

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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1. Trust Policy Statement

Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT) considers the safeguarding of pupils in all of our schools as the highest priority in our organisation. This includes ensuring that our recruitment processes are in line with safer recruitment best practice to prevent any unsuitable adults from gaining employment in our academies.

As part of our focus on diversity and inclusion, BDAT pledges that our policies will seek to promote equality, fairness, and respect for all staff and pupils. Our policies reflect the BDAT values of inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience, and excellence. By working closely with a range of stakeholders, such as our school, union, and HR colleagues, we have ensured that BDAT's policies do not unlawfully discriminate against anybody.

This policy has been implemented following consultation with the recognised trade unions and will be reviewed on an biennial basis, or more frequently as required, to reflect changes in local and national guidance. Any subsequent changes will be subject to the same.

For the purpose of this policy, the term Trust refers to BDAT. The term school and the term academy are interchangeable. The term pupil and the term student are interchangeable.

2. Introduction and Aims of the Policy

BDAT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As a result, this Recruitment and Selection Policy sets out the details of our recruitment process that aims to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people

This policy outlines the recruitment process and the range of pre-employment checks that will be undertaken in line with our approach to safer recruitment.

The Trust undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any individual who may be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed. BDAT is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of any protected characteristic including; race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

All appointing staff and interview panel members will be briefed on this Recruitment and Selection Policy prior to the shortlisting stage of the process. As an organisation using the DBS check to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, BDAT complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

This policy pays due regard to, and should be read alongside, the following statutory and non-statutory guidance and other BDAT policies:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2023](#)
[Guidance for Safer Working Practice in Education Settings - February 2022](#)
[Government Guidance on Recruiting and Hiring](#)
[Government Guidance for Employers on Preventing Discrimination](#)
[ACAS Guidance on Recruiting and Hiring](#)
[DFE Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools – October 2021](#)
[DBS Code of Practice – November 2015](#)
[DBS Filtering Guide – October 2023](#)

[BDAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)
[BDAT Equality Statement and Objectives](#)
[BDAT GDPR Policy](#)
[BDAT Recruitment and Selection Toolkit](#)

3. Applications

All recruitment advertisements will include a statement referring to BDAT's commitment to safeguarding children and young people and that all appointments are subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check with a Children's Barred List check where the postholder will be in regulated activity.

Prospective applicants must be supplied, as a minimum, with the following:

- Job description and person specification;
- BDAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- BDAT Recruitment and Selection Toolkit including Appendix D Statement on the Recruitment and Employment of Ex-offenders;
- Candidate information pack including details of the application process;
- Online Application form.

All prospective applicants must complete an online application form: CVs alone are not accepted.

4. Shortlisting and References

- References will be taken up before interviews in line with safer recruitment best practice, so that any discrepancies can be probed before and discussed. This is standard practice within the education sector.
- References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate are not acceptable.
- Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies - a detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.
- Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies - a detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.
- Short-listing of candidates will be against:
 - The application form;
 - The job description;
 - The person specification;
 - Any key criteria or competencies/skills;
 - The agreed weight to be given to each criterion;
 - The results of any selection tests. This may not always be applicable.
- Shortlisted candidates will be expected to disclose any unspent conditional cautions/convictions (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act) on a self-declaration form so that these can be discussed at interview, if necessary. The self-declaration form will only be sent to shortlisted candidates.
- Referees must always be asked specific questions regarding:
 - The candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
 - Any disciplinary warnings, including time expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children and young people;
 - The candidate's suitability for this post;
 - Whether they would re-employ this candidate.

5. The Selection Process

- Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates. Such techniques may include presentations, practical activities, and specific skill exercises.
- Interviews will always be face-to-face unless there are exceptional circumstances that require a phone or Teams interview.
- Interview panels will always comprise of at least three people. In line with safer recruitment best practice, the same people who shortlisted will interview. At least one, but usually all, of the panel members will have completed training in safer recruitment. This means that panel members will have the skills and competencies required to conduct effective interviews, and:
 - Ask only relevant job-related questions;
 - Prepare questions based on the role, application form or the job description and person specification;
 - Prepare values based questions that help to assess the values, motives and attitudes of applicants;

- Avoid asking for unnecessary personal information;
 - Avoid making stereotypical assumptions;
 - Avoid making discriminatory comments or indicating an intention to discriminate;
 - Apply the selection criteria and scoring method objectively.
- Normally the panel will comprise at least the Academy Principal/Headteacher, a member of the Local Governing Body and, for senior leadership posts, a representative from BDAT. The Trust's Scheme of Delegation should be consulted for panel composition.
- Any member of a selection panel should make a declaration if any applicant is a relative or a friend from outside the work environment. Employees/applicants also have a duty to declare any interest that they may have in respect of any aspect of the school's business.
- The interviewers will:
 - Read the application form, job description and person specification;
 - Identify any matters that require clarification, for example if the application contains any inconsistencies or missing information;
 - Prepare a list of relevant job-related and values based interview questions;
 - Ensure that any intended questions do not discriminate and could not reasonably be interpreted as being discriminatory.
- Selection criteria and scoring methods will be based on objective criteria which tests skills that are relevant and necessary for the job.
- Selection criteria will be identified in advance.
- Clear records of the selection and interview processes will be kept as evidence *(to help reduce the risk of a discrimination claim.)*

All job descriptions and person specifications will have reference to safeguarding and child protection.

Candidates will always be required to:

- Explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information;
Demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

6. The Outcome of the Recruitment Process

At the conclusion of the recruitment process, BDAT or the recruiting Academy will:

- Confirm the outcome of the interview to all interviewed applicants as soon as possible. If there is a reason for the decision being delayed, this should also be notified to all interviewed applicants;
- Give feedback on the interview if requested by the applicant;
- Issue a letter or email to the successful applicant confirming an offer of employment. This will contain conditions e.g. subject to satisfactory references and any medical assessment;
- Issue a letter to unsuccessful applicants confirming that they have not been successful.

7. Pre-Employment Checks

Prior to commencing employment, all successful applicants are required to:

- Provide three forms of proof of identity in line with DBS guidelines;
- Provide actual certificates of qualifications;
- Complete a confidential health questionnaire;
- Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK.

In addition to these checks, BDAT/the Academy will also complete the following checks:

- For teaching staff, a teacher service check (which includes the following):
 - The award of qualified teacher status (QTS) (unless the applicant appointed is an unqualified teacher).
- Completion of teacher induction or suitability to complete this. For staff engaged in 'teaching work' as per the Teachers' Disciplinary Regulations 2012, a check to determine that there are no prohibitions, sanctions and restrictions that might prevent the individual from taking part in certain activities or working in specific positions.
- For staff being recruited to a position of management, a Section 128 Prohibition from Management check.
- For staff who have lived or worked abroad, overseas checks in line with KCSIE
- Two satisfactory reference checks.

8. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

Further to the above pre-employment checks, the Trust or Academy will carry out individual Enhanced DBS checks on all new trustees, governors, staff and volunteers who start working within our Trust and schools. This will also include a check of the Children's Barred list where the individual will be working in regulated activity. These checks will be followed up annually by a self-declaration for all individuals that confirms they have had no convictions since their Enhanced DBS check was undertaken. These declarations will be saved and stored on the individual's file.

9. Single Central Record

A record of all pre-employment checks, including Disclosure and Barring Service Checks, will be maintained by BDAT and each of our academies. This record is known as the Single Central Record in each of our schools and will cover all staff (including supply), governors, trustees, volunteers, contractors and any other third parties who work in school. This record will detail the dates all the relevant checks were undertaken for each adult.

10. Criminal Convictions

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended in 2013 & 2020), shortlisted applicants should be asked to provide any information about unspent convictions, cautions or bind-overs and relevant criminal offences that would not be filtered in a separate disclosure form to be submitted before interview date:

- The panel should be made aware of relevant disclosed criminal history in order to discuss this with the candidate at interview;
- Applicants should be given the opportunity to seek legal advice and / or impartial advice from Nacro or Unlock before answering any questions about their criminal history.

It is important to note that the possession of a criminal background does not automatically debar an applicant from employment.

All information in relation to previous convictions given by applicants must be treated in the strictest confidence. However, the applicant has a right to be informed of the contents of a police report.

Candidates should be aware that failure to disclose eligible previous offences or pending legal action for posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act could lead to the offer of employment being withdrawn or dismissal if the successful candidate has already commenced employment in post.

11. Induction and Probation

- Nobody will start their employment unless a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check has been carried out, or as a minimum the Enhanced DBS check has been initiated and a standalone Children's Barred List Check has been completed and a risk assessment is in place.
- All new staff receive a Staff Code of Conduct and Handbook, including Safeguarding and Child Protection guidelines and policies.
- All new staff will be part of an induction programme including Safeguarding and Child Protection Training as soon as possible after their start date and at least once every academic year thereafter.
- All new staff will be subject to a 3- or 6-month probation period. Please see the BDAT Probationary Period Policy for more information on this.

12. Recordkeeping and Data Protection

Records will be kept of:

- Job descriptions and person specifications;
- Shortlisting criteria;
- Any interviews conducted, including interview notes and any scoring undertaken;
- Reasons for selecting and rejecting candidates.

The BDAT GDPR Policy provides details of our retention timescales in relation to all data associated with the recruitment process.