



# SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

2025-2026

MAT Board Approval:	November 2021
Last Review:	October 2025
Next Review:	Autumn 2026
Member of Staff Responsible:	CEO

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# DoWMAT Vision and Values

## Our Vision

DOWMAT's vision is to foster an inclusive, nurturing environment where everyone flourishes - academically, spiritually, and personally. Rooted in Christian values, we prioritise the vulnerable, promote work-life balance, and strive to deliver exceptional education, while celebrating each academy's unique identity—reflecting the fullness of life promised in John 10:10.

**'To love, to learn, to serve - through collaboration, honesty, and hope.'**

## Our Values

### Love

We are committed to **Compassion and Care**: As Christ commands, we strive to love one another deeply, fostering empathy, respect, and kindness. We create a culture where we genuinely care for each other, supporting personal, professional and spiritual growth, as we walk in His love.

### Learn

We are committed to **Continuous Growth and Wisdom**: Following the call to grow in knowledge and understanding, we cultivate a culture of curiosity, adaptability, and continual improvement. We encourage all to seek wisdom and learning, guided by God's truth, that we might serve more effectively.

### Serve

We are committed to **Service and Impact**: Inspired by Christ's example of humble service, we dedicate ourselves to serving others, contributing to the well-being of our schools, communities, and beyond, bringing His light and love into all we do.

### Collaboration

We are committed to **Unity in Purpose**: We value working together in mutual respect, knowing that through collaboration, we can have a greater impact supporting each other to achieve our shared vision.

### Honesty

We are committed to **Integrity and Truth**: Following Christ's call to live in truth, we foster a culture of honesty, transparency, and trust, ensuring that our actions reflect His integrity in all dealings, upholding the highest ethical standards.

### Hope

We are committed to **Inspiring Hope and Faith**: As bearers of Christ's hope, we instil in every individual the belief in their God-given potential to achieve great things, trusting in His plan to bring good out of all circumstances, and inspiring hope for a future filled with His promises.

The Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. In order to achieve this, the Trust recognises that it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share in this commitment.

Therefore, the aims of the Trust's recruitment policy are as follows:

- To attract the best possible applicants to vacancies.
- To ensure a fair, safe and effective recruitment selection is conducted at all times.
- To deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.
- To identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- To ensure that the Trust meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

## 1. Inviting Applications

Advertisements for posts will include the following statement:

***XXX School (or Trust) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure, two positive references, medical clearance and evidence of appropriate qualifications.***

Prospective candidates will be supplied with the following:

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- The DoWMAT Safer Recruitment Policy
- Application Form

## 2. Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Adverts will focus on saying what the role is, giving an indication of the Trust values, a clear statement about terms and will not use discriminatory language or indicate bias.

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. This application form has been designed to capture the information needed to recruit safely and effectively and to secure regulatory and legal compliance. It includes questions about previous offences, barred lists, and full history from school to present. A minimum of two referees will be requested (must be from current/most recent employer who can verify suitability to work with

children). The form is structured to enable the panel to identify and explore further gaps in history. A curriculum-vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

Person Specifications will include as 'essential requirements:

- a) Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- b) Health and physical capacity for the role.
- c) Qualifications at a level appropriate to the post.

The applicant may be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the Trust'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 the Trust considers acceptable. A third reference may be requested if the applicant has lived or worked abroad for 3 months or more over the last 10 years.
- The receipt of a satisfactory enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

If the above conditions are satisfied and the offer is accepted, then the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of employment.

### **3. Shortlisting**

Selection criteria - All candidates will be assessed in a fair non-discriminatory manner against the person specification criteria.

- All application forms should be scrutinised to ensure:
  - They are fully and properly completed.
  - The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies.
  - Gaps in employment/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified.
- Incomplete applications should not be accepted.
- Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this should be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, as well as a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid career move from a permanent to temporary post.
- All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification.
- Online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks on the shortlisted candidates. See Appendix 1.

### **4. Recruitment Panel**

The recruitment panel must include a senior leader and someone who is Safer Recruitment trained. For Headteacher posts, the panel must include the CEO and representation from the Diocese. CEO recruitment will be carried out by a panel of Trustees which will also include representation from the Diocese.

The same selection panel should short list and interview the candidate. At least one panel member must complete safe recruitment and selection training every three years.

The members of the panel should:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about the appointment.
- Meet before the interview to agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification and to prepare a list of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post.
- Identify any issues they wish to explore with each candidate based on the information provided in their application form and in the references.
- Notes of the applicant's interview answers should be collated by chair of the panel and stored.

## 5. Interview

The interview should assess the merits of each candidate against the job description and person specification and explore their suitability to work with children / young people / Adults at Risk.

The interview should stress that the identity of the successful candidate will be checked thoroughly and, that where a Disclosure and Barring Service check is appropriate, prior to appointment there will be a requirement to complete an application for a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure.

All candidates should bring with them documentary evidence of their right to work in the UK and their identity. Right to work evidence should be as prescribed by [Home Office](#). Evidence of identity can include a current driving licence or passport including a photograph, or a full birth certificate, and a document such as a utility bill or financial statement that shows the candidate's current name and address (please note that these latter two are time-limited and must be no more than 3 months old), and where appropriate change of name documentation. Some form of photographic ID must be seen.

Candidates should bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualification(s). If this is not possible, written confirmation must be obtained from the awarding body. Also, documentation of registration with appropriate professional body.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file.

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the post, the panel should explore:

- The candidate's attitude towards children/young people/Adults at Risk.
- His/her ability to support the organisation's agenda for safeguarding and promoting welfare.

- Any gaps in the candidate's employment history.
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or referee.
- Whether the candidate wishes to declare anything relating to the requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

The interview should also explore issues relating to safeguarding, including:

- Motivation to work with children/ young people/Adults at Risk.
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries.
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours.
- Attitudes to use of authority.

## **6. References**

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

References will be taken up on short listed candidates prior to interview unless otherwise stated on the application form. All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which 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 referee 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.

All 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. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and/or person specification for the role which the applicant has applied for.

If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- The applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance and disciplinary record.
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired).
- Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people.
- The candidate's suitability for working with children and young people.

- The candidate's suitability for this post.

The Trust / Trust academies will only accept references obtained directly from the referee on the official form with all sections completed. It will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials. Checks are made to ensure that references are received from a genuine source.

The Trust 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 before any appointment is confirmed.

## **7. Conditional Offer of Appointment**

### **Pre-Appointment Checks and References**

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate should be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, where possible confirmed by telephone.
- Verification of the candidate's identity.
- A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure at the appropriate level (unless the [Disclosure and Barring Service Update Service](#) applies).
- Confirmation that the candidate has a right to work in the UK (see [GOV.UK website](#) for information on how to check a candidate is allowed to work in the UK).
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness.
- Verification of qualifications.
- Verification of professional status/registration where required.
- Section 128 Barring Direction for all members of staff in a leadership position (and all Local Academy Board members).
- Teaching Prohibitions / Sanctions Check - required for all staff.
- For volunteers not engaged in regulated activity, a risk assessment will be conducted to determine the appropriate level of DBS check. No volunteer will be left unsupervised unless all safeguarding checks are complete.
- In accordance with the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 and the Childcare Act 2006, additional checks will be carried out for staff and volunteers working with children under the age of 8.

All checks should be:

- Confirmed in writing.
- Documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to restrictions on the retention of information imposed by Disclosure and Barring Service regulations).
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or where there are discrepancies in the information provided.

Should it transpire that:

- The candidate is found to be on the Barred Lists, or the Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court;

- The applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application;
- There are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

These facts should be reported to the police and/or Disclosure and Barring Service (if they are not already aware). Anyone who is barred from work with children is committing an offence if they apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work which constitutes **Regulated Activity**. It is also an offence for an employer knowingly to offer work in a regulated position, or to procure work in a regulated position for an individual who is disqualified from working with children, or fail to remove such an individual from such work.

## 8. Overseas Check

For employees who have lived or worked abroad for 3 months or more in the last 10 years, an overseas check is required. The Trust will expect the candidate to provide evidence in the form of a good conduct certificate from the country/countries they resided in. Where available, the Trust will carry out criminal records checks for applicants who have lived/worked overseas and/or may obtain a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked. Where the above is not possible, and/or where appropriate, we may also obtain a reference from the education organisation that Teachers worked for in the country they resided in. This would take place, regardless, if that was the last employer but this could also take place if they were a less recent employer, for example, where necessary, obtaining an overseas reference as the second reference.

## 9. Staff Records

In relation to each member of staff appointed, a record should be kept to show:

- Written references obtained and confirmed by telephone.
- Gaps in employment history checked.
- A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service / Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate obtained, with unique reference number and date.
- Reasons/decision to appoint despite criminal convictions (i.e. a Risk Assessment).
- Evidence of proof of identity (this will have been provided for the Disclosure and Barring Service check).
- Evidence of qualifications.
- Details of registration with appropriate professional body.
- Confirmation of right to work in UK (for more information, please see [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk)).
- Record of interview questions and answers.

Records should be signed and dated by appointing manager/chair of the interview panel.

## 10. Post Appointment Induction

There should be an induction programme for **all** staff and volunteers. The purpose of the induction is to;

- Provide training and information about the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. This training should be at a level appropriate to the member of staff role and responsibilities with regard to children.
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for their role.
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff.
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities.
- Enable the line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.
- Ensure that the person receives written statements of,
  - Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding.
  - The identity and responsibilities of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities.
  - Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected.
  - Other relevant personnel procedures e.g. whistle blowing, disciplinary procedures.

### **11. Maintaining a Safer Culture**

Maintaining an ethos of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children / young people / Adults at Risk can be achieved by:

- A clear written statement of the standards of behaviour and the boundaries of appropriate behaviour expected of staff and volunteers (DoWMAT Code of Conduct).
- Appropriate induction and safeguarding training.
- Regular briefing and discussion of relevant issues.
- Effective supervision and staff appraisal processes.
- Clear reporting system if a user, member of staff or other person has concerns about the safety of children (DoWMAT Whistleblowing Policy).

### **12. Monitoring**

Monitoring of both the recruitment process and induction arrangements will allow for future recruitment practices to be better informed. It should cover:

- Staff turnover and reasons for leaving.
- Exit interviews.
- Attendance of new personnel at safeguarding training.

### **13. Supervision and Staff Review and Development**

Annual staff reviews are important elements in ensuring safe practice. They should:

- Ensure staff are up to date with current safe practices.
- Identify areas for development.

- Openly address any concerns about behaviour and attitudes.
- Put in place action plan and arrangements for review.

#### **14. Retention and Security of Disclosure Information**

The Trust's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information. In particular, the Trust 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 Trust's senior management team or relevant staff.
- Not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence, to include documentation held electronically, for longer than is necessary. In most cases, the Trust will not retain such information for longer than 6 months although the Trust will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken.
- Ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding.
- Prohibit the photocopying or scanning of any disclosure information.

#### **15. Retention of Records**

If an applicant is appointed, the academy / Trust will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months unless the applicant specifically requests the Trust to keep their details on file.

## APPENDIX 1

### SCREENING SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES ONLINE

Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be conducted as part of our safeguarding due diligence, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education

**CANDIDATE NAME:**

**DATE OF CHECKS:**

**NAME OF PERSON UNDERTAKING CHECKS:**

#### Keeping Children Safe in Education

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore.

#### How will the online search be conducted?

The HR Officer and/ or Office Administrator will coordinate the search using the below process.

During a search, other information may become apparent and used when performing online searches. For example, if a candidate is in a music band, the name of the band may need to be searched. If an online search indicates that someone goes by an alternative persona, this may need to be checked. The online search is not an investigation, it is part of the process and therefore should not be excessive.

ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY SATISFACTORY CHECK (YES/ UNSURE)*
Open <b>Google</b> and search: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidate name and town of residence</li> <li>▪ Candidate name and current/ previous place of work</li> </ul>	
<b>Facebook</b> Go to the home page, click search and insert: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidate name and town of residence</li> <li>▪ Candidate name and current/ previous place of work</li> </ul> If the name matches, view the profile.	
<b>Instagram</b> Go to the home page, click search and insert: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidate name</li> </ul> If the name matches, view the profile.	
<b>TikTok</b> Go to the home page, click search and insert:	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Candidate name</li> </ul> <p>If the name matches, view the profile.</p>	
<p><b>LinkedIn</b></p> <p>Go to the home screen, search candidate name and current job title and/ or current place of work (i.e. the town or city)</p>	

\*Any relevant information should be printed and passed to the Interview Lead.

What kind of information might you find online about an applicant that could be beneficial to know up front? Some examples include:

- Discriminatory comments and comments that do not reflect your institutional values (such as blatantly sexist, racist, homophobic views, offensive language, information which contravenes the Code of Conduct);
- Posts and photographs admitting to criminal behaviour;
- Illustrations of incompetence, dishonesty, a poor work ethic or poor judgment; and
- Inconsistent or contradictory information about job history, education, publications, etc.

**DATE ONLINE CHECK ADDED TO THE SCR FOR APPOINTED CANDIDATE:**

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**Document History**

Date	Author	Summary Changes	Approved by
October 2025	Vicki Shelley	Added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For volunteers not engaged in regulated activity, a risk assessment will be conducted to determine the appropriate level of DBS check. No volunteer will be left unsupervised unless all safeguarding checks are complete.</li> <li>▪ In accordance with the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 and the Childcare Act 2006, additional checks will be carried out for staff and volunteers working with children under the age of 8.</li> </ul> <p>Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be conducted as part of our safeguarding due diligence, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education</p> <p>Business Manager changed to Office Administrator</p>	Trust Board
04.10.2024	Vicki Shelley	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Annual Review</li> <li>2. Frequency of panel member safer recruitment training is added under section 4.</li> </ol>	Trust Board
03.10.2023	Claire Davies	Annual Review	Trust Board