RECRUITMENT POLICY

Blundell's
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Blundell's
FOUNDED 1604

RECRUITMENT POLICY

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POLICY AMENDMENTS

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Autumn 2020	Date update only
Autumn 2021	Date update only
Spring 2022	Minor amendments throughout by Chief People Officer
Autumn 2022	Inclusion of safer recruitment training and online checks
Spring 2023	inclusion of information regarding longlist interviews via Teams, requirement to retain staff file, reference to formal Risk Assessment and social media checks.
Autumn 2023	Amended references to Bursar
Autumn 2024	Minor amendments in line with ISBA template policy
Autumn 2025	Date update only
Autumn 2026	Amended CPO to Director of People. Other amendments in line with KCSIE 2026 and updated GDPR regulations.

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RECRUITMENT POLICY

General

1. Blundell's School ("the School") is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority.

2. The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

3. All queries on the School's Application Form and recruitment process must be directed to the Director of People.

4. An entry will be made on the Single Central Register for all current members of staff at the School, the proprietorial body and all individuals who work in regular contact with children including volunteers, supply staff and those employed as third parties.

5. All checks outlined will be made in advance of appointment.

Scope of this Policy

6. This policy refers and applies to staff directly recruited and employed by the School. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, staff are defined as:

    a) Any person working at the School whether under a contract of employment, under a contract for services or otherwise than under a contract, but does not include supply staff or a volunteer.

    b) The School will assess volunteer roles before appointment to determine whether the role amounts to regulated activity. Where a volunteer is undertaking regulated activity, the School will obtain an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information and will ensure that the individual is not barred from working with children. The School will also record the required checks on the Single Central Register where applicable.

7. In the case of agency or contract workers, the School shall obtain written confirmation from the agency or company that it has carried out the required pre-employment checks in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. The School conducts identity checks on agency and contract workers on arrival in School and, in the case of agency workers which includes supply staff, the School must be provided with confirmation of whether an

enhanced DBS certificate has been obtained and, where required, a copy of the certificate.

8. The School will check with the relevant supply agency that the required checks have been carried out including identity, enhanced disclosure, right to work in the UK, barred list checks where appropriate, prohibition checks, qualifications, overseas checks and any other pre-employment checks required by Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Single Central Register will show that these checks have been made and the School will carry out its own identity check on arrival and will see a copy of the disclosure where required.

9. Certain individuals are automatically disqualified from acting in senior management positions within a charity. Whether an individual falls into the category of a senior management position is judged using the following criteria:

    a) A person who is accountable only to the governors, and who carries overall responsibility for the day-to-day management and control of the charity. At Blundell's School, this would be the Head.

    b) A person who is accountable only to the Head or the governors, and who is responsible for the overall management and control of the charity's finances. At Blundell's School, this would be the Bursar.

10. Being disqualified means that a person cannot take on, or stay in, a senior manager position – even on an interim basis, unless the Charity Commission has removed (or 'waived') the disqualification.

11. In respect of contractors, unchecked contractors will under no circumstances be allowed to work unsupervised in School. The School will determine the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

12. Any staff who TUPE transfer into the School's staff will be required to undertake the statutory requirements with regard to safer recruitment checks.

13. If staff are transferred under TUPE (gap of three months or less and information complete) information will be passed to the new employer and a note made on the Single Central Register that details have been accepted under TUPE.

Application Form

14. The School will only accept applications from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms, but are permitted to be submitted alongside an Application Form.

15. The School will make candidates aware that all posts in the School involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according

to the nature of the post. Candidates for employed posts will receive a Job Description for the role applied for.

16. Checks will be made of previous employment history to ascertain satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment. These checks will then be checked against references and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate. An online check will also be undertaken for shortlisted candidates on information that is publicly available online, and may be discussed at interview as appropriate.

17. The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") for the position and, where appropriate, a check of the Barred List will be undertaken. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration.

18. The statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)" applies to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 and to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

19. The school takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect their suitability to work with children must notify the school immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings they may receive.

20. Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the Director of People for more details.

21. If the candidate is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, the School will ask their current employer about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the candidate has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure.

22. If the candidate is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, the School will ask the previous employer about those issues. Where neither the current nor previous employment has involved working with children, the School will still ask the current employer about the candidate's suitability to work with children. Where the candidate has no previous employment history, the School may request character references which may include references from the candidate's school or university.

23. All candidates should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in

the application being rejected or summary dismissal by the School if they have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

Invitation to Interview

24. The School will shortlist applicants according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. At least two people will carry out the shortlisting exercise, consider any inconsistencies, look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them and explore all potential concerns.

25. As part of the shortlisting process, the school will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates as part of its safeguarding due diligence. The search will be limited to publicly available information relevant to the candidate's suitability to work with children or to the particular role. Searches will be undertaken in a proportionate and consistent way, and information will only be recorded where it is relevant to the recruitment decision or safeguarding assessment. Any relevant matters identified may be explored with the applicant at interview. This forms part of our wider safeguarding due diligence which aims to prevent and/or deter individuals who may be unsuitable to work with children from working in a school environment.

26. Shortlisted applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

27. We will, where possible, obtain references prior to interview. This allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and can be taken up with the shortlisted candidate at interview.

28. All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people chaired by the Head, Bursar or another designated senior member of staff. At least one person on the appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training. The Chair of Governors should chair the panel for the Head's appointment. The interviewers involved will be required to state any prior personal relationship or knowledge of any of the candidates and a judgement will be made by the Chair as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel. Should the Chair have a conflict of interest, the Vice Chair shall decide whether the Chair should withdraw from the panel.

29. The interview will be conducted in person where possible and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children.

30. For relevant positions, a longlist will be produced, and initial interviews may take place online. Where interviews are recorded, candidates will be told in advance, the purpose of the recording will be explained, and the recording will be retained for 12 months as detailed in the Recruitment Privacy Notice.

31. All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc.). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by the candidate from the awarding body.

32. The School requests that all candidates invited to interview also bring with them:

    a) A current driving licence including a photograph or a passport or a full birth certificate;

    b) A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;

    c) Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name;

    d) Where applicable, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

33. Please note that originals of the above are necessary. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.

34. Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks

35. Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

    a) Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received);

    b) Verification of identity and qualifications including, where appropriate, evidence of the right to work in the UK;

    c) A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;

    d) For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition from teaching order issued by the Secretary of State. Teaching work is defined in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 to encompass:

        - Planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
        - Delivering and preparing lessons to pupils

- Assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
- Reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils;

e) Verification of professional qualifications, including Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) where appropriate;

f) Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (for teaching posts – applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999);

g) Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas such checks and confirmations as the School may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered;

h) For a candidate to be employed as a teacher or in a Senior Management role, an additional online screening check, including social media where relevant, may be undertaken for the purposes of assessing matters relevant to safeguarding, the Teachers' Standards, the requirements of the role and the School's values. These checks will be undertaken by a third-party professional screening company. Candidates will be told about this processing in the Recruitment Privacy Notice, and any information obtained will be handled in accordance with the School's data protection obligations.

i) Evidence of satisfactory medical fitness;

j) Confirmation that the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)"

k) For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position as set out above under "Scope of this Policy", receipt of a signed "senior charity manager positions: automatic disqualification declaration" confirming that the candidate is not disqualified from acting in a senior management position for a charity in accordance with the automatic disqualification rules for charities.

l) Where the successful candidate will be taking part in the management of the school, a check will be carried out under section 128 of the Independent Educational Provision in England (Prohibition on Participation in Management) Regulations 2014. This applies to all Governors, Senior Management Team, teaching heads of department and support staff managers with budgetary responsibility.

36. It is the School's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire only after a conditional offer has been made. The information

contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the School in strictest confidence and processed in accordance with the Recruitment Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy. Access will be limited to those who need the information for recruitment, occupational health, safeguarding, health and safety or reasonable-adjustment purposes. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role, including proposed workload, extra-curricular activities and the layout of the School.

37. The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

References

38. The School will seek the references referred to in section 5 above for shortlisted candidates (including internal applicants) and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. References must be received by a senior person with appropriate authority. If the candidate does not wish the School to take up references in advance of the interview, they should notify the School at the time of applying.

39. The School will ask all referees whether the candidate is suitable to work with children and will ask for factual information about any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that meet the harm threshold set out in Part four of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Substantiated allegations that meet the harm threshold should be included in references. Allegations or concerns that do not meet the harm threshold and have been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious should not be included in a reference.

40. The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials. The School will verify all references. Where references are received electronically, the School will ensure they originate from a legitimate source.

41. The School will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the Application Form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

Criminal Records Policy

42. The School will refer to the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks.

43. The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request, or accessed here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice.

44. There are limited circumstances where the school will accept a check from another educational institution which are as follows:

45. This is where the new member of staff ("M") has worked in:

    a) A school or a maintained school in England in a position which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons;

    b) A maintained school in England in a position to which M was appointed on or after May 2006 and which did not bring M regularly into contact with children or young persons; or

    c) An institution within the further education sector in England or in a 16 to 19 Academy in a position which involved the provision of education or which brought M regularly into contact with children or young persons,

46. during a period, which ended not more than three months before M's appointment.

47. In these circumstances the school may apply for a disclosure but is not required to do so. A new, separate barred list check will be obtained.

48. DBS Update Service: Where an applicant subscribes to the DBS Update Service the applicant must give consent to the school to check there have not been changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. A barred list check will still be required.

49. If disclosure is delayed: A short period of work is allowed under controlled conditions, at the Head's discretion, and in line with a clear Risk Assessment. However, if an 'enhanced disclosure' is delayed, a Head may allow the member of staff to commence work:

    a) Without confirming the appointment;

    b) After a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person will be working in regulated activity and all other relevant checks (including any appropriate prohibition checks) having been completed satisfactorily;

    c) Provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;

    d) With appropriate safeguards in place, including supervision arrangements appropriate to the role and the level of risk identified;

    e) Safeguards reviewed at least every two weeks by the Head/Director of People and member of staff;

f) The person in question is informed what these safeguards are; and

g) A note will be added to the Single Central Register and evidence kept of the measures put in place.

Retention, Security of Records and Data Protection Obligations

50. The School will ensure that candidates are provided with appropriate privacy information during the recruitment process, including how their personal data, special category data and criminal offence data will be processed, the lawful basis for processing, who the information may be shared with, how long it will be retained and the rights available to candidates under data protection legislation.

51. Evidence of checks undertaken in line with this Policy will be maintained in staff files or on the Single Central Register where appropriate. The School will retain only the information necessary to evidence that required checks have been completed, subject to any statutory, safeguarding, regulatory or legal retention requirements.

52. The School will not routinely copy or retain DBS certificates. Where a DBS certificate is seen, the School will record only the required information on the Single Central Register and/or staff file, including the date seen, certificate number where appropriate, who checked it and the outcome. A copy of a DBS certificate will only be retained where there is a specific and justified reason for doing so, and in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice, data protection legislation and the School's retention schedule. Any retained copy will be kept securely, access will be restricted, and it will be deleted as soon as it is no longer required, normally no later than six months

Blundell's School
Tiverton
Devon
EX16 4DN

Tel: 01884 252543
Email: info@blundells.org

www.blundells.org