

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Abbey School

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Other relevant policies:

Safeguarding Children and Young People in Education policy

Compliments and Complaints policy

Staff Disciplinary policy

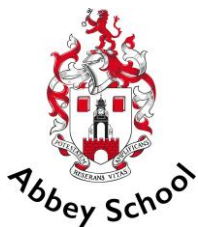
Staff Capability policy

Data Protection policy

Equality and Diversity policy

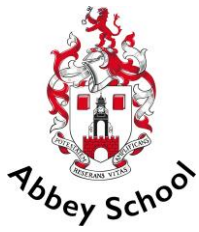
Induction and CPD policy

Pay policy

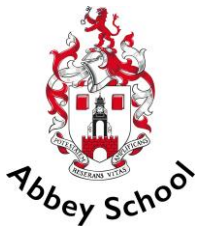


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1. Aims

Abbey 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, which is why this policy aims to embed a robust safeguarding culture into the recruitment practices of the school.

This policy outlines the school’s recruitment procedure and how the school ensures safer recruitment is considered at all levels of the recruitment process.

The School aims to recruit high calibre staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly by promoting equality and diversity in line with good practice and legislation.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(September 2022\)](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 \(Exceptions\) Order 1975](#)
- [Independent Educational Provision in England \(Prohibition on Participation in Management\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 \(July 2018\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR)
- [Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
- [Social Care Common Inspection Framework \(SCCIF\)](#)
- [Residential Special Schools: National Minimum Standards \(NMSRSS\)](#)
- [DfE \(2021\) Right to Work Checks: An Employer’s Guide](#)

3. Definitions and scope

Regulated activity includes:

- Being responsible in a school or college for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children.
- Working for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work undertaken by supervised volunteers.
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare or any overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

Regulated activities do not include:

- Paid work in specified places which is occasional and temporary and does not involve teaching or training.
- Supervised activities which are paid in non-specified settings.
- A supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children.

Teaching role – refers to a role involving planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; and assessing and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils. These activities are not teaching work for the purposes of KCSIE if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the headteacher to provide such direction and supervision.

Standard DBS – provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer, regardless of whether or not they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The law allows for certain old and minor matters to be filtered out.

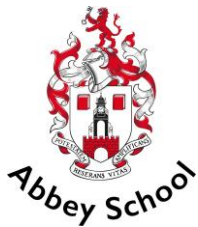
Enhanced DBS – provides the same information as the standard DBS, plus any additional information, e.g. interviews and allegations, held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed.

Enhanced DBS with barred list check – this check is required for when people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children. This check allows for additional checks to be made as to whether the person appears on the children's barred list.

Children's barred list – the DBS maintains a 'barred list' of individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults. In addition, where an enhanced DBS including a barred list check is obtained, the certificate will also detail whether the candidate is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 or section 167A of the Education Act 2002.

Section 128 check – provides for the Secretary of State to direct that a person may be prohibited or restricted from participating in the management of an independent school (which includes academies and free schools). A person prohibited under section 128 is also disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a governor of a maintained school.

Safer recruitment – is the safeguarding and protection of pupils during the recruitment and selection process. Its overall purpose is to help identify and deter or reject individuals who are deemed to be at risk of abusing children



4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Proprietor

The Proprietor is responsible for the school's recruitment and delegates day-to-day operational and strategic responsibility to the Principal with the support of the Senior Leadership Team

4.2. Advisory Body

The role of the Advisory Body is to provide strategic support, challenge and accountability. They shall:

- Review this policy and procedures
- Ensure members are familiar with the school's recruitment procedures contained in this policy

4.3. Principal/DSL

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring that the policies and procedures adopted by the Senior Leadership Team are fully implemented and followed by all staff
- all safeguarding arrangements of the School, including Safer Recruitment of Staff, Volunteers and Workers in the School
- Ensuring that appropriate checks have been carried out on prospective staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers working within the school
- Ensuring that appropriate supervision of employees and volunteers is organised, and for promoting the safety and wellbeing of pupils generally and throughout the recruitment process
- Ensuring successful candidates receive the appropriate induction training
- Deciding on the suitability of a candidate when a positive disclosure has been made

4.4. Appointment Manager

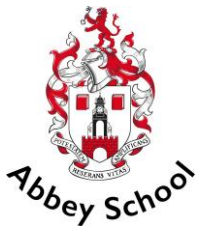
Shall be responsible for:

- Carrying out recruitment in line with this policy and procedures
- Being Safer Recruitment trained and keeping their qualification up to date
- Shortlisting and scoring candidates
- Acting as a point of contact between candidates and the school
- Preparing the recruitment panel to conduct interviews
- Recommending the successful candidate to SLT for approval with a salary recommendation
- Monitoring of candidate behaviour during interview to ensure that they:
 - Understand or appreciate the pupils' needs
 - Express that they want the role to meet the pupils' needs rather than personal needs
 - Do not use inappropriate language in relation to children, about our pupils or in front of our pupils
 - Do not express extreme views or views that do not support safeguarding practices
 - Do not display unclear boundaries with children
 - Fully explain any gaps in their employment and talk in detail about relevant experience

4.5. Recruitment Officer

Shall be responsible for:

- The operational aspects of the recruitment and selection process from start to finish
- Creating and placing job advertisements in line with policy and regulations



- Where applicable, creating the Job Description and Person Specification by liaising with the HR Assistant and Appointing Manager and getting approval from SLT
- Carrying out recruitment in line with this policy and procedures
- Identifying an Appointment Officer and ensuring that at least one person on the interview panel is safer recruitment trained
- Keeping appointment managers updated with applications and advising on the shortlisting process
- Ensure, where possible, references are received before interview and properly scrutinised with clarifications requested when appropriate
- Making conditional job offers after consulting with SLT
- Liaising with HR to ensure pre-employment checks are completed

4.6. School Administrator

Shall be responsible for:

- Maintaining the Single Central Record
- Ensuring that all pre-employment checks are completed before an individual can start work in school
- Liaising with DSL regarding the suitability of a candidate if a disclosure is made during interview or in references or concerns are raised during interview

5. Scope

The Recruitment Policy and Procedure herewith refers and applies to staff recruited and engaged by the School. In the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014, staff are defined as: *“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.”*

6. Planning, advertising and shortlisting

6.1. Planning

All vacancies will be advertised on the School website. Existing employees are encouraged to apply if they have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience and vacancies will be shared internally via email and the staff room noticeboards.

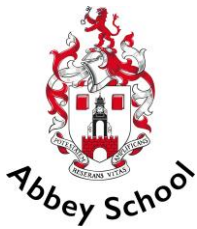
Where appropriate, adverts will also be placed via other sources, e.g. professional networks, recruitment websites. Whenever we advertise externally, we will always reference our commitment to the highest level of safeguarding and welfare for children and young people in order to attract suitable candidates who share the School’s vision and our commitment to ensuring equal rights. All applicants will have access to the Information pack (which will be accessible on the school’s website) relating to the vacancy containing:

- Application form
- Safeguarding children and young people in education policy
- Recruitment policy
- Job description & Person specification
- Selection procedure for the post
- Employment vetting requirements, such as a DBS check

The recruitment panel will comprise of at least 2 people, with at least one member having successfully completed up-to-date Safer Recruitment training within the last 5 years.

The Principal/ SLT will:

- Decide on the recruitment timeframe
- Decide who will be involved in the process and what their roles will be, e.g. who forms the recruitment panel



- Review documents to be provided to candidates, including the job description and person specification

6.2. Advertising

The school will consider the following information when advertising for a role within school:

- The skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required for the post
- The safeguarding requirements, including to what extent the role will involve contact with children and whether the appointed staff member will be engaging in regulated activity
- The School's Equality and Diversity policy to ensure that the advert reaches a wide range of groups

Advertisements will include:

- A statement of the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils whilst making clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding responsibilities of the post per the job description and person specification, including to what extent the role will involve regulated activity
- Information whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020

6.3. Application forms

Applicants will be reminded in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if they are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

The School will only accept applications from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs or other methods of application will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms.

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.

Applicants will be required to provide the following:

- Personal details (name, former names, address and NI number)
- Details of their current or most recent employment, including the reason for leaving
- Full employment history with adequate explanations for any gaps in their employment
- Qualifications details
- Details of references and whether the school may contact them prior to interview
- A personal statement of why the individual meets the person specification for the role

6.4. Shortlisting

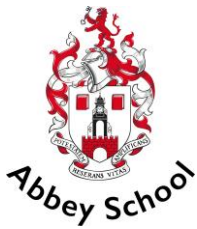
Selection methods will be objective, promote equality of opportunity and guard against bias in line with its Equality and Diversity policy. The School will shortlist applicants based on the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities specified by the role. Essential and desirable qualities will be published in the Person Specification for each role.

The school will not discriminate against any protected characteristics and will always promote difference and inclusion throughout the school.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a Self-Declaration form which must be received at least 1 day prior to interview which requires individuals to answer questions about their criminal record and any sanctions, restrictions or prohibitions which would make them unsuitable to work with children or young people.

The Recruitment Officer shall create a shortlisting template for the Appointing panel to use based on the Person Specification and give clear guidance on how to score. Candidates will be assessed against the same shortlisting criteria to ensure a fair process.

When shortlisting, the panel of at least 2 people will:



- Ensure that they have no personal knowledge of the candidates and preferably anonymise the applications
- Also conduct the interview, where possible
- Assess whether there are any inconsistencies or gaps in the applicant's employment history and consider the reasons given for them
- Explore any further potential concerns
- Request further information from the candidate if necessary prior to interview via the Recruitment Officer

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or disclosure of any information making them unsuitable to work with children. Only those candidates who have been shortlisted will be asked to disclose any relevant information including:

- Information of any criminal offences committed
- If they are known to the police and children's social care services
- Whether they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- Any relevant overseas information.

Applicants will need to sign a declaration which confirms that the information they have provided is true.

As part of the shortlisting process, the School will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. If it is identified that any incidents or issues have happened, that are publicly available online, the School may explore this with applicant at interview.

Interviews will be arranged for the shortlisted candidates by the Recruitment Officer.

7. Invitation to interview

Once a shortlist has been confirmed, the candidates to be invited for interviews will be contacted by the appointing officer and suitable interview times will be decided.

Short-listed applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail and their suitability to work with children will be explored. Applicants will be sent prior to their interview:

- A letter containing details of what the interview will entail, what documents to present
- Self-disclosure form to be sent to the School Business Manager prior to interview
- Details about Team-Teach training (where applicable)

8. Pre-interview checks

The Recruitment Officer shall be responsible for the necessary pre-interview checks for shortlisted candidates being completed and ensure the Recruitment Panel are made aware of any discrepancies or information which needs following up.

The Self Declaration form shall be returned to the School Business Manager who will ensure that any disclosures shall be relayed to the DSL and followed up sensitively in line with the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders (Appendix 1).

Pre-interview checks will include the following:

- Requesting at least 2 references from each shortlisted candidate directly from the referees, 1 reference shall be from the current or most recent employer and one from the role in which the candidate worked with children (if possible)
- Verification that the candidate has qualifications and/or experience relevant to the post and fulfils the essential elements of the Person Specification
- Checking references against application forms and noting down discrepancies or concerns, and following up these concerns with referees (and the DSL where necessary)
- Checking and, where necessary, following up candidates' Self Declaration forms

9. Requesting references

Once a candidate, including internal candidates, has been shortlisted for a position, references will be requested and scrutinised by the recruitment panel. Any concerns will be resolved satisfactorily prior to confirming an appointment.

At least two references will be taken up for every appointment, whether internal, permanent, temporary, part-time or fixed-term and previous employers may be approached for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. Additional references may be required dependent on the role, employment history and type of references received. In the case of staff who have lived or worked abroad we will take up at least one reference from the employer in the relevant country.

One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the candidate is a school leaver or graduate or has not been in work for over 2 years, then character references will be requested. 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.

The School will ask all referees if the candidate is suitable to work with children.

For specific roles at least one reference should be taken up prior to interview. This includes, but is not limited to, all senior roles, teaching posts and allied health professionals.

10. Checking references

References will be checked upon receipt to ensure that all questions have been answered satisfactorily and that information is not contradictory or incomplete. The referee will be contacted to provide further clarification where appropriate, e.g. if some answers are vague or insufficient, or contradictory information has been provided. The reference will be compared for consistency with the information on the candidate's application form. Discrepancies between the reference and the application form will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

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. When references are not sufficient in response, they will be followed up with a phone call to the referee to discuss the reference further and details of the response noted.

Where a reference appears incomplete or other concerns arise, the school will carry out one of the following actions:

- Call the referee to discuss the reference further
- Email the referee the reference for confirmation of its accuracy

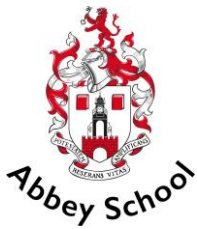
The recruitment panel will ensure that any past disciplinary action or allegations disclosed as part of a reference are considered carefully when assessing the candidate's suitability for the role. If this involves safeguarding or potential safeguarding concerns, the DSL will be consulted to help assess the candidate's suitability.

Before making a decision not to appoint a candidate based on an unsatisfactory reference, the recruitment panel and/or SLT will consider if HR advice is necessary. Once the decision is made, the decision will be recorded on the recruitment file as the reason for non-appointment.

11. Providing references

References will only be provided once written consent has been obtained from the person requesting a reference.

Staff members providing a reference will follow this policy's procedures and the prospective employer's requests as much as is reasonably possible, e.g. complete the provided form. If there



reference is not requested in a specific format, the staff member will decide the most appropriate method.

Staff members must make HR aware when they have been asked to provide a personal or employment reference relating to the individual's employment at Abbey School, e.g. for a current or former colleague. All employment references must be authorised and countersigned by the School Business Manager or Principal who will complete the request in consultation with the individual's line manager and HR.

Information relating to an individual's health and sensitive personal data, e.g. information relating to the individual's ethnicity, religion or trade union membership, will not be disclosed as part of a reference unless "express consent" has been received from the individual for this purpose.

If, as part of a settlement agreement, the school has agreed to provide a reference for a member of staff, the Principal will ensure it is provided in line with the agreement and this policy. In circumstances, where new evidence emerges that indicates information provided in the reference is incorrect, the Principal will decide if the reference is changed or withdrawn after taking legal advice and will notify the member of staff of any decision before sending.

The school will ensure that any information provided confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicants suitability to work with children, and only provide the facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations, including a group of low-level concerns about the same individual, that meet the harm threshold.

Any repeated concerns or allegations which do not meet the harm threshold which have been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated, or malicious will not be included in any reference.

12. Content of references

Basic information will always be expected in references received and provided, e.g. skills, knowledge, duties undertaken, experience working with children, and personal characteristics, in addition to any information relating to safeguarding. Further relevant comments will be made as much as is reasonably possible in line with the employer's requests, provided they are verifiable and objective, e.g. through appraisals or attendance records, except as outline below.

Employees who have left Abbey School without serving their contractual notice will only be entitled to a basic reference confirming dates of employment, job title and whether there were any safeguarding concerns.

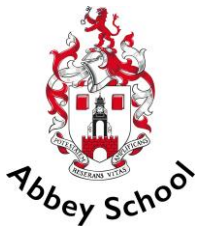
References will contain only factual and verifiable information and will not include speculation, e.g. about a former employee's suitability for a job, or hearsay. The person providing the reference will ensure all comments have a factual basis and that an impression is not given which is misleadingly positive or negative. Performance issues or concerns which have not been discussed or raised with the employee beforehand will not be mentioned.

Details of any live disciplinary warnings or capability procedures in the previous two years, and the reasons for these, will be provided if requested.

All members of staff providing references will be made aware that information provided verbally to the prospective employer is subject to the same duties as written information and will avoid making verbal statements. Where it is necessary or appropriate, verbal information will be provided only in line with this policy's procedures, e.g. all statements must be verifiable and objective.

13. Previous disciplinary action

The recruitment panel will ensure that any references requested by the school include a section asking for any past disciplinary action or allegations to be disclosed. Any disclosure will be carefully considered when assessing the candidate's suitability for the role, in line with this policy.



Information from DBS checks will not be included in references provided by the school. Information regarding criminal offences from other sources will not be included, unless the Principal deems it appropriate and HR advice has been sought.

When providing references, the disclosure of information about disciplinary action or allegations not relating to safeguarding will be provided where it is deemed appropriate, e.g. it is relevant to the staff member of former staff member's suitability for the role. Information relating to disciplinary action will generally only be disclosed if penalties or sanctions remain in place for the employee.

Allegations which were proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious, e.g. relating to misconduct, will not be included in a reference – this includes if it is a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious. The member of staff providing the reference will make no comments about their own personal views on the veracity of allegations. If an allegation exists which is yet to be investigated or an investigation is incomplete, the Principal will seek HR and legal advice, on what information, if any, should be provided to the prospective employer.

14. Use of data and confidentiality

Personal data relating to references will be handled in line with the Data Protection Policy. All references will be properly addressed and marked private and confidential.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the UK GDPR any personal information will be processed fairly and lawfully, and will be kept safe and secure. Access will be strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Information relating to an individual's health and sensitive personal data, e.g. information relating to the individual's ethnicity, religion or trade union membership, will not be disclosed as part of a reference unless 'express consent' has been received from the individual for this purpose.

The person requesting a reference may request to see it before it is sent, unless the Principal decides this is not appropriate; however, the school is aware that ultimately, they cannot prevent the person receiving a copy in line with the Data Protection Act. If the person raises comments about the reference before it is sent, the member of staff responsible for the reference will consider the comments and, if they decide to leave it unchanged, record the reason(s) behind their non-agreement.

15. Online searches on shortlisted candidates

The school is committed to ensuring that safeguarding is a top priority; therefore, in line with KCSIE, the school will carry out online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of their due diligence.

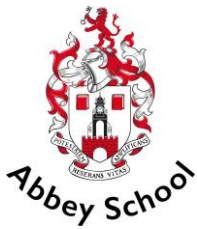
Online searches solely aim to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school may want to explore with the applicant at interview.

Online searches will be conducted on shortlisted candidates only, and only where the school considers this appropriate. The school will consider any potential risks of online searches, e.g. unlawful discrimination or invasion of privacy, and will be clear on the reasons that online searches are being conducted. Online searches will only examine data that is publicly available.

Online searches will be carried out by an individual who is independent of the recruitment process to minimise the risk of bias or discrimination and to ensure that only relevant information is considered. The person responsible for carrying out online searches will have due regard to Part three of KCSIE and have read and understood this policy.

The online search process may include searching for the candidate by name via search engines and social media, such as:

- Google
- Facebook
- LinkedIn



When carrying out searches of shortlisted candidates' online presence, the school will look out for indicators of concerns, such as:

- Discriminatory comments
- Inappropriate behaviour, images or language
- Anything that suggests the candidate may not be suitable to work with children or young people

Any concerns will be addressed during the interview process. The school will ensure that candidates are given an opportunity to discuss any concerns raised by the online search.

16. Interview

Short-listed applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail and their suitability to work with children will be explored.

All formal interviews will have a panel of at least two people, one of whom will be safer recruitment trained. 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 SLT as to whether or not an interviewer should withdraw from the panel should a potential conflict of interest arise.

The panel will ask standard questions and the responses recorded for ease of comparison, they will also ask open questions to assess the candidates experience and suitability for the post and to assess the candidate's personal competencies in relation to their:

- Motivation for working with children or young people
- Exploring their experience of working with children and/or young people with special needs
- Emotional resilience
- Physical resilience
- Physical fitness for working with our pupils
- Values and ethics

Questions on the above should have direct links to the Person Specification for the role and be structured in such a way that examples of what would constitute a positive indicator in a response is set alongside what a negative indicator would be, to assist the panel in measuring the responses.

Candidates will also be asked to explain any gaps in employment and be asked a question to probe their understanding and knowledge of safeguarding.

Areas that may raise concerns and lead to further enquiry and scrutiny include:

- Implication that adults and children are equal
- Lack of recognition or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- Lack of understanding about the needs of our pupils
- Inappropriate idealisation of children
- Inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children
- Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours
- Consistent rule-breaking behaviour.

Candidates shortlisted for interview will be given the opportunity to complete a self-disclosure form before the interview, to give the interview panel time to consider the information provided.

Some roles may require additional assessment such as a lesson observation or practical task. Details will either be included in the Information Pack or sent to the applicant prior to the interview date.

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming their ID.

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.

Temporary staff who are appointed on a fixed-term basis will only be appointed to a permanent position if the full recruitment, selection and vetting processes have been followed.

17. After the interview

After the interview has been completed, the recruitment panel will:

- Assess the candidates' performance using the same agreed criteria
- Ask the successful to provide documents to complete the pre-employment checks and to complete the DBS application checks as soon as possible

Interview notes and assessment materials will be held securely for an appropriate amount of time after the interviews, in case any aspect of the recruitment process is challenged.

After choosing a successful candidate, the school will:

- Make a conditional offer of employment to the candidate
- Ask the candidate to provide identification, right to work in UK evidence and proof of qualifications, if this has not already been done
- Complete the relevant pre-appointment checks

Any spent or filtered convictions declared on the candidates' self-declaration form, or declared at interview, will not affect the offer of employment if already made; however, the school will undertake relevant assessments to determine whether the candidate is suitable to work in the school.

18. Candidate reserve list

Candidates who are deemed to be suitable for appointment by the selection panel, but for whom there are not enough vacancies, can, if they wish, be placed on to a reserve list. If another vacancy for the same role with the same specification becomes vacant then the vacancy may be filled directly from the reserve list without the need to re-advertise or re-interview subject to pre-employment checks including updated references.

Candidates will be placed in order on the reserve list in selection result order. Appointments will be subject to the candidate being able to fulfil any specific requirements of the vacancy at the time. The reserve list will be valid for 6 months from the interview date

19. Remote recruitment

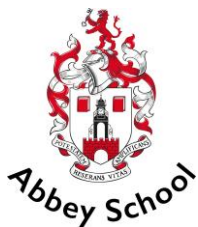
The school will follow all the requirements set out in this policy when recruiting remotely, changing only the in-person nature of the interview, and implementing the necessary additional steps to support this. Remote recruitment will only happen in exceptional circumstances, for example if the candidate lives overseas.

Online interviews will take place on Microsoft Teams in line with the school's ICT Acceptable Use policy. Staff members will ensure they understand how to operate the functionalities of the platform and check it is operating correctly before the interview commences.

The school will communicate its expectations to candidates regarding the use of the online platform and remote completion of written tasks in good time prior to the interview. These expectations will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

- The candidate will participate in the interview with both the video camera and microphone features enabled at all required times
- The candidate will participate in the interview in a suitable setting – a quiet area with a neutral background
- The candidate will keep personal information which is not relevant to the recruitment process private, e.g. their email password, and will not ask the staff members conducting the interview to share any such private information
- Where necessary, the candidate will be aware that the school may record the online interview, and that they will be required to consent to this in order for the interview process to continue.

If a candidate refuses to attend a remote interview, the school will consider whether alternative arrangements for an in-person interview are possible, having due regard to the school's equality



duties at all times. If it is not possible, the school will sensitively inform the candidate that the remote interview is a requirement of the application process and discuss whether recruitment process can be continued at this time.

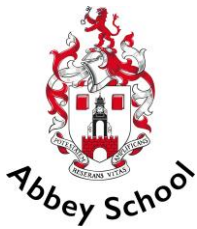
20. Pre-appointment checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon completion of the necessary pre-appointment checks set out below to the School's satisfaction. The checklist is not exhaustive and may be added to and adapted to improve the process when appropriate:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received).
- Verification of identity, including evidence of the right to work in the UK by conducting a manual document-based check or using the government's [online portal](#)
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List(s) maintained by the DBS. Any positive DBS checks will be discussed with the Principal and the candidate, the results of which will be recorded. See [Appendix I](#) for further details on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders. Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify a candidate for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.
- 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. 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 Principal or School Business Manager for more details.
- For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.
- Verification of professional qualifications, where appropriate.
- Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (for teaching posts – applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999).
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas such criminal record checks and other confirmations as the School may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.
- Verification of a satisfactory medical physical and mental fitness to carry out the role which the candidate has been offered through completion of a pre-employment health questionnaire. In this context, 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.
- 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.

The school will consider the following when assessing any disclosure information on a DBS certificate:

- The seriousness and relevance to the post which they have applied to
- How long ago the offence occurred
- Whether the information was disclosed on the Self Declaration form
- Whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents
- The circumstances around and at the time of the incident
- Whether the individual accepted responsibility for what happened
- Whether the offence has been decriminalised



If the school has reason to believe that an individual is barred, it is an offence under section 9 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 for the school to allow the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

Checks for all prohibitions, directions, sanctions and restrictions will be carried out by using the secure access portal on the Teacher Services' web page.

Candidates who have lived outside the UK

For candidates who have lived outside the UK, all mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary, including an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information for those engaging in regulated activity, even if they have never been to the UK before.

The school will make any further checks that it deems appropriate so that any relevant events occurring outside the UK can be considered, e.g. obtaining proof of past teaching conduct for any candidate for a teaching position from the professional regulating authority in the country in which they worked, where available.

If a candidate is unable to provide the correct documentation, they cannot submit a DBS check. This is because the right to work in the UK cannot be established.

Following the UK's exit from the EU, schools and colleges should apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

Agency and third-party staff

All agencies supplying agency staff will provide Abbey School with a written agreement that they have carried out all pre-employment checks required by the School and will be recorded on the School's SCR. Confirmation will also be obtained that the individual who presents for work is the same person on whom all checks have been completed. A copy of photographic identification will generally be kept where appropriate.

The school will obtain a copy of the enhanced DBS certificate from the agency where it has been obtained before the person is due to commence work and has disclosed any matter or information. The school will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information). Under no circumstances will a contractor in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or left alone in areas where they can have access to or access to data about children or adults at risk or engage in regulated activity. If employed to work with children or adults at risk they will be subject to the same checks as a School employee

Trainee and student teachers

The school will ensure that enhanced DBS certificates and barred list checks are obtained on all salaried candidates for initial teacher training who are in regulated activity.

Where student teacher placements are placed by the university or college, it is the responsibility of the provider to carry out the necessary checks. The school will obtain written confirmation from the university or college that the checks have been carried out.

Adults who supervise children on work experience

Pupils who are on work experience placements will always be accompanied by a member of school staff. The school will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm.

21. Right to work checks

The school will obtain evidence that all candidates for a position have the right to work in the UK by either conducting a manual document-based check, or by using the government's [online portal](#). This will be done before a candidate is offered a position.

When conducting a manual, document-based check, the school will ensure that the documents received from candidates are acceptable in line with government guidance, and from the appropriate list: [List A](#) for candidates with a permanent right to work in the UK, or [List B](#) for candidates with a temporary right to work in the UK. Checks on documents will be conducted in line with [section 19](#) of this policy.

The school will obtain proof of candidates' immigration status in the UK.

The school will contact the Home Office in the event that a statutory excuse must be established in the following circumstances:

- The candidate provides a document confirming receipt of an application to EUSS on or before 30 June 2021
- The candidate provides a non-digital certificate of application confirming receipt of an application to the EUSS on or after 1 July 2021
- The school has checked a digital certificate of application and has been directed to the Home Office's Employer Checking Service
- The candidate provides an Application Registration Card stating the holder is permitted to undertake the work in question
- The school is satisfied it has not been provided with any acceptable documents because the candidate has an outstanding application with the Home Office made before their previous permission expired, or has an appeal or review pending against the Home Office's decision and cannot provide evidence of their right to work as a result
- The school considers that it has not been provided with any acceptable documents, but the person presents other information indicating they are a long-term resident of the UK, i.e. having arrived before 1988.

The school will not make assumptions about a person's right to work in the UK, or their immigration status, on the basis of their race, ethnicity, nationality, length of residence in the UK or background. All candidates, including British citizens, will have their right to work in the UK checked. Where a candidate's right to work is time-limited, the school will conduct a follow-up check in advance of its expiry.

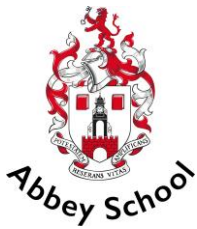
The school may use a certified digital identity service provider (IDSP) to conduct right to work checks on candidates.

22. Identity checking process

When checking the validity of identifying documents, the school will ensure that this is done in the presence of the holder, e.g. in person or via a live video link. In both cases, the school will be in physical possession of the original documents. The school will only accept valid, current and original documentation in its physical form. The school will not accept photocopies or documentation printed from the internet, e.g. internet bank statements.

The school will request documents with photographic identity, such as a passport, and compare this against the candidate's likeness. The school will not accept documents that are not in the candidate's current name as recorded on the application form.

The school will ensure that the candidate declares all previous name changes and provides documentary evidence to support the name change. If the candidate is unable to provide evidence to support the name change, the school will hold a discussion with the candidate about the reasons



why. The school will always aim to check the name on the candidate's birth certificate in order to validate their identity.

The school will compare the candidate's address history with any other information the candidate has provided, such as their CV.

The school will ensure that all letters and statements provided by the candidate are recent e.g. within a three-month period.

The school will keep a dated record of every document that has been checked for the duration of the candidate's employment and for a further two years after they have left the school. This will be either as a hard copy or in a scanned format which cannot be manually altered, e.g. JPEG or PDF document, and will be made available to the appropriate authorities if and when requested.

In line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, the school will only retain copies of DBS certificates where there is a valid reason for doing so, and only for as long as is needed to consider the information provided – this will not be for longer than six months.

When information is destroyed, the school may keep a record of the fact that vetting was carried out, the result of this vetting, and the recruitment decision taken.

The school may use a certified digital IDSP to secure DBS checks on candidates.

23. After the pre-appointment checks

Once the pre-employment checks have been completed or are in progress, the Recruitment Officer will agree a provisional start date with the candidate and the School Business Manager will submit contractual paperwork.

The School Administrator will add the required details of the checks carried out to the school's SCR.

24. Single central record (SCR)

The school will maintain and regularly update the SCR.

All new employees will be added to the record, which will include:

- All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school.
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the school, including volunteers
- All members of the proprietor body.

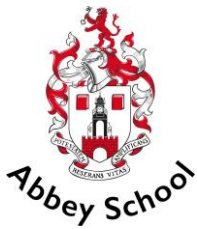
The bullet points below set out the minimum information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed or certificate obtained:

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK, including checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check

25. Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and the Advisory Body. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.

All members of staff involved in the recruitment process are required to familiarise themselves with all processes and procedures outlined in this policy.



Appendix I: Recruitment of ex-offenders policy and procedure

Purpose and scope

The aim of this policy is to state our approach towards employing people who have criminal convictions.

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aim to select people for employment on the basis of their individual skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and, where appropriate, qualifications and training.

However, Abbey School for Exceptional Children is an exempt employer as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975) and as such, we have a lawful basis for requesting an enhanced DBS disclosure certificate for all employees. In addition, the School is a regulated activity provider and for most posts, we have a statutory duty to check that the individual is not barred from regulated work with children and / or adults.

The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance to us and the scrutiny of any unspent cautions or convictions and those which would not be protected under the Ministry of Justice filtering rules is an essential and non-negotiable part of the pre-employment check process.

We will consider ex-offenders for employment on their individual merits. Our approach towards employing ex-offenders differs depending on whether the job is or is not exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Jobs covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

We will not automatically refuse to employ a particular individual just because they have a previous criminal conviction.

During the recruitment process, we will ask shortlisted job applicants to disclose any unspent cautions or convictions but will not ask job applicants questions about criminal history that would be filtered or protected, nor expect them to disclose any protected convictions. The successful applicant will be asked to apply for a basic DBS certificate.

If an applicant has a caution or conviction that is unspent and if the nature of the offence is relevant to their suitability for the job for which they have applied, we will review the individual circumstances of the case and may, at our discretion, decline to select the individual for employment.

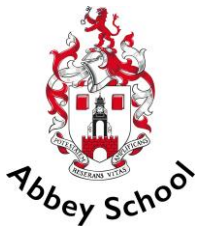
Jobs that are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The vast majority of the roles we are seeking to recruit are covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (roles in regulated positions and in Further Education provision). In these cases, the School will require shortlisted applicants to disclose all unspent convictions or bind overs in addition to any criminal history that would not be filtered. Even in these circumstances, however, we will not refuse to employ a particular individual unless the nature of the conviction has some relevance to the job for which the individual has applied.

As a result of amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act in 2013 and 2020, cautions and convictions that meet specified criteria should not be disclosed by applicants and must not be taken into account by potential employers. We encourage all applicants to use the flowchart and guidance provided by Nacro and to seek legal or impartial advice before completing their self-disclosure. We will not take into account any criminal history that would be protected or filtered, even if it is subsequently disclosed on the DBS certificate.

The School will, once we have selected the person to whom we wish to offer employment, make a joint application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for an enhanced certificate (with the relevant DBS barred list(s) check if the post is in regulated activity). Where the individual is a member of the DBS update service in the relevant workforce and at the required level, the organisation will, with the individual's permission, carry out a status check on any current certificate.

Abbey School is committed to ensuring that all information provided about an individual's criminal convictions, including any information released in disclosures, is used fairly and stored and handled



appropriately and in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. Data held on file about an individual's criminal convictions will be held only as long as it is required for employment and / or safeguarding purposes and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised person.

The Process

As a Regulated Activity provider (RAP) almost all paid employees at Abbey School are in regulated activity and therefore subject to an enhanced DBS certificate with check(s) of the relevant DBS barred list(s).

In relation to volunteers and contractors, we only request a DBS certificate after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that a check is relevant to the position concerned.

For those positions where an enhanced DBS check is required, all application forms, recruitment advertising and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an enhanced DBS certificate (with barred list check(s) where relevant) will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position and an explanation of when in the recruitment process criminal information will be requested and considered.

All shortlisted applicants are required to complete a criminal record self-disclosure to be returned no less than 1 day prior to the interview date. This information is to be sent to the School Business Manager or Principal. Failure to return the self-disclosure will result in the offer of interview being withdrawn. We will ensure that the self-disclosure information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

The criminal history self-disclosure will include information for shortlisted applicants on the importance of seeking legal advice and the contact details of organisations that can provide impartial advice.

We ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) (as amended 2013 & 2020) and know how to access advice and support (e.g. from HR, external adviser, NACRO) and relevant registered bodies.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, the recruitment selection panel will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or related concerns that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that would not be filtered could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment

All potential employees are guided to the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice and a copy is made available on request

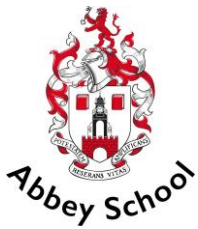
We undertake to discuss any relevant matter on a DBS certificate with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. This discussion and any subsequent risk assessment may be undertaken by the Principal or by another appointed person. If the DBS check reveals any matching information against the DBS barred list(s) or any criminal conviction which precludes them from working with children and/or adults the applicant is deemed non-appointable. In this circumstance, we would notify the Local Authority Designated Officer in line with the local multi-agency procedures.

References / useful links :

Disclosure & Barring Service www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

Detailed information, fact sheets and FAQs: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

Filtering guidance from 28/11/20 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering-guide>



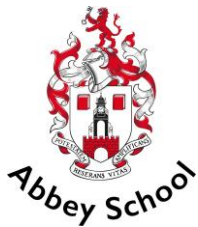
Ministry of Justice – guidance on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975 (and self disclosure) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>

National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Nacro)

Criminal record support service – advice for applicants and employers

<https://www.nacro.org.uk/criminal-record-support-service/>

Filtering flowchart [Filterin-flowchart-twitter.png \(5000×2813\)](#) (netdna-ssl.com)



Appendix 2: Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteers fall outside of the definition of staff contained in the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2014. Volunteers are individuals who undertake unpaid activity in the School of their own free choice.

Abbey School is committed to ensuring that:

- pupils benefit from working with volunteers
- volunteers benefit from working at Abbey School
- volunteers support the aims and objectives of the School
- employed staff understand the role of volunteers
- a range of opportunities will be offered to encourage volunteers to work with us.

Abbey School expects volunteers to:

- be reliable and honest
- uphold the school's values
- comply with the school's policies and procedures
- contribute positively to the aims of the school
- carry out tasks within agreed guidelines

Volunteers can expect:

- to have clear information about what is and is not expected of them
- to receive adequate training, support and supervision
- to be insured and volunteer in a safe environment

Anyone wishing to volunteer at Abbey School should approach the Principal with their contact details and details of how and when they would like to volunteer. Volunteers must complete a Volunteer Application Form with details of two referees who can confirm their suitability to work with children.

If an applicant is accepted to volunteer at the school, a volunteer agreement will be drawn up setting out the conditions of the volunteering, code of conduct and checks required before volunteering can commence.

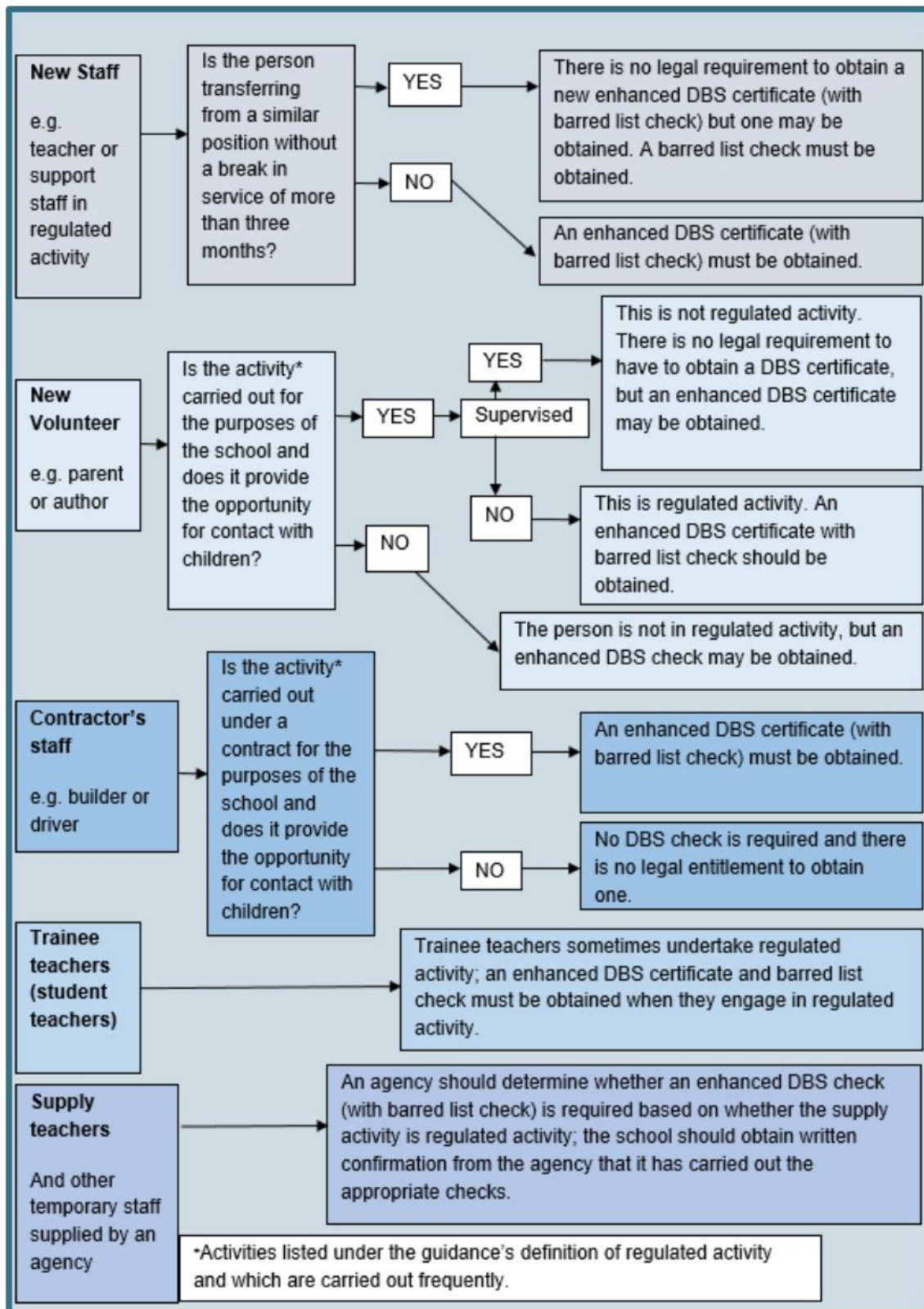
In line with guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education volunteers will be:

- be risk assessed for the type of DBS check required according to the nature of the work with children, whether the role is eligible and the information known about the volunteer
- supervised at all times by an employed member of staff in regulated activity

The school will undertake an Enhanced DBS check with barred list for children and adults on all individuals undertaking regulated activity. In addition, volunteers will undergo the following checks before volunteering may commence:

- ID check, confirming their identity and current address
- Health disclosure to confirm their physical and mental fitness for the role
- DBS check
- At least two references from individuals who can confirm their suitability to work with children and do not know the applicant solely as a friend or relative.
- Overseas check, where the volunteer has lived or worked abroad for more than three months in the past five years

Appendix 3: Flowchart of DBS criminal record and barred list checks



Appendix 4: Flowchart of caution and conviction

