

Recruitment Policy & Procedures

1. Introduction

This document sets out the recruitment and selection procedures which will be followed at Open Box Education Centre.

It has been produced using guidance from the following sources:-

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Employment Act 2002](#)
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#)

2. Policy Statement

The Governing Body is committed to the safer recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

The School's full Recruitment & Selection Policy Statement including Data Protection information is at **Appendix A**.

3. Scope

The relevant principles described in this procedure will be applied in relation to everyone who works in the school including:

- staff employed on a permanent basis,
- temporary and casual staff;
- unpaid volunteers (see Section 6);
- those engaged via external organisations such as supply agencies (see Section 7); and
- contractors and self-employed persons.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 It is the responsibility of the **Governing Body** to:

- ensure there are effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and effective recruitment of all staff and volunteers and for the engagement of other adults in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements;
- monitor compliance with those policies and procedures;
- elect members to sit on the selection panel for the appointment of the Principal and other appointments as required;
- approve the appointment of the Principal.

- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the **Principal** to:
- apply robust, transparent and effective recruitment and selection processes in accordance with this procedure, statutory guidance and legal requirements; and
 - ensure that safer recruitment practices are in operation and that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, volunteers and others engaged to work, at an appropriate point in the recruitment process.

4.3 **Delegated Authority**

The Governing Body has delegated authority to the Principal to make all staff appointments. Governors may be involved in staff appointments below leadership level, but the final decision will rest with the Principal. The Principal may delegate the selection process of staff outside of the leadership group to others, but remains responsible for the decision to appoint. At least one member of all selection panels will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

5. **The Recruitment Procedure**

5.1. **Pre-advertisement**

5.1.1 **Identifying a vacancy**

Before any action is initiated, careful consideration will be given to the necessity of filling the post, the tasks to be undertaken and the skills, attributes and behaviours required to do the job. Where necessary, amendments to the role and staffing structure will be submitted by the HR & Safeguarding Committee. Financial due diligence and identification of the affordable salary window for the post, will be undertaken by the Finance & Premises Committee. Following recommendation from the Pay Committee (comprising the Chairs of both the HR and Safeguarding Committee and the Finance and Premises Committee), the vacancy will be submitted to the Governing Body for approval. The upper limit of the salary window will represent the maximum salary that can be offered for any role and will have been approved by the Governing Body before a vacancy is advertised.

5.1.2 **Job Descriptions/Person Specifications**

A job description and person specification will be drawn up for all posts. The job description will provide a framework of expectations and will define the purpose, scope and the principal duties and responsibilities of the role. The person specification will enable applicants to assess themselves for the job and provides a benchmark for judging suitability. All Job Descriptions and Person Specifications will clearly set out the extent of the relationships/contact with students and the degree of responsibility for students for each post. The job description and person specification will be used throughout the recruitment process to develop the shortlisting and selection criteria.

All positions at Open Box will require the successful applicant to speak fluent English, as they are all public facing roles. A public facing role is considered as “customer facing”, where, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, the person is required to speak to members of the public, whether face to face or by telephone, and includes any posts involving communication with pupils and parents.

5.1.3 Setting timescales

The length of the recruitment process will vary depending on the type of vacancy, the frequency of the desired publication, whether it is necessary to advertise both internally and externally and the length of the required notice periods.

5.1.4 Recruitment pack

The recruitment pack will vary according to the post but will consist, as a minimum, of:

- Application form
- Job Description
- Person Specification
- The Recruitment and Selection Policy statement which includes data protection information
- A Recruitment Monitoring Form
- A Criminal records self-declaration form (SD2a) – for completion by shortlisted candidates only
- Privacy Notice (Applicants)

A Key Information sheet will be included where appropriate and the pack may also include other relevant information i.e. covering letter, school information, etc.

5.1.5 Visits

Informal discussions and visits prior to application are welcomed by prior arrangement.

5.2. Advertising

The school will consider the most appropriate methods of advertising any vacant posts and the format for the advert. This may include advertising the post on professional social media sites in addition to other methods e.g. the school website and local/national publications.

To ensure equality of opportunity, all positions will be advertised to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. Normally this will entail an external advertisement.

However, there may be circumstances where an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate. This will include where:

- clear career development and progression paths are being supported;
- there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified and experienced internal candidates;
- the position is for additional responsibilities and not a vacant post;
- staff are at risk of redundancy

The Principal's post will be advertised in the manner considered appropriate by the Governing Body.

All agency workers working at the school and employees working on fixed term contracts will be informed of any vacancies within the school.

5.3. Application

5.3.1 Application Form

Our School application form is used for all vacancies, and includes a link to our Child Protection policy, which must be read by all Candidates. Alternate format application forms will be accepted from disabled applicants, but such applicants must provide all of the information required by the standard application form. Candidates applying through the Essex Schools Jobs website can apply online through the website application form, which provides all of the information required by the standard application form. Curricula vitae will not be accepted in isolation.

All parts of the application form must be completed and the form signed by the candidate. Incomplete application forms will not be accepted and will be returned for completion or checked with the candidate, if they are shortlisted. Where an applicant is shortlisted, any discrepancies or gaps in employment will be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or, in summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected.

Internal applicants who wish to apply for a new post will be informed whether an application form must be completed or whether a letter of application is sufficient. Where a post is advertised externally, internal applicants will be expected to apply in the same way as external candidates, to ensure equality and fairness.

5.3.2 Recruitment Monitoring Information Form

As part of the application process, individuals will be given the opportunity to complete a Recruitment Monitoring Information form. Completion of the form will ensure that policies and procedures are effective in avoiding discrimination and promoting equality and diversity in recruitment. Completion of the form is voluntary.

The recruitment monitoring information does not form part of the selection process and is separate from the application.

The information provided will be used for periodic monitoring and statistical data purposes only. Required reporting of this data will be on an anonymous basis.

5.3.3 Acknowledgement

Due to limited resources and the large number of applications often received, only shortlisted candidates will necessarily be notified of the outcome of their application.

5.4. Shortlisting

Shortlisting will take place as soon as possible after the closing date. Shortlisting will be undertaken by the selection panel normally consisting of at least two individuals.

5.4.1 Invitation to interview

Once the shortlist has been decided, the shortlisted candidates will be notified as soon as possible. Invitation to interview will be confirmed in writing. Adequate time will be allowed between invitation and interview to allow for pre-employment checks to take place and to allow candidates adequate time to prepare for their interview.

Full details of the selection process (i.e. details of the interview and any additional selection exercises) will be notified to the applicant in the invitation to interview letter. Content of the selection exercises will not be disclosed before interview, as tasks are designed to allow candidates to show their ability to 'think on their feet' and be flexible in their responses, based on their knowledge, experience and skill, as this reflects the fast-paced and ever-changing nature of our provision and needs of our students.

Interviews cannot be recorded, and there is no requirement for any candidate to take live written notes during the interview. The interview questions will be linked to the Person Specification document provided with the Job Description, which will provide details of the essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience necessary for the role.

Every effort will be made to accommodate any special requirements and/or short adjustments as necessary, to enable candidates to participate in the process. All candidates will be treated with kindness, respect and understanding during the interview, to make the experience as comfortable as possible.

5.4.2 Requesting references

References will be taken up on all short-listed candidates, including internal applicants, usually prior to interview. In line with statutory guidance, references will be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed. A reference will be required from the candidate's current and/or most recent employer, and where available, at least one reference will relate to the last position which involved working with children.

For teaching roles, we will only accept references that confirm teaching experience and the quality of teaching.

References from schools will only be accepted from the Headteacher, or if the Headteacher is new, with confirmation from the school that the person submitting the reference has authority from the Head of the school.

We will not accept general, limited references which only indicate dates of employment and minimal information. We will prioritise applicants whose references confirm teaching ability.

In exceptional circumstances, where an applicant has good reason not to want their referees to be contacted prior to interview, they should set out the reasons with the accompanying letter to their application form. Where it is agreed to defer obtaining references, referees will be contacted immediately after an interview and before the offer of employment is confirmed.

For internal candidates, the Principal's decision will be final in deciding if the applicant's suitability for the advertised role.

5.4.3 Self-declaration of criminal history and prohibitions

Shortlisted candidates will be required to make a declaration of criminal convictions and prohibitions, and any relevant positive declarations will be explored with them at interview. Declarations should be submitted in a sealed envelope. The Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement at Appendix A sets out how such declarations will be considered.

5.5 Selection process

The selection process will, as a minimum, consist of a face-to-face interview even where there is only one candidate and the process will be the same for internal appointments and promotions and volunteers.

Where appropriate, the selection process may include additional activities such as in-tray exercises, group activities, presentations, student panels or observed assemblies/teaching. Each section of the interview process will be assessed and discussed by the panel, to ensure a fair and consistent assessment for each candidate.

The process will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements (i.e. job description and person specification) and explore their suitability to work with the students at Open Box.

Where a candidate has made a declaration of criminal convictions, these will be discussed as part of the selection process in accordance with the Recruitment & Selection Policy Statement.

If an individual declares information on a Self Declaration Form the school will need to establish whether the information declared meets one of the disqualification criteria, in which case the panel may decide

- a) to discontinue the recruitment process in respect of that candidate
- b) discuss the declaration with the individual at interview and decide whether the application can proceed.

5.5.1 Screening applicants using social media

As part of our due diligence process, selected candidates will be subject to an online search, to help identify any incidents, or issues that are publicly available online. The purpose of such screening will be to ascertain whether a candidate demonstrates appropriate conduct, behaviour and suitability for employment in a school environment. Any such screening will not be used in isolation and will be discussed with candidates at interview where necessary. Searches will be conducted by an appropriate senior member of staff, who is not a member of the interview panel, to avoid the potential for discrimination. Only information related to the purposes stated for the search will be shared with the panel.

5.6. Employment Offer

The choice of candidate will be determined by the interview and associated assessments, and majority view and scoring of the interview panel. The panel may identify a first and any reserve choice candidate(s).

The successful applicant will be advised that they are the preferred candidate and a conditional offer made, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. A firm offer cannot be made until all pre-employment checks have been completed, to the satisfaction of the school.

Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily received, a firm offer of employment will be made and the contract of employment (or a contract amendment as applicable) will be issued. The contract/contract amendment will be issued as soon as possible but in all circumstances by the first day of employment.

If the preferred candidate does not accept the post, the panel will consider the option of contacting any reserve candidate(s). This will only be done where these candidates meet the criteria for the role, and a conditional offer will be subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks.

Unsuccessful shortlisted candidates will be advised accordingly. All candidates can request feedback on their interview/selection.

5.7. Induction and Probation

5.7.1 Induction

All new employees, internally promoted staff and volunteers will be provided with an induction program, which will seek to ensure that they are clear about their job role, the expectations of them in terms of standards of performance and conduct and applicable policies and procedures. Any training and development needs will be identified and supported appropriately. Mandatory and other appropriate induction training relating to Health & Safety, will also be provided.

5.7.2 Probation

A probationary period applies to all newly appointed staff. Please refer to the Probationary Policy for full details. During the probationary period, new entrants will be expected to establish their suitability for the post.

5.8 Record Retention/Data Protection

5.8.1 Selection Records

Interview notes on all applicants will be retained for a 6-month period, after which time, these records will be destroyed.

Under data protection legislation, 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 interview panel/Principal within 6 months from the date of interview.

5.8.2 Personal File Records

For the successful candidate, the following information will be retained (where applicable) and will make up part of the employee's personal file:

- Application form, interview notes, offer letter, references, acceptance letter
- Job Description and Person Specification
- Employment Contract
- Self declaration Form (SD2a) (until DBS clearance is received and checked against the form, at which point the self declaration form will be removed and destroyed)
- Proof of identity
- Evidence of right to work and/or right to remain, in the UK and any supporting documents
- Overseas Police Check
- Proof of required qualifications
- Certificate of good conduct (if applicable)
- Completed health declaration form
- Evidence of medical clearance (from the Occupational Health Centre if required)
- Evidence of the DBS check or online status check (not DBS Certificate)
- Evidence of DBS Children's Barred list check
- Evidence of ECC "Known to LADO" check (if applicable)
- Evidence of prohibition from teaching check
- Evidence of Completion of Statutory Induction (Teachers only where applicable)

- Evidence of s128 directions check
- Disqualification risk assessment form and any disqualification waiver documentation (where applicable)
- Staff Code of Conduct Agreement
- GDPR Consent Form
- Training Certificated
- Induction and Probationary information

Relevant evidence of pre-employment checks will be retained on volunteers, contractors and other workers as required by Statutory Guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education).

Information will be collected, held and processed in accordance with the school's data protection policy and record retention schedule.

6. Engaging Volunteers

Open Box Education Centre values the contribution that volunteers make to its community and recognises the positive impact they can have on students' learning, experiences and wellbeing.

Volunteers are seen by children as safe and trustworthy adults, and the same high standards of safer recruitment principles and processes are applied to volunteers as are applied to paid staff.

6.1 Interviewing Volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to have a discussion with the Principal prior to commencing their role. This will not be a formal interview but will provide:

The school with:

- an opportunity to explain the workings of the school and how volunteers fit into that;
- time to ask volunteers for the factual information needed to make a successful placement including any safeguarding checks;
- the opportunity to explore their suitability to work with children, including their motivation to work with children and their ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries;
- an opportunity to determine whether any special health, safety and welfare criteria needs to be met.

The volunteer with:

- the opportunity to find out more about the nature of the work;
- information to decide how best they can make a contribution, using their skills and experience;
- how much time they want to commit.

6.2 Application Forms

Volunteers will be asked to complete a volunteer application form. This provides the information necessary to undertake safeguarding checks and to give a picture of the skills and experience the volunteer brings to maximise their contribution and the volunteer's own fulfilment in the assigned activities.

Prospective volunteers will be given the relevant Privacy Notice prior to completing the volunteer application form.

6.3 Role Profiles

Volunteers will be given clear and simple description of the roles and boundaries of the voluntary activity.

It is acknowledged that by its very nature, volunteering does not place the same obligations on an individual in terms of attendance etc. as a paid employee. However, it is very much hoped that volunteers will fulfil their commitment as agreed between themselves and the school - this includes consistent attendance and undertaking the agreed tasks. Volunteers may be asked to sign a voluntary agreement as clarification of the commitment they are making to the school and vice versa.

7. Agency Staff and other workers

The same standards of safer recruitment will be applied by external bodies providing workers or volunteers to the school.

External bodies will be required to provide written confirmation that relevant safer recruitment and other relevant pre-employment checks have been undertaken and this will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

Approved by: (Principal) (date)

Authorised by:..... (Chair of Governors)(date)

To be reviewed every: 2 Years

Next review date: May 2028

Date of Review	Reviewed by	Ratified by Governors	Date of next review
September 2020	Alison Dolan	29-09-20	July 2022
May 2022	M Black/A Dolan	10-05-22	May 2024
May 2024	M Black/A Dolan	25-06-24	May 2026
May 2026	M Black/A Dolan	30-06-26	May 2028

Appendix A

Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement

1. The Governing Body is committed to:
 - safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, of children and young people;
 - promoting equality of opportunity and community cohesion where the diversity of different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
 - promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

and expects all staff, volunteers and other workers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

2. The Governing Body recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds, with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective, fair and promotes equality of opportunity. Selection will be on the basis of merit and ability, assessed against the qualifications, skills and competencies required to do the job. We will uphold obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, gender re-assignment, disability or health, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic origin), religion or belief.
3. We will 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 role.
4. We will ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. We will monitor the compliance with these measures and require evidence that relevant checks have been undertaken for all workers deployed.
5. The following pre-employment checks will be required where applicable to the role and settling:
 - receipt of satisfactory references*
 - verification of identity
 - a satisfactory DBS disclosure if undertaking Regulated Activity
 - verification that you are not on the DBS Children's barred list and therefore not barred from working with Children
 - verification that you are not prohibited from teaching
 - verification of medical fitness that is required for the role and for working with our students
 - verification of qualifications
 - overseas Police Check
 - online content search relating to the applicant
 - self declaration Form (SD2a)
 - verification of professional status where required e.g. QTS status

- the production of evidence of the right to work in the UK
- verification of successful completion of/exemption from statutory induction period
- verification that you are not subject to any s128 directions preventing you from holding a management position within a school

NB It is illegal for anyone who is barred from working with children to apply for, or undertake Regulated Activity.

*In exceptional circumstances, where you have good reason not to want your referees to be contacted prior to interview, you should set out your reasons with your application form. Where it is agreed to defer, referees will be contacted immediately after interview before an offer of employment is made.

6. We will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, in line with the current DfE requirements.
7. All posts/voluntary roles that give substantial unsupervised access to children and young people are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all shortlisted applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs (save for those offences that are subject to filtering by the Police), and any prohibitions prior to interview.

Applicants will be required to consent to an online status check to be carried out in the event that the applicant subscribes to the DBS update service, to allow Open Box to verify the DBS information. Copies of DBS certificates will be destroyed as soon as the recruitment process is complete and only the DBS number will be kept on file.

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that people who have convictions / cautions / reprimands on their record are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions.

Positive disclosures will be discussed with candidates and managed on a case-by-case basis taking into account the nature, seriousness and relevance to the role. The following factors will be considered in each case:

- The seriousness/level of the disclosed information eg: was it a caution or a conviction.
- How long ago did the incident(s) occur?
- Whether it was a one-off incident or part of a repeat history/pattern.
- The circumstances of the offence(s) being committed and any changes in the applicant's personal circumstances since then.
- The country where the offence/caution occurred.
- Whether the individual shows or has shown genuine remorse.
- If the offences were self-disclosed on the Self Declaration form or not (non-disclosure could, in itself, result in non-confirmation of employment on the grounds of trust, honesty and openness).

When making a recruitment decision The Governing Body/Principal will disregard any filtered convictions/cautions/reprimands which were disclosed in error.

A previously issued Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate will only be accepted in certain restricted circumstances or where you currently subscribe to the DBS update service and the appropriate online status checks have been satisfactory.

The Disclosure and Barring Service has published a Code of Practice and accompanying explanatory guide. This Governing Body is committed to ensuring that it meets the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to the processing, handling and security of Disclosure information.

8. The school processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy. Data collected as part of recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the recruitment procedure. On the conclusion of the procedure, data collected will be held in accordance with the school's retention schedule.

A copy of our Recruitment Policy and Procedure is available upon request.