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## SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The Royal Grammar School  
September 2022

## RGSW Safer Recruitment Policy

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children. RGSW\* is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This is to be achieved through effective recruitment and retention of competent, motivated staff members who are suited to, and competent in their roles. RGSW recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce comprising different backgrounds, skills and abilities. As such it is committed to a recruitment and selection process that is systematic, efficient, effective and equal. In doing so, it upholds its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants on grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation or identity, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the practice of safe recruitment of staff appointed to RGSW. It also sets out the minimum requirements to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants unsuitable for work with children;
- identify and reject applicants unsuitable for work with children.

### Practices

The following procedures and practices are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff.

#### Stage 1 - Advertising and Inviting applications

All advertisements for all posts will clearly stipulate the stance adopted by RGSW by the inclusion of the following statement:

“The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service”.

#### Stage 2 - Applications

Prospective applicants are able to access all relevant information about each School via the relevant vacancies' sections on their respective websites. All applications where possible are to be made online rather than in paper format. (This is to enable the effective storage and control of applicant data as per the RGSW Data Retention Policy.)

The online application requires all applicants to complete all relevant sections;

- Full work history
- Full education history
- Provide at least 2 references
- Applicants are also required to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

Applicants are provided with information about;

- School information and setting;
- Department Information (if appropriate);
- Job description
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Privacy Notice for Applicants

Where paper applications are requested and/or submitted, these are screened by HR to ensure that they are properly completed and then added to the online 'job' on the recruitment database manually. (The online application form can only be submitted once complete.)

### Stage 3 - Applicant Selection/ Short-Listing

All applications received will be scrutinised in a systematic way by the short-listing panel and candidates deemed suitable for the post will be short-listed following consultation between the Teacher or Manager leading the recruitment process and other relevant staff. Where there is a high volume of applicants for a post it may be necessary to long-list in the first instance and introduce an additional stage to the recruitment process. A sample initial sift of applicants for any post can be found in Appendix 1. However, as long as the sifting is consistent, different formats can be adopted to identify candidates who most closely align to the person specification for a particular job role.

Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage to establish suitability for interview, particularly where a high volume of applicants are received, but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face meeting as part of the final selection/interview process.

Where possible and with candidate consent, references are taken up before the interview stage through the electronic TES portal. (Should a candidate progress to selection and interview stage prior to their receipt, satisfactory references will always be taken up prior to any appointment being made. This will normally be completed by HR.) In addition, shortlisted candidates are also required to complete a criminal convictions declaration form. RGSW will, at its discretion, also conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates to assess their suitability for working with children. This will be done in a systematic way and only using reasonable and objective information. This may be conducted by a member of the HR team and results should be recorded as part of recruitment documentation and discussed with the candidate at the safer recruitment interview if necessary. Those conducting online searches must be confident of the following:

- That the information obtained/found relates to the correct person
- That the information disclosed does not relate to any protected characteristics
- That searches are conducted in the same way for all candidates

### Stage 4 - Interview

Candidates selected for interview will undergo a separate safer recruitment interview where possible, that is separate from the main role focussed interview. In all cases they will be asked to provide:

- photographic proof of identity
- proof of right to work in the UK (Normally a birth certificate or passport for UK nationals)
- proof of qualifications as evidenced on their application form and required for the post applied for
- to have completed a signed declaration form confirming they are not restricted from working with children

If any of the above documentation is not presented at interview, then any offer of employment made is conditional and subject to pre-employment checks only, until such evidence has been verified. (Normally by HR.)

The interview process will seek to assess candidates in terms of whether their appointment would be in line with safer recruitment and fulfil the requirements of the post. Interviews may take a variety of formats to help recruiting managers assess the skills of candidates. For example, a competency-based interview, computer-based task, group exercise or prioritisation activity may be conducted. Evidence must be gathered against both the technical and behavioural competencies that are most relevant for that post and retained in the successful candidates file.

Significantly, in terms of safer recruitment practices, at least one representative involved in the interview process, will have successfully completed safer recruitment training and conduct a probing Safer Recruitment Interview, with the aim being to have one further interviewer present to watch the responses given by the applicant. The template for the Safer Recruitment part of the interview process is included as Appendix 2 and this both records the verification of identity and professional background and probes the motivations for working with children, their emotional maturity, values and ethics. (A list of staff across the Schools who have completed the Safer Recruitment NSPCC training is available from HR.)

To summarise, a Safer Recruitment Interview Form (Appendix 2) will be completed for all RGSW staff appointments and an ID badge issued by HR once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed and the Single Central Record updated. HR will also ensure that in conjunction with the Pastoral team, that new employees will be booked on Safeguarding Training within the first half term that they commence in post if they have not attended a training session already prior to starting. In these circumstances, new employees will be provided with a Safeguarding leaflet. This will ensure that all employees are aware of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputies and where to locate them.

#### Stage 5 - References

References are sought directly from the referee via the relevant Schools' TES portal or [email/post](#). References or testimonials provided by the candidate are never accepted. Open references 'To whom it may concern' and so on will not be accepted if they fail to include date evidence or are without obvious organisation authorisation.

In all cases where applicants are invited to interview and there are anomalies or discrepancies on a reference provided, referees will be contacted by telephone or e-mail in order to clarify.

A written note will be kept of such exchanges and retained on the personnel file of the individual appointed. Furthermore, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies if needed and again a detailed written note of such exchanges will be retained on the personnel file of the individual appointed.

#### Stage 6 - Successful Candidates

For successful candidates, the following pre-employment checks will be completed prior to taking up the post. This will normally be completed by HR;

- verification of the candidate's identity;
- verification of the candidate's eligibility to live and work in the UK;
- receipt of at least two satisfactory references (with further references being taken up if the candidate has worked or lived abroad for more than 3 months in the last 10 years);
- completion of the Early Years declaration form if working in the Prep Schools
- a satisfactory Enhanced DBS disclosure produced in School
- a satisfactory check on QTS status and the DfE Prohibition Order list (for all staff backdated to April 2012).
- verification of the candidate's medical fitness to work to be completed online via Health Assured
- verification of qualifications;
- verification of professional status where required e.g. GTC registration, QTS status (unless properly exempted);

- the new requirement (January 2016) with Employer Access On-line now allowing schools to identify teacher restrictions imposed by other European Economic Area authorities in addition to the normal prohibition checks. A separate sanction list was added in late February 2016 and KCSIE was updated to reflect this facility. It was noted that restrictions imposed by

another EEA authority did not necessarily prevent an individual from taking up teaching positions, however, circumstances leading to the restriction would be considered when assessing a candidate's suitability. This check is reflected on the Central Register for employees joining the School from 01/01/2016 onwards.

- a further check on Prohibition from Management (section 128) is also now required and the School applies this check which is recorded on Central Register for the Proprietor, Heads, Senior Leadership Teams and Heads of Faculty and Education and Support Managers from 12/08/2015.

- Online screening to assess suitability of working with children. (See Stage 3 above.)

The manager responsible for the recruitment of a new member of staff will ensure that the induction and health and safety checklist is filled in and returned to HR for filing.

#### Stage 7 - Induction

All staff who are new to RGSW are required to undertake induction training in line with the RGSW Induction Policy. This will include the following:

- Health and Safety training;
- Safeguarding training;
- Provision of KCSIE information, Safeguarding Children Policy and the Code of Conduct and checking these have been read and understood
- Signing off on a standardised induction checklist, thus providing another level of safeguarding checking.

#### Stage 8 - Leaving the employment of RGSW

There is a statutory requirement for the provision of the Protection of Children Act and appropriate DBS checks to be applied where employees work in the provision of care services to children. Employees at a school who are dismissed, who resign in circumstances which may have led to dismissal or where a disciplinary transfer has occurred on grounds of misconduct which harmed or placed a child at risk of harm will be referred to the Disclosures and Barring Service:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs>

This will only be done following consultation with relevant senior management, to specifically include the appropriate DSL and following advice from appropriate external bodies.

#### **Notes:**

RGSW will:

- maintain a central record of recruitment and vetting checks, in line with the ISI's requirements (see below) known as the Single Central Record (SCR)
- require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the School to notify the Head or Director of Finance and Operations in writing of the offence and penalty
- ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure, in line with the School's Contractors' Policy.

The school will monitor the compliance with these measures and:

- respond to changes in legislation required to ensure the safeguarding of children
- review policy and practice in the light of developments

- carry out an annual review of this policy (or more frequently if key changes in legislation or ISI requirements necessitate this).

In addition to the various staff records kept in school and in individual personnel files, a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept, with the HR Manager for RGSW having responsibility for its input and maintenance alongside other appropriate staff (HR Assistant) and undertaking regular audits.

This Single Central Record contains details of checks for:

- all staff who are employed to work at the school
- all others who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, governors who also work as volunteers within the school, and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, e.g. a specialist sports coach, peripatetic staff and agency/cover staff.

### **Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA) was revised following implementation of change to the ROA included in the Legal Aid and Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. As of May 2013, amendments made to the Exceptions Order of the ROA resulted in certain old and minor cautions and spent convictions not being subject to disclosure or appearing on a standard or enhanced DBS disclosure certificate.

As such, candidates are advised that: upfront disclosure of a criminal record may not debar you from appointment as we shall consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age it was committed and any other relevant factors. Please submit information in confidence enclosing details in a separate sealed envelope which will be seen and then destroyed by the relevant Head or Director of Finance and Operations.

Please disclose any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings. Please note that the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify you for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.

All advertised positions contain the following statement:

Rehabilitation of offenders: This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Which means that when applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found in the DBS filtering guide.

### **Data Protection Issues**

Following the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) candidates are advised that if they wish to view information or data used in the decision-making process of their appointment that they must submit this request in writing to the relevant Head or Director of Finance and Operations.

## Supply Staff

For the purposes of creating the record of checks for supply staff provided through a supply agency, the school will request written confirmation from the supply agency that it has satisfactorily completed all relevant checks. Access to the check is only required where there is information contained in the Enhanced DBS Disclosure. Information disclosed as part of an Enhanced DBS Disclosure will be treated as confidential. Photographic identity checks will be carried out by RGS to confirm that the individual arriving at the school is the individual that the agency has referred to.

## Contractors

All RGS Schools currently employ permanent contractors for the services of cleaning and catering. Namely Melton Support Services Ltd and Holroyd Howe. All new employees and the checks that have been completed by the contractors are declared to HR via email. The date this is received is recorded in the Single Central Record. Photo ID passes from HR are not provided to new contractor staff until checks are confirmed.

## Peripatetic Staff

For the purposes of creating the record of checks for peripatetic staff (for music, sports, tutors etc.) the school will require all necessary checks and DBS requirements are fulfilled.

This policy has been written with reference to the DfE's Publications Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## Safer Recruitment During 'Lockdown'

In the event that recruitment needs to continue during periods of 'lockdown' (for example the recent COVID-19 outbreak), or due to a localised 'lockdown', the School will ensure that all steps listed above will continue to be completed to the highest possible standards. Measures that may need to be adopted include; safer recruitment interviews that are 'virtual', the viewing of ID documents over video or via photo scan or other adapted recruitment procedures. In all cases the School will ensure that original documents are viewed at a later date and all pre-employment checks will still be carried out. The School will closely adhere to relevant advice from Keeping Children Safe in Education and current ISI guidelines. **The School has adopted face to face checks following the lifting of restrictions and will continue to do so until further notice/guidance on Government changes in this regard.**

Sponsor – HR Manager

June 2011

Reviewed and Endorsed by the Board of Governors: September 2012, August 2013, August 2014, February 2015, July 2015, August 2016, October 2017, August 2018, August 2019, September 2020 to reflect adaptations that may be required in the event of future 'lockdowns' and September 2021. Reviewed June 2022 - additional notes added regarding conducting online searches of candidates and the statement regarding rehabilitation of offenders made clearer.

Appendix 1: Applications – Initial Sifting Form

Job Role:		
Date:		
APPLICANT	STATE SIFTING CRITERIA: Eg/ application form completed correctly / relevant experience / key skills:	RATING
Additional comments:		

Manager:                      Ratings:  
 0 - No evidence of any key criteria (will not interview)  
 1 – Some evidence of key criteria (might interview)  
 2 – Strong evidence of all key criteria (will interview)



Appendix 2: RGSW - Safer Recruitment at Interview

Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Position applied for / date: \_\_\_\_\_

To be completed for ALL Teaching and Education and Business Development Team Staff:

RIGHT TO WORK IN UK/ID VERIFICATION		
Proof of id: driving license with photo / passport / full birth certificate.	Document provided (only originals can be accepted)	Seen by (initial)
Any document relevant to a change of name.		
Proof of entitlement to work in the UK: ONLY passport or birth certificate for UK nationals.  (Permits or VISAs for other nationals should be checked online.)		

QUALIFICATIONS VERIFICATION		
Qualifications are relevant to the position applied for and commensurate to the application form?	Qualifications presented:	Comments
Is the application form filled in correctly?	(No gaps in employment without explanation.)	
Any history of living or working abroad for more than 3 months within the last 10 years?		

To be completed for ALL Teaching and Support Staff applicants (one or more questions as appropriate, depending upon post applied for):

Positive Indicators	Sample questions - to pick one or two from each section, as appropriate	Negative Indicators
<p>Proactive and has personally taken actions to improve safeguarding culture.</p> <p>Has personal experience of having appropriately dealt with a challenging safeguarding issue.</p> <p>Personally committed towards making improvements. Sees it as part of their job.</p> <p>Prepared to challenge others in the workplace to make tangible improvements to safeguarding.</p> <p>Prepared to tackle difficult issues and confront individuals if necessary in order to promote best practice.</p> <p>Shows a good understanding of the issues. Up to date with events and legislation. Knows about test cases.</p>	<p><u>Safeguarding knowledge.</u></p> <p>- What is the safeguarding policy in your workplace? How is it monitored? What steps have you taken to improve things in the last 12 months?</p> <p>- Give me an example of when you have had safeguarding concerns about a child. Has this included any incidents of cyber bullying? How did it arise? Who did you speak to? What actions did you take?</p> <p>- Have you ever had a situation where you felt you fell short of safeguarding standard Follow up with: How did it arise? Who did you speak to? What actions did you take?</p> <p>- Have you ever had to challenge the views of someone more senior than yourself in relation to safeguarding concerns? Follow up with: What were the circumstances? How did you go about it? What was the outcome?</p> <p>- What does the term 'safeguarding' mean to you and whose responsibility is safeguarding? (CLEANING STAFF)</p>	<p>No evidence of having taken steps in own right to make improvements.</p> <p>Passive approach to safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Reluctance to challenge people/systems/processes to make things better.</p> <p>No real experience of handling safeguarding issues. Naive approach.</p> <p>Sees it as someone else's job and/or responsibility.</p> <p>Not well versed or clear in understanding of the issues.</p> <p>Intolerant of the bureaucracy around safeguarding.</p> <p>Shows tendency to take inappropriate chances/risks in areas of safeguarding.</p>

<p>Convincing responses based on balanced understanding of self and circumstances.</p> <p>Has a realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>A realistic appreciation of the challenges involved in working with children.</p> <p>Behaves consistently and appropriately under pressure or in a position of authority.</p> <p>Has control over emotions with children.</p> <p>Understands power position and how to seek help in difficult circumstances.</p> <p>Realises that allegations could be true as well as false</p> <p>Demonstrates self-awareness in terms of stress management.</p> <p>Acts on concerns and follows through.</p>	<p><u>Motivations for working with children / in a school.</u>  - What do you feel are the main drivers that led you to want to work with children or in a school?  How do you motivate young people? What has working with young people taught you about yourself?</p> <p><u>Emotional Maturity and Resilience.</u>  - Tell me about a time when you have been working with children when your authority was seriously challenged. How did you react? What strategies did you employ to bring things back on course?</p> <p>ALWAYS ASK THIS QUESTION  - What do you think about pupils who make allegations against staff?</p> <p>- Handling pressure  Give an example of how you responded when a child's behaviour was challenging. How did this affect you and how did you cope emotionally with the aftermath?</p> <p>- How do you know when to stop working?  What do you do to switch off?</p> <p><u>Promoting safeguarding and taking action</u>  - What would you do if you saw or heard something you were concerned about regarding a pupil?  (CLEANING STAFF)</p>	<p>Unconvincing responses based on whimsical examples. Not self-aware, don't see themselves as others do.</p> <p>Driven by personal needs not needs of others.</p> <p>Not realistic about personal strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Inappropriate responses when under pressure or when in a position of power.</p> <p>Inconsistent responses.</p> <p>Handles conflict badly.</p> <p>Assumes allegations against staff are false and/or malicious</p> <p>Fails to control temper/emotions with children.</p> <p>Doesn't seek help when needed and fails to go to others for advice.</p> <p>Concern that they may not be able to perform or cope under pressure.</p> <p>Unaware of the need to report concerns or take</p>
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		other appropriate action.
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To be completed for Teachers (and Support Staff where applicable) - one or more questions as appropriate:

Integrity

1. Can you give me an example of a situation when you observed someone at work bending the rules in a way that made you feel slightly uncomfortable?

Self-awareness

2. Describe a situation where you had to deal with a child who didn't like you and how this made you feel and respond.

Handling pressure and stress, safeguarding judgement calls

3. A pupil comes up to you and says they want to speak to you in confidence; they are obviously in some distress. You are in an empty classroom; it is after school and everyone in your department has gone to the Common Room for coffee before going on to Parents' Evening in the Main Hall. What do you do?

Social Media

4. *Make the candidate aware that an online search has/will be conducted in line with KCSIE 2022 guidelines to help assess their suitability to work with children in addition to advance referencing. Describe your digital footprint to us please and anything you would like to make us aware of or are concerned about.*  
**Ask about social media, including online gaming platforms and messaging services.**

Completed by: ..... (Signature)

Name: ..... Date: .....

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED WITH RECRUITMENT DOCUMENTS FOR FILE AS EVIDENCE