SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Approved by: Samantha Coxon-Smith – Director
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Introduction

NLTE is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. NLTE is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to providing a supportive working environment to all its members of staff.

The provision recognises that, to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest quality who share this commitment.

The provision complies with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (Guidance), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)2024, the DfE regulatory requirements for Independent Schools September 2019, and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

Aims

The aims of the provisions' recruitment policy are:

To adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children and that the provision meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks. When advertising a post, a safeguarding commitment statement will be added, this will include a statement about on-line media searches being carried out on all applicants shortlisted for interview. This will be done as part of our due diligence and will try and identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online and which we might wish to explore with the applicant at interview.

To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently

To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age

To ensure that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the provision is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity.

Equality Statement

At NLTE we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the provision, irrespective of race, gender, special educational needs, disability, religion or socio-economic background. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected with the provision feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in life.

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Procedure

Advert

The following information will be included when defining the role (through the job description and personal specification):

- the skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post, and
- the safeguarding requirements, i.e. to what extent will the role involve contact with children and will they be engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

The advert will include:

- NLTE's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and person specification, and
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.

Applications

All applicants must submit a NLTE Application Form. This informs applicants that any previous employer may be contacted. Applicants are asked to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and include any cautions and pending prosecution. The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment but will be considered in the same way as positive DBS disclosures.

Job Description

This states clearly:

- The main duties and responsibilities of the post
- The individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the pupils.

Candidate Information Pack

This will include a copy of the Application Form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role, the job description, person specification the Child Protection Statement, terms and conditions relating to the post and NLTE Privacy Notice. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

Short-listing

The applicant may then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

References

NLTE will take up references on short listed candidates prior to interview. No questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made. Offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend. Referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role for which the applicant has applied. NLTE will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and not provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials. NLTE will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

Interviews

• These will, whenever possible, be face-to-face.
• Interviews will be conducted by a minimum of two people. A larger panel will be required for senior posts.
• At least one member of the panel will have completed Safer Recruitment training
• The panel will agree a set of questions in advance relating to the requirements of the post.
• A written record will be kept of the outcome of the interview.
• If an issue arises from an online social media check, this will be raised during the interview.

Pre-Appointment Checks

In accordance with the recommendations set out in the Guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2019 the provision carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

An offer of appointment to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of the following:

• the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating NLTE's standard terms and conditions of employment
• the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which NLTE considers to be satisfactory;
• verification of candidate's identity and address, from current photographic ID, Birth Certificate and proof of address
• a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity (See Appendix 2). Where the position amounts to "regulated activity" (see Appendix 2) confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List administered by the DBS.
• a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available (See Appendix 2)
• a check that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service
• Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. In line with KCSIE guidance, a job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role
• Verification of the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then the provision follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
• completion of overseas check as required
• Verification of professional qualifications

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring with them evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications as set out below and in the list of valid identity documents (Appendix 1)

Applicants must bring: One document from Group 1 and two further documents from either of Group 1, Group 2i or Group 2ii, one of which must verify the applicant's current address; and original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form.

Applicants who have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change. The provision asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with KCSIE 2022. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that NLTE may verify the identity of, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history of all applicants. NLTE does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

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Criminal records check

NLTE applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS in respect of all prospective staff members and volunteers.

NLTE will verify the original DBS document provided by the applicant.

NLTE applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) in respect of all positions at the School which amount to 'regulated activity' (See Appendix 1) as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended).

The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List maintained by the DBS.

It is for the provision to decide whether a role amounts to 'regulated activity' (See Appendix 1) taking into account all the relevant circumstances. The DBS now issues a DBS disclosure certificate to the subject of the check only, rather than to the provision. The original disclosure certificate is provided to NLTE prior to the first day of employment. Employment will remain conditional upon the original certificate being provided and it being considered satisfactory by NLTE.

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS disclosure the Managing Director has discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the disclosure. This will only be allowed if all other checks, including a clear check of the Children's Barred List (where the position amounts to regulated activity), have been completed and once appropriate supervision has been put in place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including a criminal records check from the relevant jurisdiction(s).

Contractors engaged by NLTE must complete the same checks for their employees if they are to be on site during school hours. NLTE requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Contractor can commence work at NLTE.

Agencies who supply staff to NLTE must also complete the pre-employment checks which NLTE would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, the provision requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work at NLTE.

NLTE will verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency.

Student Teachers-it is responsibility of the initial teacher-training provider to carry out the necessary checks. NLTE will ensure these have been completed prior to the student starting their placement.

If a person working at NLTE moves from a post that was not regulated activity into work that is regulated activity the relevant checks for the regulated activity must be carried out.

Under the Prevent Duty, NLTE ensures that all visiting speakers whether invited by staff or pupils themselves, are suitable and appropriately supervised. All visiting speakers are briefed on NLTE's safeguarding and child protection procedures and are not left alone with children at any time.

NLTE will make referrals to the DBS and National College of Teaching and Leadership in line with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Prohibition Orders

A check of any prohibition will be carried out using the Employer Access Online Service. Disqualification by Association From the 5 January 2015 prior to appointment, it is also a requirement that all staff who will be working in the Early Years provision up to the age of 8 will need to self-certify whether or not they as individuals or others in their households* are disqualified from working with children including whether:

• They have been cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home or abroad
• Other orders have been made against them relating to their care of children
• They have had their registration cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering
• They live in the same household where another person who is disqualified lives.

*By household means living in the same house where the member of staff resides irrespective of whether they are family.

The Managing Director will ensure the maintenance of a single central record (SCR) detailing the outcomes of the self-certification.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

NLTE will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment based on conviction or other details revealed. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within NLTE. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in paragraph 6.2 below. All positions within NLTE are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must therefore declare all previous convictions and cautions, including those which would normally be considered "spent" except for those to which the DBS filtering rules apply (See DBS Filtering Guide 2013) A failure to disclose a previous conviction (which should be declared) may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence. It is unlawful for NLTE to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position at NLTE. NLTE will make a report to the Police and/or the DBS if:

it receives an application from a barred person it is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

Data Protection and Record Keeping

If an applicant is successful in their application, NLTE will retain on his/her personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help the School to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g. so that NLTE may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.
This documentation will be retained by NLTE for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with NLTE. It will be retained for a period of six months after employment terminates after which it will be securely destroyed.
NLTE will retain all interview notes on unsuccessful applicants for a 6-month period, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, applicants have a right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. Applicants who wish to access their interview notes must make a subject access request in writing to the director within 6 months of the interview date.

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Employment Records

NLTE's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information. NLTE will store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the Senior Management Team, ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding and prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information.

NLTE will retain the following information which will make up part of the personal file, for the successful candidate:

- Application form
- References
- Disclosure of convictions form
- Proof of identification/address
- Right to work
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Contract including medical fitness form
- Evidence of the DBS clearance

Personnel files will be kept for 6 years after the person has left.

Single Central Record of Recruitment Vetting Checks

NLTE will keep and maintain a single central record (SCR) of recruitment and vetting checks. The SCR will record all staff who are employed at NLTE including supply agency staff whether employed directly or employed by third parties, volunteers, and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members, e.g. specialist sports coach. The SCR shall also indicate who undertook the check and the date on which the check was completed or the relevant certificate obtained. NLTEs Business Manager completes the SCR.

Post-Appointment Induction

Every new member of staff is assigned a mentor who is responsible for supporting the new member of staff, induction work shadowing and ensuring they are familiar with NLTE Policies and Procedures.

Monitoring and Review

This policy and procedures and the efficiency with which related duties have been discharged will be reviewed annually by the Managing Director. Line Managers will schedule and keep record of termly supervision meetings. Any deficiencies and weaknesses will be remedied without delay.

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