it takes.

Appendix 3: Volunteers Policy

Volunteers within the Sherborne Schools Group (the Group) bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils at our schools. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community. A volunteer is an unpaid adult who provides support to our schools.

The Group intends that this policy gives a clear statement on the engagement and deployment of volunteers.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- SSG Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part One - Safeguarding Information for all staff - & Annex A
- SSG Staff Code of Conduct
- SSG Whistleblowing Policy

These policies are reviewed regularly and revised in response to changing legislation, guidance or practice as necessary.

Introduction

Our Volunteers may include:

- Members of the Governing Body (including Co-opted Committee members)
- Parents of pupils
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience placements from other Schools
- University students
- Former members of staff
- Partners of staff
- Local residents

The types of activities that volunteers are engaged in include (but are not limited to):

- Working with small groups of pupils
- Working alongside individual pupils
- Undertaking coaching with pupils
- Supporting teaching staff to run co-curricular activities
- Accompanying school visits and trips
- Offering administrative support

Becoming a Volunteer

A HoD or Line Manager wishing to appoint a volunteer, either for a one-off event or on a more regular basis, should complete the form and job description below or forward it to their SLT, Line Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. There must be prior approval from the Senior Leadership Team that a volunteer can be appointed and agreement from the Senior Leadership Team of the terms of the voluntary arrangement, which includes access to buildings, regulated activity and the responsibility assigned to the HoD or Line Manager making the request (known as the mentor). There is a separate procedure for new Governors, which is managed by the Clerk.

Before starting in school and to ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all volunteers will be required to

- Complete an Application form.

- Attend an informal interview with the HoD/Line Manager and a member of the safeguarding team to assess the volunteer's attitude, motives and suitability for working with children.
- Complete all new starter paperwork (which includes the receipt of a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), two satisfactory references and a self-declaration of physical and mental fitness to discharge the responsibilities of the role, online social media check).
- Undergo a full induction and appropriate training. Volunteers will be assigned a mentor who is responsible for full induction and training (to include Safeguarding (Child Protection), Prevent Training and Health & Safety Training). The mentor will also be responsible for monitoring how often and when the volunteer is on site.

Confidentiality Policy

All volunteers are bound by our confidentiality policy. Volunteers shall not, either during or after their period of volunteering with the School, disclose to any unauthorised person and shall use their best endeavours to prevent the publication or disclosure of any confidential information relating to the business affairs, finances or trade secrets or any information concerning the School or any of its dealings or transactions or affairs. This includes details of clients, customers, whether actual, potential or past, pupils, employees, including details of rates of services offered by the School, including all information on the School's database. Volunteers shall not at any time use or attempt to use any such information in any manner which may or may be likely to injure or cause loss directly or indirectly to the School.

Issues affecting pupils

Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with or come into contact with should be shared with the appointed mentor and NOT with the parents of the pupil or any person outside the School. These comments, particularly if taken out of context can cause distress to the parents of the pupil if not heard directly from the School. A situation may arise in school where the duty to the pupil is greater than that to the parent.

Child Protection/Volunteer's Responsibility

The welfare of our pupils is paramount. If a pupil discloses something, this information should be shared promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Designated Safeguarding Deputies. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are interviewed.
- All volunteers are given a copy of the volunteer policy and asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement.
- To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all of our volunteers must have been cleared by the DBS and completed all new starter paperwork before they begin work as a volunteer.
- All volunteers will have a full induction with their Mentor.
- Where the voluntary activity is likely to be carried out more than once but with a 3-month gap in between the activity the volunteer will be asked to register with the DBS Update Service so that the School can perform a DBS status check before undertaking any further voluntary activity. Registration with the DBS Update Service is free for volunteers.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of an appointed mentor to whom they are assigned. The appointed mentor retains responsibility for pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers are likely to work unsupervised at some point. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the appointed mentor as to how an activity is carried out and what the expected outcome of an activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice or guidance from the appointed mentor in the event of any query or problem regarding the pupils' understanding of a task or behaviour.

Health & Safety

All volunteers should comply with the School's Health and Safety Policy, details of which will be provided by the appointed mentor. The mentor should ensure that volunteers have the appropriate Health and Safety Training for the voluntary role that they undertake. Mentors should ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks. If a volunteer attends a school trip, then emergency contact details will be requested. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the appointed mentor.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Head or nominated person for investigation.

The School has the right to take the following actions:

- To speak with a volunteer about the breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again;
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer;
- Inform the volunteer that the School no longer wishes to use them.

Request for a Volunteer

	To be completed by the staff member requesting the Volunteer appointment	To be confirmed/authorised by SLT
Name of Volunteer		
Role that the Volunteer will be undertaking		
Does the Volunteer need to have any particular qualification to do this?		
When will this role commence?		
When will this role finish?		
How often will this role take place and during what hours		
Will this role involve working directly with pupils		
Who will be responsible for the volunteer whilst they are carrying out duties?		
What training will the Volunteer require?		
Will the Volunteer require computer access?		
Will the Volunteer require a swipe card and access to buildings (please advise which buildings)		
Will the Volunteer require a parking permit?		

Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement

The Sherborne Schools Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants for this post must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including reference checks with previous employers and a criminal record check with the DBS.

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STAFF MEMBER REQUESTING A VOLUNTEER

(an electronic copy of this document can be found in SharePoint)

Volunteer's Role

Voluntary Role:

Hours:
(include days, time, frequency and duration)

Appointed Mentor:

Location of voluntary role:

References/Police Check:
As the Group is registered to ask 'exempted questions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, successful applicants (volunteers) will be subject to receipt of a satisfactory criminal record check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (a "Disclosure"), before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings. In addition certificates of Good Conduct will be required from their Country of origin if they have lived or worked abroad for more than 3 months over the age of 16 years. This post is also subject to receipt of two satisfactory written references, one of which must be you last employer.

Medical Self Declaration:
The offer of the voluntary appointment with the Group will be conditional upon the provision a self-declaration of physical and mental fitness to be able to discharge the responsibilities required by the voluntary post.

Post-holder's Responsibility:
You share with all School Staff the responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people for whom you are responsible, or with whom you come into contact. In doing so, you are expected at all time to adhere to and ensure compliance with the Group's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy. If you become aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the School, you must report any concerns to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Non-Smoking Policy:
It is the policy of the Group that all our workplaces are smoke free, and all employees have a right to work in a smoke free environment. Smoking (including the use of e-cigarettes) is prohibited in all areas of the Schools, both internal and external, including company vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

Purpose of Voluntary Role:

Assisting/Supporting with:

Qualifications (i.e. extra curricular if appropriate)

Expectations:

- The volunteer must comply with School Policies and Procedures
- The volunteer will have an awareness of and display commitment to the relevant legislation and guidance in working practices in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people.
- The volunteer will be required to attend training sessions arranged by the School.

Training Requirement for volunteer:

This list is not exhaustive and the volunteer may be required to undertake other training as required by the School

Training		To be completed by	Frequency of training
Safeguarding (Child Protection) and Prevent Training		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing.	As required
Induction training with Line Manager		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing.	
Emergency First Aid Training (if required)		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing.	As required
Display Screen Equipment (DSE) User (if required)		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing.	As required
Fire Awareness		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing.	As required
GDPR		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing	As required
Manual Handling		Within first week of Voluntary role commencing.	As required
Driver Assessment (Minibus Training) if applicable	D1 Minibus Assessment	As required	Every 3 years
	PCV Licence	Before voluntary role commences	Then Driver (Minibus) Assessment every 3 years