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**Annemount**

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Nursery and Pre-preparatory School

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## **Safer Recruitment Policy**

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS

### **Introduction**

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Annemount School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2025*, The Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2014 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the School takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, the School is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy. Relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team are trained in safer recruitment processes.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

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 familial relationship with an applicant they must declare as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

The policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Annemount School.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to:

- Ensure the School has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the School's compliance with them.
- Ensure that the School operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the School.
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

### **Advertising**

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

### **Application Form**

All applicants must complete, in full, an Application Form. Those who do not cannot be considered. CVs may be submitted in addition to, but not instead of, the Application Form.

### **Job Descriptions**

A job description sets out the duties and responsibilities of the role.

### **References**

References for short listed applicants will be sent for immediately after short listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up.

The School must obtain a reference before employment and should:

- not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern
- not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority
- not accept references from a family member
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with

children). If the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting

- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post, and
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

### **Interviews**

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the role. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process. At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed following the end of the recruitment process.

### **Digital Screening**

As part of the shortlisting process, the school will carry out an online search as part of due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

### **Self-Declaration of Criminal Record**

In cooperation with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, all shortlisted candidates for employment at Annemount School are required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. To confirm they have not been disqualified from working with children or have a caution or conviction for violence against a child or adult.

### **OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS**

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS Certificate, barred list checks, overseas checks against disqualifications, prohibitions from teaching checks and prohibition from management checks (for those in a senior position), right to work in the UK check, references, medical checks, copies of qualification and proof of identity. All checks must be satisfactory to the school before an offer of appointment is made. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork. The checklist will be retained in personal files.

### **Visitors and Volunteers**

The school has a Visitors and Volunteers Policy.

The school has a *Child Protection and Safeguarding Guidance Document for Staff, Visitors and Parents* for reference when on-site visits take place.

A Risk Assessment will be carried out to decide which checks are needed on each volunteer, depending on whether they will be in regulated activity, supervised or not.

Visiting speakers are checked as 'suitable' through appropriate checks necessary to their role such as Google internet searches.

Visitors are always supervised.

### **The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions normally considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any position at Annemount School.

### **DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate**

All staff at Annemount School require an enhanced DBS Certificate which must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee. Members of staff at Annemount School are aware of their obligation to inform the Head Teacher of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

If the enhanced criminal record check is required but the DBS certificate is not available before a person starts work in regulated activity, the school may allow the staff to commence work:

- after a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person will be working in regulated activity;
- and all other relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily;
- provided that the DBS application has been made in advance; with appropriate safeguards taken (for example, loose supervision)
- review safeguards at least every two weeks;
- ensure the person in question is informed of the safeguards in place;
- add a note to the single central register and keep evidence of the measures put in place.

### **Self-Declaration - Disqualification under the Childcare Act**

All employees at Annemount School are required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. To confirm they have not been disqualified from working with children or have a caution or conviction for violence against a child or adult.

All staff that work in, or are involved in the management of EYFS or out of hours care for children up to the age of 8 are asked to complete a Self-Declaration Form to comply with the Childcare Act 2006 as amended in 2018.

### **Dealing with convictions**

The school operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Head Teacher. A decision will be made following this meeting.

### **Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status**

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the School will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving license etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position as claimed in their application form.

### **Medical Fitness**

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All successful applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

### **Overseas checks**

All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks. These checks could include, overseas criminal records checks, obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked.

Where this information is not available the school will seek alternative methods of checking suitability and or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment, for example, at least two further references from the country where they have lived or worked.

### **Contractor Staff**

Confirmation is obtained from all external businesses whose employees work at Annemount School or with pupils from the school, that they were appointed in accordance with correct safer recruitment procedures. The agency/business must confirm in writing that they have carried out all necessary checks required for teaching staff as listed on page 3. The school will need to see ID and DBS prior to starting.

### **Induction Programme**

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the School policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy,

and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how the staff members carry out their roles and responsibilities.

### **Centralised Register of Members of Staff (SCR)**

In addition to the various staff records kept in School and in individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfE requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained electronically. The Centralised Register will contain details of the following: -

- all employees who are employed to work at the School;
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the School whether employed directly or through an agency;
- all others who have been chosen by the School to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, peripatetic staff and people brought into the School to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members e.g. sports coaches etc.

### **Record Retention / Data Protection**

Annemount 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 will 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 the School Office in a locked and secure location.

### **Ongoing Employment**

Annemount 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. The School will therefore provide ongoing training and support for all staff.

### **Leaving Employment at Annemount School**

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee the School's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, Annemount School will inform the DfE and the Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances why the employee is leaving Annemount School's employment. The school also has a duty to consider making a referral to the TRA (previously National College for Teaching and Leadership).

The School will also make a referral to DBS if the referral requirements are met.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored. This will be reviewed annually.

Date: July 2025

Review: July 2026