



Staff Selection Process

A General Summary of the process

This statement relates to the school's Safer Recruitment Policy. In essence the School follows a recruitment procedure developed by Veale Wasborough Vizard, the leading firm of educational lawyers in the country. The process safeguards the children and the employees of The Downs School. It is **available for scrutiny in the Safer Recruitment Handbook**. The process 'dove tails' with the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations, the requirements of Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007 (SCSRE) and the School's Central Register (SCR).

Aim

The quality of a school is largely dictated by the quality of the staff. The aim of The Downs selection process is to ensure that the candidate applying for the post who is most likely to make a positive and significant contribution towards the school is selected. The process gives due diligence to safeguarding children and is used in the recruitment of all staff – teaching support, part time and full time - at the School.

Objectives

- To prevent discrimination
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of the pupils and staff at The Downs
- To ensure that candidates - and subsequently new members of staff – are as far as is reasonably possible aware of the various demands of the role - academic, financial and social.
- To ensure that candidates are aware of the culture and high values and expectations of the School
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate by such means as observation, formal interview and general discussion.

The Process of Selection – in summary (see Safer Recruitment Handbook)

The Headmaster's permission has to be given before any process of recruitment can take place. The Headmaster also signs off the process. The Headmaster's PA and the Bursar manage each process.

In any recruitment process, a person trained in Safeguarding in Recruitment will be involved. All members of the Leadership Team and Curriculum Group, the Facilities Manager and the Head of Catering are trained in this regard.

A general overview of the process to recruit a member of the teaching staff:

1 Analysis of Vacant Post

- by direct observation to identify the behaviours and skills necessary for successful performance and/or
- by discussion between experienced and related practitioners.

2 Advertising and Literature

Job advert includes the safeguarding statement:

'The Downs is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service'.

Candidates are warned that if an applicant has made a false application, it will be reported to the DFES. The Bursar and the Headmaster's PA are responsible for checking these details.

Applicants applying for details of the job are given pertinent documents; Job Description, standard Application Form, general letter of introduction, time schedule for the process, equal opportunity policy, and the latest ISI report.

Applications are made on a standard Application Form requesting details of two referees (including the current or last employer), previous employment, previous salary, reasons for leaving & qualifications.

A standard form and letter is sent to request details from referees. The form asks for details relating to the role and specifically asks the referee to declare any reason they know which indicates that the applicant should not be employed to work with children.

In the case of a job offer a phone call is made to referees to ensure references are valid.

3 Long Listing

Long lists are created based on analysis of candidates attributes against job specification. At least one member of the Leadership Team is included in this consultation process.

A letter asking successful candidates for interview requests that they bring with them evidence of their identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications:

- Passport
- Two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing name and home address.
- Documentation confirming national insurance number (P45, P60 or National Insurance card).
- Original documentation confirming any educational and professional qualification referred to in the application form.

Candidates are also advised that references are being taken up.

Candidates are also advised of interview requirements and schedule.

4a **The Formal Interview Process**

- Interviews of all applicants are held on the same day or over a short period of time i.e. a week.
- The Headmaster selects the interview panel in regard to teaching posts. A member of the Leadership Team will select a panel otherwise.
- Interviewers are given copies of candidates' Application Form, CV, Job Description and references.
- Sequential interviews take place, usually coordinated by HM's PA:
 1. HM (and wife) welcomes candidates and provides overview of the school values and checks interview schedule
 2. PA collects and scrutinises essential documentation
 3. Interview Panel: (usually three members at least one being member of Curriculum Group); questions coordinated by HM specific to Job Description including safeguarding
 4. Bursar; questions in regard to employment package, health and safety, administration skills, general interpersonal skills
 5. Head of Department / Curriculum Group member; observation of lessons and as necessary
 6. Assistant Head; questions in regard to co-curricular, routine, duty day and interpersonal skills

Previous to any applicant being interviewed, the interview team is briefed by the Headmaster. They are reminded of the Job Description, the school's values, the schedule and the de brief.

Candidates are asked to explain any 'gaps' in their CV – usually by the Headmaster during the panel interview.

Interview questions include behavioural descriptive questions – questions which make the candidate reflect on particular experience – in certain circumstances. These types of questions are the most accurate predictors of future behaviour.

The process is concluded by a de brief involving all of the interview team.

Interview notes and Observation Sheets are kept on file of interviews and the de brief.

4b Lesson Observation (Teachers only)

This is a useful means of selection but it is only part of the whole process. Candidates are usually asked to teach two lessons to contrasting year groups.

Candidates are warned that they will be expected to teach during the interview process. They are given details of ability, year group, length of lesson, resources available and theme of the lesson if there is one.

Lessons are no longer than 35 minutes, observed by a member of the Curriculum Group or a Head of Department. The ISI Observation Sheet is used to record the observation. The observation concentrates on Teaching and Learning. Candidates are allowed brief feedback. Lesson observations take part before the Panel Interviews as much as is possible.

5 Decision Making

After the process is concluded, the Headmaster or Leadership Team member will chair a meeting with the interview panel to debrief. Ultimately, the selection of staff is the Headmaster's decision however the views of all are genuinely and carefully considered.

6 Offer of a Post

Successful candidates are advised as soon as possible, certainly within five days of interview. In regard to teaching roles, the Headmaster offers the job over the telephone before confirming the offer by letter. The candidate is warned that the offer is conditional on the following:

1. that the applicant is 'cleared' by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). All staff are required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure. In the unusual event that the Enhanced disclosure is not received prior to the applicant's start date, the applicant may begin their employment but only under the conditions set by a risk assessment. The risk assessment will set clear boundaries of contact with children and the requirement for supervision by a staff member who has an enhanced check already in place. The risk assessment will be reviewed as a minimum every two weeks until a clear enhanced disclosure is received.
2. that two written references have been received and deemed acceptable
3. that the candidate's Pre Employment Health Questionnaire does not highlight areas of concern that they would be unable to carry out the role effectively
4. that the applicant is not Prohibited from Teaching by the National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL)

5. that the applicant is not Prohibited from Management by the NCTL
6. that the applicant is not disqualified from working with children by association under the Childcare (Disqualifications) Regulations 2009
7. that the applicant has no other restrictions imposed by another country in the European Economic Area

Successful candidates are given an overview of the contract. They are asked to confirm acceptance of the role in writing.

Unsuccessful candidates are informed of their non-selection by phone and/or letter. Feedback is offered if the candidate feels it beneficial.

When the Bursar and the Headmaster are satisfied with the application, the successful candidate is offered a contract. The contract process is conducted by the Bursar.

School Central Register (SCR)

The SCR documents all recruitment checks and is held and monitored by the Bursar.

Monitoring

External monitoring:

Veale Wasbrough Vizard review the Safer Recruitment process on a regular basis and provide the School with the latest legal changes

Internal monitoring;

Regular discussion with Assistant Headmaster and HM's PA responsible for routine

Discussion with the interview team after each process of selection.

General observation of candidates during selection - and sometimes feedback from candidates after the process.

Evaluation

Against the quality of staff selected

Termly, by a governor against the SCR

Annually by Governor responsible for Child Protection and safeguarding.

Timescale

Ongoing.

Please Safer Recruitment Handbook for further details.

HLW
24.2.17