

## **PRENTON HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

### **SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY**

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## Contents

|    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 1  | Scope and Purpose.....  | 3  |
| 2  | Who is responsible for the policy? .....                                      | 3  |
| 3  | Safer Recruitment Training .....  | 4  |
| 4  | Advertising Posts.....  | 4  |
| 5  | Identification of the recruitment panel .....                                 | 4  |
| 6  | Applications .....  | 4  |
| 7  | Short Listing and References.....   | 5  |
| 8  | Interview and Selection .....   | 6  |
| 9  | Employment Checks .....   | 7  |
| 10 | Confirming the appointment .....  | 7  |
| 11 | Induction.....  | 8  |
| 12 | Personnel File and Single Central Record .....                                | 8  |
| 13 | Adults working with children who are not employed directly by the school..... | 9  |
| 14 | Risk Assessment DBS Certificate Pro-forma: .....                              | 14 |

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

## **1 SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy of this policy is to set out the requirements for the recruitment of teaching and support staff at the School. The aim of the School is to:

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

Decisions concerning the need to recruit staff are delegated to the Headteacher by the Trust. All decisions will be made with regard to curriculum needs and financial circumstances.

Decisions regarding remuneration for posts will be made in accordance with the School's Pay Policy.

This policy takes into account the provisions of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Department for Education September 2025). The Trust will ensure that the statutory requirements for the appointment of staff will be met. Requirements will change from time to time and this policy will be updated accordingly.

The School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants and will abide by existing legislation including the Equality Act 2010. The School Trust does not unlawfully discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time on consultation with recognised unions.

## **2 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY?**

The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation, maintenance and review of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework.

The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to the Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other managers involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that their School operates safe recruitment procedures;
- Ensure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at their School;
- Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document;
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the recruitment process.

It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document.

It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

### 3 SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

Subject to the availability of training, the Trust will ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have successfully completed accredited training in safe recruitment procedures, at the minimum this will include the Headteacher and at least one Governor at the School.

The School Trust must ensure that one person on any recruitment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

### 4 ADVERTISING POSTS

Advertisements for posts – whether in newspapers, journals or online – and application booklets issued to prospective applicants will include the following statement:

*Prenton High School for Girls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects its entire staff to share this commitment. All post-holders will be subject to safeguarding checks and required to have an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)."*

The advertisement will specify whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974

Prospective applicants will be supplied, as a minimum, the following:

- Job description and person specification (including any safeguarding responsibilities of the post);
- An application form.

Applicants will also be made aware of the relevant school policies, including the Child Protection Policy and policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise all vacant posts.

However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal applicants or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement alone may be considered appropriate.

### 5 IDENTIFICATION OF THE RECRUITMENT PANEL

The recruitment panel will comprise of an 'appointing officer', responsible for the management of the entire recruitment process. Between two and four selectors is appropriate for most appointments.

At least one member of the panel should have successfully completed training in safer recruitment.

### 6 APPLICATIONS

Prospective applicants will respond to the advertisement by accessing the application online or requesting an application form directly from the School, applications include an equal opportunities monitoring form. In most cases, the application form may be completed and submitted online, alternatively, it may be returned via email or post by the specified closing date and time. Teaching applications must be accompanied by a supporting letter. Other forms of curriculum vitae are not acceptable in place of a completed application form.

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

Applications received after the published closing date will not be considered unless there is clear evidence that the late receipt of the application has been caused by a postal delay. Such evidence would generally be an application with franking showing that it was posted first class at least one day before the published closing date. Applicants are advised to also submit their applications by e-mail to avoid late arrival.

The School will require applicants to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on this application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

## **7 SHORT LISTING AND REFERENCES**

The selection panel will shortlist applicants against the person specification for the post. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants. The selection panel will agree the applicants to be invited to interview.

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.

Two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the selection process.

References will be sought directly from the referee and, where necessary, he/she will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Written records will be kept of such exchanges.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Written records will be kept of such exchanges.

If an applicant for a post working with children is not currently employed in a post working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment in which the applicant has worked with children to confirm details of the applicant's employment and their reasons for leaving.

Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm, in writing:

- The referee's relationship to the applicant;
- Details of the applicant's current post and salary;
- The applicant's performance history and conduct;
- Whether the applicant has been subject to capability procedures and the outcome of this;
- Whether the applicant has been subject to disciplinary action relating to the safety and welfare of children, including where the sanction has expired, and the outcome of this;
- Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns about the applicant relating to the safety and welfare of children;
- Whether the referee has any reservations as to the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people (if so, the school will ask for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the applicant may be unsuitable to work with children);

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

- The applicant's suitability for the post with explicit reference to the job description and person specification.

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

Employer testimonials i.e. Those provided by the applicant and/or marked 'to whom it may concern' will not be accepted. References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the applicant has applied. The selection panel will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend of the applicant, for any post. References will be verified and any discrepancies or areas of potential concern will be discussed with the applicant at interview.

The School may conduct a range of online searches of candidates to identify incidents or issues that have happened and which are publicly available online.

This process may include a search of public information for the candidate via:

- Google
- Facebook
- Linked In
- Other Social Media platforms

The School may discuss its findings with the shortlisted candidate at interview.

If the field of applicants is felt to be weak, the post may be re-advertised.

## **8 INTERVIEW AND SELECTION**

Prior to the interview and selection process applicants will be given any relevant information, e.g. Details of any selection methods that will be used.

Applicants who have a disability or any other particular needs will be given the opportunity to highlight this prior to any selection activities in order that reasonable adjustments may be made to the recruitment process.

All vacancies will require an interview of short-listed applicants. Interviews will always be face-to-face. Telephone interviews may be used at the shortlisting stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face interview (which may be via visual electronic link).

Whilst an interview is always likely to be used as the primary feature of the selection process, the selection panel will consider whether any additional selection methods are required to supplement the interview. These may include presentations, teaching observation, interaction with pupils, in-tray exercises, psychometric, verbal or numerical tests, according to the requirements of the role. Any psychometric tests used will have been validated in relation to the job, be free of bias, and be administered and validated only by a suitably trained person.

Whichever methods are chosen, the panel will use these to assess the merits of each applicant against the person specification and explore their suitability to work with children. This will include exploration of the applicants understanding of child safeguarding issues.

The selection panel will ensure that all applicants are asked the same main questions at interview based on the list of essential criteria for the post, although supplementary questions may differ according to the applicants' answers and backgrounds.

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

Applicants will always be required:

- To explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- To explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the selection panel
- To declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure
- To demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people

The interview will also include a discussion of any convictions, cautions or pending prosecutions that the applicant has declared and are relevant to the prospective employment.

Particular care needs will be taken to ensure that no questions or selection methods could be viewed as discriminatory.

## **9 EMPLOYMENT CHECKS**

All successful applicants are required to:

- Provide proof of identity (e.g. Passport; driving licence photocard)
- Complete an enhanced DBS disclosure application and receive satisfactory clearance;
- Obtain a barred list check if the individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- Provide actual certificates of professional qualifications (teaching staff or where required)
- Provide proof of address (e.g. Recent utility bill, bank or credit card statement)
- If the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK make any checks the School considers appropriate
- Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK (including EU nationals).

Documentation will be checked by a member of staff suitably trained in safer recruitment processes.

Once an applicant has been offered the post they may be required to complete a confidential health questionnaire to verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work

## **10 CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT**

The final offer of employment will be subject to:

- A satisfactory enhanced DBS and barred list check;
- A check that the applicant is not subject to a prohibition order using the Employer Access Online Service (teachers only);
- Receipt of a completed confidential health questionnaire which is required to verify the applicant's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work
- Receipt of final references from previous employers;
- A valid work permit for overseas applicants and/or confirmation of settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (where applicable);

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

- Verification of the applicant's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;
- A check that the applicant is not subject to a prohibition or restriction order under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 (where applicable); and
- The applicant's details have been added to the school's Single Central Record (SCR).

The school reserves the right not to proceed with or to terminate employment with immediate effect if the DBS checks reveals convictions which have not been declared on the application form or if any of the documents provided have been falsified in any way.

## **11 INDUCTION**

All employees who are new to the school will receive full induction training that will cover all relevant matters of the School policy including safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, child protection procedures, whistle blowing, and guidance on safe working practices.

Employees will also be required to read, and confirm that they have read, Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

## **12 PERSONNEL FILE AND SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD**

Recruitment and selection information for the successful applicant will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of their employment with the School including:

- Application form – signed by the applicant;
- Interview notes – including explanation of any gaps in the employment history;
- References;
- Proof of identity;
- Proof of right to work in the UK;
- A check of professional qualifications;
- Proof of relevant academic qualifications;
- A completed confidential health questionnaire and any medical clearance obtained from the Occupational Health service;
- Evidence of DBS clearance, Barred List (where applicable), a section 128 check (where applicable) and Teacher Prohibition checks;
- Offer of employment letter and signed contract of employment.

The School will maintain a Single Central Record of employment checks in accordance with relevant Department of Education guidance. The School will remove an individual's details from the single central record once they no longer work at the School.

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

### **13 ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT EMPLOYED DIRECTLY BY THE SCHOOL**

#### **Visitors**

The School does not require DBS checks or barred list checks for visitors such as children's relatives. The Headteacher shall determine the level of supervision required visitors with a professional role (e.g. Educational psychologists or social workers). The School will require visitors with a professional role to provide assurance of an appropriate DBS check and the school will carry out identity checks when they arrive on site.

#### **Supply Staff**

The School will only use those agencies which operate a Safer Recruitment Policy and supply written confirmation that all relevant checks have been satisfactorily completed to the same standard of the School. The school will carry out identity checks when the supply staff member arrives on site.

#### **Volunteers**

The School will carry out DBS and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post (subject to a risk assessment) and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees. References are taken up, as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. Trips/PTA events) are supervised by a person who is themselves in regulated activity relating to children.

#### **Students on placement**

When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, ECT etc.), references and completion of an application form will not be required. However, the School will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with barred list check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at the academy. It will be the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks that the school would otherwise perform.

#### **Students on work experience**

Students on work experience will always be supervised and must not be left unattended with pupils.

#### **Contractors**

The School ensure that contractors, or any employee of a contractor, working at the School have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required.

The School will set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the School.

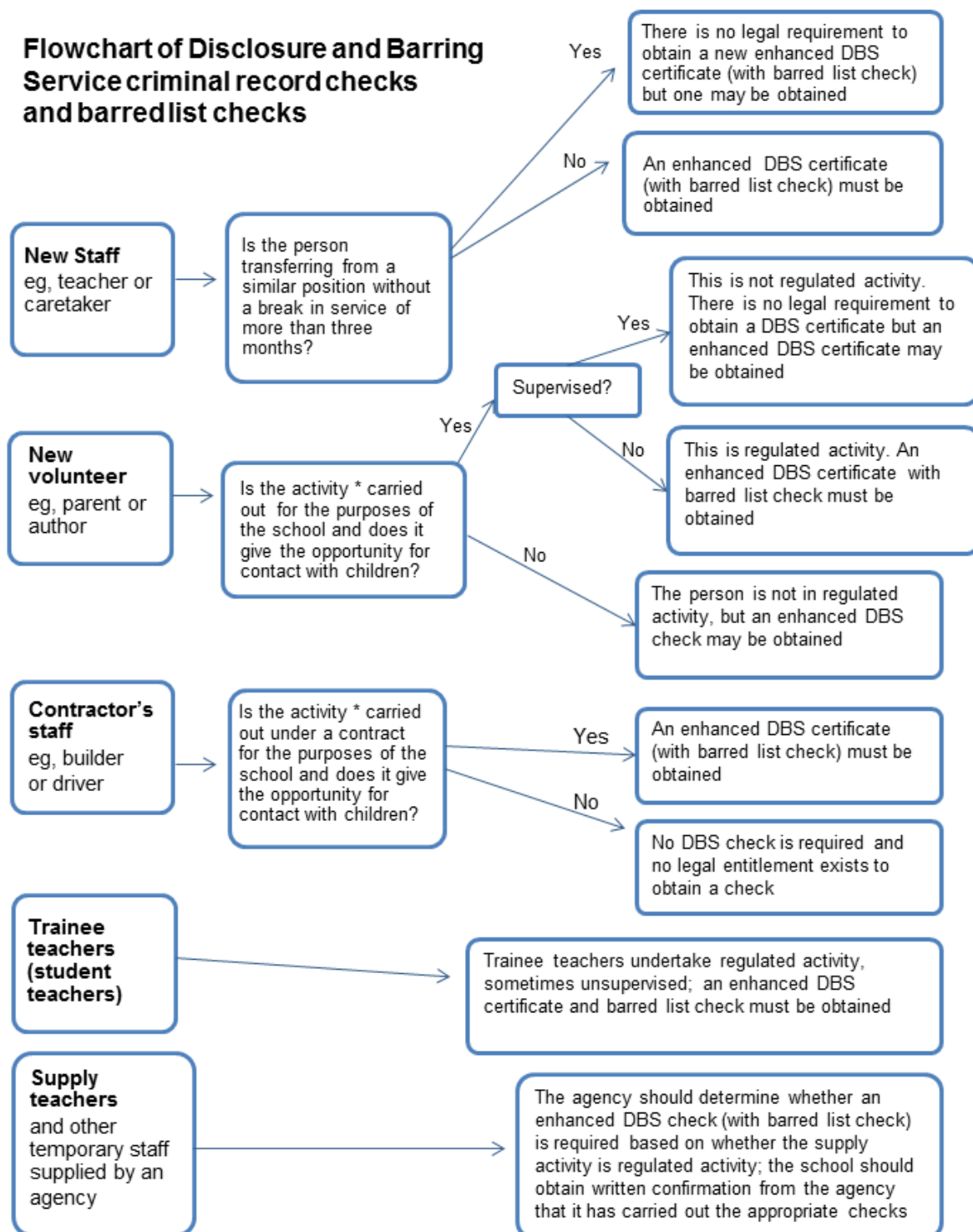
Contractors and contractors' employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children.

If a contractor working at the trust is self-employed and will be in regulated activity, the School will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

The School will check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
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| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

A. Flowchart of disclosure and barring service criminal record checks and barred list checks.



\* Activities listed under the guidance's definition of regulated activity and which are carried out 'frequently'

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
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| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

Risk Assessment - This form is to be used when commencement of employment is being considered prior to a satisfactory DBS Disclosure being obtained. Please tick and date when completed. Record all follow up actions and comments.

| Action   | Complete | Management Action | Date | Initials |
|--|----------|-------------------|------|----------|
| <b>Pre-recruitment Checks</b>  |          |                   |      |          |
| Application form checked for gaps and anomalies  |          |                   |      |          |
| Two satisfactory references received   |          |                   |      |          |
| Completed DBS application on-line (Capita VRS)   |          |                   |      |          |
| Proof of ID obtained and copied  |          |                   |      |          |
| Permission to work in UK checked and documented  |          |                   |      |          |
| Original qualifications seen and copied  |          |                   |      |          |
| Check of professional registration body with satisfactory results  |          |                   |      |          |
| <b>Safeguarding Checks</b>   |          |                   |      |          |
| <b>If employee has disclosed previous convictions/cautions please consider the following:</b>  |          |                   |      |          |
| Candidate has made you aware of nature of conviction/caution and you do/do not feel this poses a risk to the safety of children and staff/volunteers |          |                   |      |          |
| The conviction/caution does not automatically bar candidate from working with children   |          |                   |      |          |
| <b>For all employees please consider the following questions:</b>  |          |                   |      |          |
| Does the post require unsupervised Access to children?   |          |                   |      |          |
| In the course of such duties can the Employee be observed or supervised by another who has been checked?   |          |                   |      |          |

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

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| Does the post require employee to work in a remote/out of sight location? |  |  |  |  |
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|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

| Action  | Complete | Management Action | Date | Initials |
|---|----------|-------------------|------|----------|
| Does the employee have access to keys that grant unsupervised access to building out of hours?                  |          |                   |      |          |
| Will the employee be providing personal care to children?   |          |                   |      |          |
| Will the employee be responsible for escorting children to the toilet?  |          |                   |      |          |
| Will the employee be residing with children for any period of time?   |          |                   |      |          |
| Will the employee have potential for contact with children away from the organisation or outside working hours? |          |                   |      |          |
| Is training required for others in relation to supervising the employee?  |          |                   |      |          |
| Does the employee require supervision prior to return of satisfactory DBS Disclosure?                           |          |                   |      |          |

I confirm that I have considered the risk to children, staff and volunteers of allowing this person to be employed prior to receipt of satisfactory DBS Disclosure.

I am willing/not willing for them to commence employment subject to any conditions outlined above.

**Signature:**

**Print name:**

**Position:**

**Date:**

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

#### 14 RISK ASSESSMENT DBS CERTIFICATE PRO-FORMA:

To be completed if the DBS Certificate has criminal record disclosures

Name on DBS Certificate:

Certificate No:

Post:

Date of issue:

| Question   | Yes | No | Comments/Actions/Explanation | Initials |
|--|-----|----|------------------------------|----------|
| Did the applicant declare their offences on their job application form or on the DBS Disclosure application and/or in interview?                             |     |    |                              |          |
| Does the individual agree that the information detailed on the DBS Certificate is correct?   |     |    |                              |          |
| Does the individual regret the matter(s) or what is their attitude towards the matters now?  |     |    |                              |          |
| Would they do anything differently now?  |     |    |                              |          |
| Has the individual's circumstances changed since the conviction? E.g. Location, friends, partner, education?   |     |    |                              |          |
| Does the disclosure show recent offences or a recent change in behaviour? How long ago was that? Was the applicant a juvenile at the time of any offence(s)? |     |    |                              |          |
| Are there any mitigating circumstances? (e.g. Peer pressure, financial need or lack of judgement)  |     |    |                              |          |
| Does the disclosure show a pattern of offending? E.g. Is   |     |    |                              |          |

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Ratified:    | Autumn 2025 |
| Next Review: | Autumn 2026 |

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| there a cycle or history, reoccurrence, repeat offences                                   |  |  |  |  |
| Can the applicant demonstrate any efforts not to re-offend?<br>I.e. Rehabilitation Course |  |  |  |  |

| Question   | Yes | No | Comments/Actions/Explanation | Initials |
|--|-----|----|------------------------------|----------|
| Do any offences have any relevance to the job role?  |     |    |                              |          |
| Does the nature of the job present any opportunities for the post holder to reoffend in the place of work? |     |    |                              |          |
| What is the nature of the contact the individual has with children?  |     |    |                              |          |
| Can any safeguards be implemented to reduce/remove any risk? E.g. No unsupervised contact                  |     |    |                              |          |
| Will the post holder be supervised? Is supervision available?  |     |    |                              |          |

### Outcome of Assessment

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>I am</b> satisfied that based on the above, the criminal background of this person should not prevent them taking up the position  |  |
| <b>I am not</b> satisfied that based on the above, the criminal background of this person makes them suitable to take up the position |  |

**Headteacher's Name:**

**Headteacher's Signature:**

**Date:**

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Reviewed:    | Autumn 2025 |
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