



Muscliff Primary School

Safer Recruitment Policy

Approved by: RMC

Date: September 2024

Last reviewed on: September 2025

Next review due by: September 2026

This policy ensures accordance with the latest 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers 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 fulfill in the roles they undertake.

The school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. The school is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. The school will uphold its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in the school's Equality Policy.

All posts within the school are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Therefore all applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarding as spent and have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS). The level of DBS check required, and whether a prohibition check is required, will depend on the role and duties of an applicant to work in a school.

For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be appropriate as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. A person will be considered to be in 'regulated activity' if as a result of their work they:

- Will be responsible, on a regular basis, for the care or supervision of children, or
- Will regularly work in a school at times when the children are on school premises (where the person's work requires interaction with children, whether the work is paid or not (unless they are a supervised volunteer), or whether the person is directly employed or employed by a contractor)

In a school a **supervised** volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity.

The Recruitment Process

The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the school based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification. The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation. If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familiar relationship with an applicant they must declare

it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

1. Decision to recruit

All interview panels as chosen by the Headteacher will understand their role, and will include staff who have successfully completed appropriate safer recruitment training within the past 3 years.

2. Advertising the Post

The school will carefully consider the skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post and the safeguarding requirements of the role (i.e. the extent to which the role will involve contact with children and whether they will be engaging in regulated activity. The advert will include a reference to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as well as the recruitment for completion of an enhanced DBS check. This will also be reflected in the information pack sent to all applicants. The school encourages visits from potential candidates, especially from teachers, and will ensure a member of the Senior Leadership team is able to show them around the school. In the application pack, the school will also highlight a link to the Safeguarding policy on the website.

3. Application Process

Application forms will be used to enable all potential applicants to provide a common set of core data as follows:

- Current and former names, date of birth, current address, NI number and evidence of eligibility to work in the UK
- Full details of qualifications relevant to the position applied for including awarding body and date of award
- Teachers will need to provide DfE number
- Full history in chronological order showing employment, study, voluntary work, with explanations for any periods not covered, and reasons for leaving employment
- Declaration of any family or close relationship to existing or potential employees or employers
- Details of referees – one of whom must be current or most recent employer. For an employee not currently working with children, but who has done so in the past it is important that the past employer should also be contacted
- A statement from the applicant of their personal qualities and experience, which they believe, meets the person specification

There will be a statement explaining that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, requiring a signed statement that the individual is not on barred lists, disqualified from work with children or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body, and either has no sanctions, cautions or bind-overs, or has attached details of their record in a sealed envelope marked confidential. There will also be an explanation of the DBS checking requirements.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded, or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

Applications will be carefully scrutinized upon receipt by at least two members of staff in order to identify any anomalies or areas of concern, which need to be followed up at interview. This will include any gaps in service or mid career move from permanent to supply or temporary work.

4. Taking up references for shortlisted candidates

References will be sought for all shortlisted candidates, including the most recent, using the school's reference request forms. These will be scrutinized to identify any gaps or contradictions, which will then be explored at interview. They should be requested directly from the referee and the school will not rely on open references, for example in the form of 'to whom it may concern' testimonials. The referee will be contacted if any clarification is needed or if any questions have not been fully answered. As part of the reference process, online searches will be conducted on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence.

Shortlisted candidates will be required to provide proof of Identification on the day of the interview, and if offered a position in school this will be subject to proof of qualifications and professional status.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. (Appendix 2)

5. The Interview

Interviews will be on a face to face basis wherever possible, and the same panel will see all the candidates for a post. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore anomalies or gaps which have been identified so far in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria identified above.

Consideration including discussion with the candidate will also need to be given to any information regarding previous records of cautions or convictions including information provided in a sealed envelope. Discussion will also take place regarding any significant periods of sickness absence.

The school will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. Those interviewing will agree structured questions. These will include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children;
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role; and

- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

The interviews should be used to explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children.

Areas that may be concerning and lead to further probing include:

- implication that adults and children are equal;
- lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children;
- inappropriate idealisation of children;
- inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children; and,
- indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

Children should be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way. Observing short listed candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with children is common and recognised as good practice.

All information considered in decision making should be clearly recorded along with decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

The school will:

- Verify a candidate's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address;
- Obtain a certificate from an enhanced DBS check with barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity;
- Obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- Check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issues by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service;
- Verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK;
- If the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school consider appropriate, and;
- Verify professional qualifications as appropriate.

For teachers the school will verify successful completion of the statutory induction period. These together with the collection of all necessary references will be completed before staff start work, unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Any offer made to a candidate will be conditional on all the pre-employment checks being completed satisfactorily.

For any 'new staff' the school will obtain a DBS certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, **including** when using the DBS update service.

Schools do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates in order to fulfil the duty of maintaining the single central record. To help schools comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, when a school chooses to retain a copy, there should be a valid reason for doing so and it should not be kept for longer than six months. When the information is destroyed a school may keep a record of the fact that vetting was carried out, the result and the recruitment decision taken if they choose to.

6. Induction

All members of staff will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the school policies and procedures, including child protection, and make clear the expectations and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles. This will give the opportunity to provide discussion of any relevant issues. The programme will ensure that all new staff are aware of the following policies and procedures and how to access them:

- Safeguarding and welfare e.g. child protection, positive behaviour, anti bullying, physical intervention/restraint, internet safety
- Discipline and grievance, appraisal and capability, and whistle-blowing

In addition all staff will be made aware of the channels for raising any concerns. Staff will sign to say they have read and understood the policies provided through the Induction process.

7. Ongoing Employment – Existing staff

Muscliff Primary School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. We will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through performance management. We will also provide a range of opportunities where concerns may be raised, in order that staff feel that the school culture embraces safeguarding and communicates a clear framework to employees, parents and pupils. We will monitor issues as they arise, and through the use of such strategies as exit interviews will seek to continually improve the school environment, for the benefit of both staff and pupils.

There are limited circumstances where schools and colleges will need to carry out new checks on existing staff.

These are when:

- an individual working at the school or college moves from a post that was not regulated activity with children into work which is considered to be regulated activity with children. In such circumstances, the relevant checks for that regulated activity must be carried out;
- there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more; or
- there are concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children.

Duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service

There is a legal requirement for schools and colleges to make a referral to the DBS where they remove an individual from regulated activity (or would have removed an individual had they not left), and they believe the individual has:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults,
- satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or vulnerable adults; or
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

The Single Central Record

We keep a Single Central Record as described in DfE guidance. The Single Central Record includes all employees, supply staff, relevant consultants (those involved in regulated activity), governors and volunteers. The central record must indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity checks;
- Barred list check (as relevant for those engaged in regulated activity);
- DBS certificate (previously an enhanced CRB disclosure);
- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job, e.g. those posts where a person must have QTS;
- Prohibition from teaching check;
- Checks of permission to work in the United Kingdom and
- Further overseas criminal records checks where appropriate (see ‘Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education’ (DfES 2006) paragraphs 4.65 to 4.71 for advice on staff who have lived or worked outside the United Kingdom).

Each year staff are asked to complete a declaration that there have been no new convictions/ changes to their DBS record. This is done electronically or via paper form, and is updated on the Single Central Record.

Supply Staff

We require supply agencies to comply with ‘Safer Recruitment’ practices, and we seek written confirmation from each agency to this effect. We require the DBS certificate reference number for each agency worker in order that this can be recorded on the Single Central Record.

In addition, we seek to verify the identity of each agency worker when they arrive on site, and these checks are also recorded.

Governors, volunteers, visitors and Contractors

All governors and volunteers are required to have a fully enhanced DBS check and to sign a disclosure every three years. Contractors and visitors whose companies do not confirm that a DBS check is in place will not be allowed on the school premises unless escorted by a member of staff. Identification of any individual must be sought if not known to staff eg. Driving license

Record Retention / Data Protection

Muscliff Primary School will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The 6-month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow the school to deal with any data

access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in a locked and secure cabinet.

APPENDIX 1: The Safer Recruitment Checklist

Stage of Process	Initials	Date
Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the vacancy • Decide timetable (ensuring that this allows sufficient time to carry out necessary checks at the appropriate stages) bear in mind – average recruitment takes 12 weeks • Decide who will be involved in the process and what their roles will be (eg short listing panel, interview panel) one of those involved should have been on safeguarding training • Review and update as necessary the documents to be provided to applicants, including the Job Description, Person Specification and the Application Form • Ensure that an explicit ‘Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement’ is included in the documents • Ensure that the application form seeks all relevant information and includes the relevant statements about references, Criminal Records Disclosure and other pre-employment checks. • Ensure that the Job Description and Person Specification reflect the individual’s responsibility for ‘promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children’ and that the person specification details the qualifications, experience, competencies and qualities needed and states that a DBS check is essential • Ensure the Application Pack is ready to dispatch to candidates by the date the advert appears 		
Advertising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide where to advertise the post • Prepare advertisement, ensuring the appropriate details of the post, the salary, the qualifications required, the closing date and the anticipated interview date are included • Ensure that the advertisement includes the school’s statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the need for the successful candidate to be DBS checked • Arrange for the advert to be placed in the appropriate forums/publications 		
Initial Handling of the Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send to interested candidates the Application Pack prepared earlier • When completed application forms received, ensure that they are recorded as having been received and copied as necessary for the short-listing panel 		
Scrutinising and Shortlisting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up a shortlist of candidates, using a short-listing assessment form based on the objective criteria listed in the Person Specification (included those criteria relating to the promotion and safeguarding of the welfare of children) • Scrutinise all the application forms of those candidates considered for shortlisting for any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note any such discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment to explore at interview with the applicant and if necessary through previous employers (to be scrutinised by at least two members of staff) 		
<p>Invitation to Interview</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite all short-listed candidates to interview, include details of the arrangements for the interviews, 'how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore including suitability to work with children Send to short-listed candidates the 'Declaration of Criminal Record' form, together with a copy of the school's 'Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy' and an envelope stamped 'confidential' (for return, sealed, strictly to the Chair of the Interview Panel) Stated that online searches will be carried out States that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked and that the DBS Disclosure check where appropriate will need to be carried out and therefore ensure that the invitation instructs all candidates to bring i) ID to enable the DBS application process to be begun for the successful candidate ASAP and ii) proof of qualifications if necessary 		
<p>Checks before interview (including References)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a pro-forma that asks the recommended questions, request (directly from the referees concerned) at least two references on each short-listed candidate ASAP after short-listing (and before interviews take place) requesting they are returned before the interview date Ensure that reference requests include recommended specific questions (eg suitability for their role, suitability to work with children, regarding allegations or disciplinary action) Wherever possible get a reference relating to a role in which the candidate worked with children Wherever possible ensure that references are available before the interview so that any issues arising can be taken into account/explored further with the previous employer/or candidate in the interview Online searches to be made of shortlisted candidates Where necessary verify that a candidate has a qualification or experience that is 'particularly relevant' to the post with the previous employer Check short-listed candidates 'Declaration of Criminal Record' form and, if necessary, follow-up contents either before or during interview When references are received, check the contents against the information supplied on the application form, scrutinise for any discrepancies/issues of concern and note down any such concerns Follow up any issues of concern with referee if necessary : ensure record of any verbal conversation is kept 		
<p>Interview Preparation</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for the interviews and for any other assessments taking place on the selection day (e.g. tests, presentations) as necessary Ensure that there are at least two interviewers on the panel, that at least one panel member has undertaken Safer Recruitment training, that they have the authority to appoint and that they have met in advance to agree 		

<p>questions/assessment criteria/standards (objectivity is important : consider using a scoring system)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the interview is structured, that open questions are asked to draw out candidates actual experience and that the questions explore the applicant’s motivation towards safeguarding children/suitability to work with children as well as for the post 		
Interview		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes • Assess the applicant’s suitability for the post and explore the candidate’s attitude to children, gaps in their employment history and any concerns arising from information in the application or references • Ask the candidate if they wish to ‘declare anything in the light of the requirement for DBS Disclosure’ • Where applicable, and where this has not been done before interview, follow-up regarding the contents of ‘Self-Declaration of Criminal Record’ form • If references have not yet been received, ask the candidate ‘if there is anything they wish to discuss/declare in light of the questions put to their referees • Ensure all the candidates’ application forms have been signed • Assess all applicants’ interview performances using the agreed criteria, ensuring that such assessment is fair and objective • Ask the successful candidate to provide proof of ID and qualifications immediately (or ASAP after the offer is made) • Keep copies of the documents used to verify the successful candidates’ ID (with regard to their right to work in the UK) and to verify their qualifications for inclusion on their personal file • Retain all the interview notes and assessment materials securely for six months in case any aspect of the appointment process is challenged 		
Conditional Offer of Employment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a conditional offer of appointment (first verbally, then in writing) to the successful candidate (conditional on the successful completion of the necessary pre-employment checks and, in the case of non-teaching posts, on the completion of a probationary period) • Ask the successful candidate to provide ID and proof of qualifications (if not done so already) and to complete the DBS application form ASAP • Contact and give feedback to the unsuccessful candidates 		
If the checks reveal concerns...		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Schools’ HR if any of the checks reveal concerns about the candidates’ suitability to work with children 		
Once the school has completed the pre-employment checks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree start date with the successful candidate • Destroy the completed Self-Declaration of Criminal Record forms • Submit the contractual paperwork including the completed DBS application form and copies of ID, references and proofs of qualifications and the Pre- 		

<p>Employment Medical Enquiry form with the Method of Pay, P45, Application/Equal Ops, Emergency Contact and RT41 forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the required details of the checks carried out on the appointed individual to the school's Single Central Record 		
<p>Post Appointment – Induction</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place and implement the appropriate induction programme for all newly appointed staff or new volunteers • Include in this induction, training etc to ensure the new employee or volunteer understand their on-going responsibilities regarding safeguarding issues 		

APPENDIX 2:

Self-declaration and disclosure form

For roles involving contact with children (under 18 years old)

Private and confidential

All information will be treated as confidential and managed in accordance with relevant data protection legislation and guidance. You have a right of access to information held on you under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Employee information				
Name				
Address				
Contact number(s)				
Date of birth				
Gender ⁱ	Female <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/>	Another description (please state) <input type="checkbox"/>

Note: As the position you have applied for involves work with children and young people it is not covered by the provisions in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. When answering questions 1 to 4 you must declare criminal convictions and/or cautions that are not ‘protected’ under the Exceptions Order (as amended). This includes UK, overseas and armed forces convictions, cautions and relevant service discipline convictions where it would be considered an equivalent offence in England and Wales.

Declaration of individual		
1. Do you have any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you been formally charged with any other offence in any country which has not yet been disposed of?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>

4. Are you currently subject to any criminal investigations or pending prosecutions by the police in any country which may have a bearing on your suitability for this position?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you ever been known to any Children’s Services department or the police as being a risk or potential risk to children?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you been the subject of any formal action, disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about your behaviour towards children?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you ever been dismissed for misconduct from any employment, volunteering, or other position previously held by you, in circumstances which may have bearing on your suitability for this position?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are you currently subject to any fitness to practise investigations or proceedings by a regulatory, governing, or licensing body in any country, which may have bearing on your suitability for this position?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes – please provide further information <input type="checkbox"/>


Please tick the boxes below and then sign this form.

I agree that the information provided here may be processed in connection with recruitment purposes and I understand that an offer of employment may be withdrawn or dismissal may result if information is not disclosed by me and subsequently comes to the organisation’s attention.

In accordance with the organisation’s procedures, if required I agree to provide a valid DBS certificate and consent to the organisation clarifying any information provided on the disclosure with the agencies providing it.

I agree to inform the organisation within 24 hours if I am subsequently investigated by any agency or organisation in relation to concerns about my behaviour towards children or young people.

I understand that the information contained on this form, the results of the DBS check and information supplied by third parties may be supplied by the organisation to other persons or organisations in circumstances where this is considered necessary to safeguard other children.

Signature	
Print name	
Today’s date	