



The Westminster
Specialist College

2022/2023

Safer Recruitment Policy

Approved by Board of Governors on:	15/12/2022
Signed by Chair of Governors:	P Coldicott
Head of College:	O Flowers
Lead Personnel:	O Flowers
Date of Review:	15/12/2024

1. Introduction

The Westminster Specialist College (TWSC) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, site staff, personnel from alternative providers and 3rd party contractors to share this commitment.

TWSC is committed to recruiting and selecting high quality staff with the necessary skills, experience and aptitude to care for, nurture and enable the pupils to learn and thrive in a happy, caring and safe environment. This continues the School's vision of Safe, Happy and Learning.

When recruiting any staff, there is always at least one member of staff of the interviewing panel who has completed the Safer Recruitment Training. This training is provided by a recognised training provider with the relevant skill sets and expertise to deliver topics pertinent to the qualification obtained on completion.

All staff employed at TWSC, including volunteers, casual staff, and university and college students will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS and Barring Check. This is renewed in line with Sandwell Local Authority Guidelines on a three-year cycle.

Safer Recruitment Procedure

New Staff

When a post becomes vacant or is created then the following procedure takes place:

1. Job and Person Specification

For every vacancy a job and person specification will be written and approved by the Principal. Each role is tailored to take into account the following:

- General Professional Duties and Responsibilities
- Knowledge and Understanding
- Planning, Teaching and Classroom Management
- Sickness Absence and Disability
- Qualifications
- Experience
- Disposition
- Practical and Intellectual Skills
- Other Professional Requirements
- Legal and Legislative Requirements (e.g. Enhanced DBS and Barring Check, Criminal Convictions, Childcare Disqualification Declaration and other pre-employment checks relevant to Sandwell Council's Schools Model Recruitment and Selection Policy).

2. Job Advertisement

All posts will be advertised internally and externally in order to attract a wide field of candidates as possible. The exception to this is where internal applicants are required due to budgetary challenges.

All advertisements for posts will include:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.

3. Application Form

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)
- Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

4. Shortlisting and References

- All applications will be looked at in detail and scrutinised by at least two members of SLT or the Governing Board.
- They will consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them and explore all potential concerns
- All applicants for any post within the school will be required to complete an application form - a curriculum vitae will not be accepted.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted, and may be returned for completion.
- Applicants will be shortlisted for the post if they meet the particulars of the job description and person specification.
- Immediately after shortlisting, references will be sent for those candidates identified.
- All applicants will be asked to provide two referees, one of whom should be the applicant's current or most recent employer. NB where an applicant who is not currently working with children, has done so in the past, it is important that a reference is also obtained from the employer by whom the person was most recently employed in work with children.
- When seeking references we will:
 - Not accept open references
 - Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
 - Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
 - Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
 - Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
 - Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
 - Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed.
- All referees will be asked if the candidate is suitable to work with children, has any disciplinary procedures relating to the safety and welfare of children, or any details of allegations/concerns/bad behaviour relating to the safety and welfare of children (see appendix 1).
- The HR provider or other nominated person will inform those shortlisted immediately after the shortlisting process has taken place. Unsuccessful applicants will not always be informed due to the potential volume of applications the school may experience.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) all shortlisted applicants will be subject to an online search as part of our due diligence. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, which the school may wish to explore with the applicant at interview. This search does not form part of the shortlisting process and you will have the chance to discuss any issues of concern that come up during the search at interview."

Shortlisted candidates will be made aware that an online search of publicly available information will be undertaken and will have an opportunity to address any issues of concern that arise during the search at interview.

The check will be made by a member of staff who is not part of the recruitment process (to prevent any unconscious bias) and the form for the check to be made is included as Appendix 5.

Shortlisted candidates will be sent:

- A self-declaration form to detail their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
 - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
 - Any relevant overseas information

The Westminster Specialist College

- They will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true
- detailed documentation of the interview process

Shortlisted candidates will be asked if they have a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and if they require any particular adjustments to accommodate their particular needs. Also, they will be informed if they will have to undertake skill tests as part of the interview.

5. The Interview

- On the day of the interview all candidates will need to provide proof of identity, proof of their qualifications and proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK.
- The interview may consist of an activity, informal meetings with the Governing Board and representatives from the Local Authority, a meeting with the School Council and a Professional Interview.
- Teaching posts will require a short micro-teach and Classroom Support Staff posts will be required to support a class for a period of time.
- All candidates will be assessed for their suitability to the post and their capability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people. This is to be assessed through specific Child Protection and Safeguarding questions coupled with e-Safety questions.
- During the interview, any discrepancies noted from the shortlisting, including any gaps in employment, will be explored. If the interviewing panel are not satisfied with any explanation given, the applicant will not be successful.

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

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, as set out below.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity – Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022 states that best practice to do this is to check the name on the candidate's birth certificate where available
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken
- 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. Where available, these will include:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked

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.

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

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
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe 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

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.

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 includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). 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.

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.

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.
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

Governors

All governors will have a DBS check without barred list information.

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

All governors will also have a section 128 check (as a section 128 direction disqualifies an individual from being a maintained school governor).

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.

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.

Further reading and other Policy information

It is important that this policy is read in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding Protection Policy and Guidance.

Where supply staff are used, compliance checks will be made ensuring that agencies provide written evidence of in date enhanced DBS.

Appendix 1

The Westminster Specialist College Reference Request Template

Appendix 2

The Westminster Specialist College SCR Headings.

Appendix 3

The Westminster Specialist College Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. – Please refer to policy

Appendix 4

SIPS HR Pre-employment Checklist

Appendix 5

SIPS HR Fully Cleared Memo

Appendix 1

The Westminster Specialist College Reference Request Template



Reference Request

The Westminster Specialist College
Hawes Lane
Rowley Regis
West Midlands
B65 9AL
Date:
Please ask for:
Telephone: 0121 561 6884
Fax: 0121 561 6885

Your co-operation in completing and returning the enclosed forms as soon as possible would be appreciated.

Appointment of:

Name:

Address:

The above named is an applicant for the post stated and has given your name as a referee.

A Job Description and Personnel Specification, relating to the post are enclosed and I should be grateful if you would advise me as to whether you consider the applicant to be suitably experienced to fulfil the requirements of this post.

I have enclosed a pro-forma for your reply, and a prepaid addressed envelope.

Please note that all college based posts are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975 and I would therefore ask you to reveal information on any convictions that the applicant may have.

May I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Head of College

The Westminster Specialist College

Private and Confidential

Reference Request

The information that you provide will normally be disclosed to the applicant, should they request to see their references under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. If you have any concerns about providing a reference under such circumstances, please contact the officer dealing with this request on the telephone number on the accompanying letter.

Section A

Name of applicant:

Position held by applicant:

From:

To:

Applicant's present salary:

In what capacity have you known the applicant?

How long have you known the applicant?

Reason for leaving:

The Westminster Specialist College

Signature:	Date:
Name:	
Position:	Tel No:
Company Address (if applicable):	



Name of Applicant:

Section B

Please indicate the applicant's performance in the following areas:-

Please use the space below to comment further on your ratings.

Please tick appropriately

V Good	Good	Average	Poor	V Poor
--------	------	---------	------	--------

Attendance

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Quality of Work

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Attitude to Supervision

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Relationship with Colleagues

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Continued...

The Westminster Specialist College

Please tick appropriately:

V Good	Good	Average	Poor	V Poor
--------	------	---------	------	--------

Flexibility

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Timekeeping

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Honesty

--	--	--	--	--

Comments:

Any further comments regarding the above:-

Name of Applicant:

Please give details of any current disciplinary warnings or outstanding disciplinary issues pending, including the nature of the offence/alleged offence and sanction given. Please include details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving issues related to the Safety and Welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired. If there are none, please state "None".

Please give details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the Safety and Welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults or behaviour towards children, young people or vulnerable adults. If there are none, please state "None".

Please give details of the outcome of those concerns, for example, were the allegations/ concerns investigated? What conclusion was reached? How was the matter resolved?

Are you completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children?

If not, please give specific details of your concerns and the reasons why you believe the candidate might be unsuitable.

To your knowledge, does the applicant have a criminal record?

For Teaching Posts only:

In accordance with School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 please advise whether or not the member of staff has, in the preceding two years, been the subject of the Capability Procedures established by the governing body in accordance with regulation 8 and, if so, please provide details of the concerns which gave rise to this, the duration of the proceedings and their outcome.

Would you re-employ?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

The Westminster Specialist College

Please give any other information that may help us concerning the possible employment of this applicant?

Signature:	Date:
Name:	Tel No:

Appendix 2

The Westminster Specialist College SCR Headings.

ID Checks

- Name
- Address
- Date of Birth
- Address ID seen by and date
- Photo ID seen by and date
- Date started with College
- Position held

Prohibition from Teaching Check

- Check required (Yes/ No)
- Date of check
- Check undertaken by

Qualifications and Registration

- Teaching qualifications required (Yes/No)
- If required, teaching qualifications evidenced
- Teacher Reference Number
- If required, date teaching qualifications seen
- If required, date teaching agency reference seen

Vetting Checks

- Disclosure Number
- DBS date of issue
- DBS date of expiry
- DBS checked by and date
- Countersignatory
- Barred list checked by and date
- Overseas Police check required (Yes/No)
- Overseas Check made by and date
- EEA Check required (Yes/No)
- EEA check made by and date
- Risk assessment (Yes/No)
- Risk assessment date
- Childcare disqualification check completed and date

Right to work in the UK Check

- Evidence seen
- Evidence seen by and date

Appendix 4

SIPS PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

Surname:	Forenames:	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr
Appointment of:		TRN Number:
Location:		
Manager's Name:		
Permanent/Temporary	End Date:	Internal/External

Checks Completed	Date Sent	Date Cleared/Rec'd	Initials	Spreadsheet Updated
Added to New Starter Spreadsheet				
Provisional Offer Pack sent				
Application Form Signed				
Medical Sent to Occupational Health				
Reference 1 (Name)				
Telephone Verification Received (Shenstone only):				
Accepted by Manager: Y / N				
Reference 2 (Name)				
Telephone Verification Received (Shenstone Only):				
Accepted by Manager: Y / N				
A&I Cleared: Y / N Docs Seen:				
Does the post require a DBS? Y / N				
Does the post require 5128 management check? Y/N				
DBS Appointment Made				
Date Sent:				
DBS Disclosure number:				
DBS Date of Issue:				
Overseas check required: Y / N				
Child Care Disqualification: Y / N				
Qualifications Received and copied (where applicable)				
Teacher Qualification – Class of Degree				
QTS Date:				
QTS and Prohibition Checked:				
EEA Check Completed:				
Transfer of Service Y / N From:				
Bank Details and Pension Form Received:				
Manager Informed Applicant is Cleared:				



SIPS Education
Limited
Guardian House,
West Bromwich,
B70 8GS



MEMORANDUM

FROM: Nikki Burling

TO: Oliver Flowers

TEL:

DATE:

Name	
Post Title	
School	

I am pleased to advise you that the above named person is now fully cleared. Please contact them to arrange a mutually convenient start date. Please confirm the start date in writing, failure to confirm will result in non-payment.

TYPE	CLEARED ON
Medical	
Reference 1 Received	
Reference 2 Received	
Reference Confirmation Date	
Asylum and Immigration Cleared	
Asylum & Immigration – Document Seen	
DBS Disclosure No. – Enhanced with Barring	
DBS Disclosure Date of Issue	
DBS Identity Check – Documents seen	
DBS – Date Documents Checked	
DBS – Documents seen by	
DBS – Name of Countersignatory	
Child Care Disqualification Declaration	
TRN No.	
QTS Date	
Teachers Sanctioned in other EEA member states check	
(TA) NCTL Teacher Registered and not subject to a prohibition/interim prohibition order – Date Confirmed	
Class of Degree	

☎ 0121 296 3000
@ enquiries@sips.co.uk
🌐 www.sips.co.uk

