

Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy 2026



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Introduction

This recruitment and selection policy has been produced in accordance with the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025. This policy aims to ensure that safer and fair recruitment and selection is conducted at all times at Bede's (encompassing all schools within St Bede's School Trust Sussex).

Bede's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Bede's is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining for future summer employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service. A motivated and committed workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is critical to our performance and fundamental to the delivery of a high-quality service.

Purpose

To ensure the recruitment of both, fixed-term and Temporary staff (including volunteers) is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner. To achieve this, those who are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

Scope

The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the governing body. The governing body has delegated the responsibility to the Director for appointing staff.

Aims and objectives

- To attract and recruit the best candidates for all roles.
- To ensure all staff adhere to all safeguarding measures within the process at all times.
- To present Bede's professionally at all stages of the process.
- To ensure consistency of approach when interviewing and selecting the best candidate for each role, using a fair and measured approach and following the Trust's Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- To positively demonstrate the Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, ensuring all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to and that appointees are not discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and marriage or civil partnership.
- To ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.

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Principles

The following principles are encompassed in this policy:

- All applicants will receive fair treatment and a high-quality service.
- The job description, and in particular the section entitled 'Key skills and experience', are essential tools and will be used throughout the process.
- Employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the job.
- Selection will usually be carried out by a panel with at least two members. At least one panel member during the recruitment process will have received and successfully completed appropriate accredited training on the recruitment and selection process.
- Selection will be based on a minimum of completed application form, shortlisting, interview and references.
- All posts will normally be advertised. The following will be carried out in connection with the advertising of vacancies:
 - a) Roles will usually be advertised externally. In some cases, recruitment may be undertaken through an agency where this is the most appropriate route.
 - b) Advertisements will not be confined unjustifiably to those geographical areas or publications that would exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants from a particular racial group.
 - c) Advertisements shall not state a specific length of residence or experience in the United Kingdom as a requirement for a vacancy.
 - d) Advertisements shall not differentiate between qualifications obtained in the UK and those that are fully comparable but obtained outside the UK.
 - e) All applicants for posts will be sent a copy of Bede's Equal Opportunities Policy, if requested.
 - f) Where an advertisement contains an informal contact point, this shall be for the purpose of expanding on the job details and requirements and not as an informal selection procedure.
- The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

Equal opportunities

As a Trust, we must not discriminate against any employee or candidate. We must ensure we are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 where we do not discriminate on the grounds of race, religion, age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation and marriage or civil partnership. Bede's acknowledges that unfair discrimination can arise on occasion and so will ensure that the Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is the foundation for all its activities.

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Pre-recruitment process

Overview

Bede's Summer School uses an online application form, which must be filled in, in English, by all applicants including in circumstances when a CV and / or other written information has been submitted.

Objective

The objective of the recruitment process is to attract and select staff who will successfully and positively contribute to the future development of Bede's Summer School. The first experience of Bede's an individual has is important, so the experience should be positive and all those responsible for recruiting will:

- Leave a positive image with unsuccessful applicants
- Give successful applicants a clear understanding of the post and what is expected of them
- Strive to reduce the risk of a bad selection decision that can be expensive and may cause line management problems in the future or may not meet Bede's commitment to safeguard children and young people.

Application form

An online application form will be used to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants.

Job description and person specification

An accurate job description is required for all posts, using Bede's job description format. The job description contains a section outlining the key skills and experience of the post (a 'person specification').

References

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be sought and obtained in writing/e-mail directly from the referee, who must have the authority to give a reference on behalf of their organisation.

Two references will be sought as minimum and cover, typically employers for the previous five years. Where an applicant has not been in employment during this period, then independent personal referees will be contacted.

As part of our verification process, all referees will be contacted by phone to authenticate the reference provided.

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Interviews

Objective

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work directly with or in a working environment with children and young people. The selection process for people who will work with children and young people will always include an online face-to-face interview, even if there is only one candidate.

Interview panel

The members of the panel will:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments and be aware that they act for the Trust in making recruitment decisions.
- Panel members should be aware of the duty to make reasonable adjustments for a candidate with a disability. Examples of reasonable adjustments could include:
 - Changing the interview location
 - Providing a hearing loop for an applicant with a hearing impairment
- Independently make appropriate notes during and immediately after the interview on each applicant. Notes must relate to how applicants demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience and abilities in relation to the person specification. The Data Protection Act allows applicants to request disclosure of such notes and the lack of such notes would seriously impede the Trust's ability to contest a complaint about the recruitment process.

Long listing and Shortlisting

If a large number of applicants are received for a post it may be necessary to both long and subsequently shortlist applications. Both processes must be carried out by the interview panel, who will meet to discuss the applications in accordance with the pre-agreed selection criteria and a written record of the long and shortlisting processes kept.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel, it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

Scope of the interview

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also explore:

- The candidate's attitude towards children and young people (using a 'values based assessment' approach, as designed and supported by the NSPCC in their *Safer Interviewing Skills Training* work)
- Their ability to support Bede's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

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- Gaps in the candidate's employment history
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee
- Whether the candidate wishes to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS check.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate will also be asked at interview if there is anything they wish to declare/discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to their referees. (It is essential that the references are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed and before they start work).

Conditional offer of appointment: pre-appointment checks

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional on:

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references
- The receipt of a fully completed and signed Application Form
- Verification of the candidate's identity
- Verification of eligibility to work in the UK
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness
- Verification of qualifications, where required for the role
- Satisfactory Social Media checks
- Completion of a Childcare Disqualification form
- Completion of a Criminal Declaration Form
- An overseas police check may be required if a candidate has lived overseas for 3 months or more in the last 5 years.
- A check of the Children's Barred List
- A complete DBS certificate application or verification of update service enrollment.
- A check of the Teachers Record (Prohibition Checks)

All checks are carried out by Bede's Summer School Recruitment Department. If a disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed in the course of the selection process, the Recruitment Department will follow relevant DBS guidance in such circumstances, informing the Director and HR.

All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention and location of information imposed by DBS regulations)
- Recorded on Bede's single central register (SCR) record database
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

The facts must be reported to the police and/or the Children's Services at the local authority where:

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- The candidate is found to be on the Children's Barred List, or the DBS disclosure shows they have been disqualified from working with children by a court
- An applicant has provided false information that affects their suitability to work with children in, or in support of, his/her application
- There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

Bede's will liaise with the local authority's designated officer if this should be the case.

Post-appointment induction

There will be a Safeguarding and child protection induction programme for all staff and other volunteers newly appointed to Bede's regardless of previous experience. This induction will, in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, take place prior to the commencement of employment and will be undertaken by an appropriately trained member of staff normally the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead or a suitably qualified external professional.

Living on School premises

In accordance with the National Minimum Standards: it is a requirement that 'all persons over 16 (not on the School roll) who after April 2002 began to live on the same premises as boarders but are not employed by the school, complete and satisfy an enhanced DBS check'.

There is a licence agreement between the school and any person over 16 not employed by the school but living in the same premises as boarders (for example, members of staff's own family or partner). This details the terms of their accommodation, provides guidance on contact with boarders and makes clear they have a responsibility to supervise their visitors. It makes clear that accommodation may cease to be provided if they break the Bede's Child Protection policy.

Regular visitors to Bede's boarding accommodation complete and satisfy an enhanced DBS check. Less frequent visitors to Bede's boarding accommodation must be fully supervised at all times to prevent gaining unsupervised access to Bede's boarders or their accommodation.

Disqualification by Association for EYFS

Bede's asks employees, including new appointments working within EYFS (or those who manage the provision) to complete a self-declaration form that shows they are not disqualified themselves or by association from working in this setting.

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Complaints procedure

Applicants for employment concerned about the recruitment process should write to the Director of Summer School in the first instance. This does not preclude them taking the matter to an employment tribunal or civil court.

Any member of staff with concerns about the application of this policy should refer to Bede's Summer School Grievance Procedure.

For guidance on the Equality Act and making reasonable adjustments:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-guidance>

For further guidance on recruitment and induction:

<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/8/d/Recruitment-and-induction-advisory-booklet.pdf>

For guidance on DBS:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disclosure-and-barring-service-filtering>