



The Application Process & Safer Recruitment

At Ackworth School we strictly follow the safer recruitment processes with no deviation of what is expected of us as outlined in the ISI guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Our intention is always to protect and safeguard the pupils in our care.

We aim to follow not just the minimum requirements but best practice, wherever we believe that it is essential to do so. This may mean that our processes may at times seem to take longer or feel a little pedantic but we place safeguarding and the wellbeing of our pupils at the forefront of everything. We will always ensure that we continue to treat everyone fairly and we will not ask something from a candidate, that we may not need to ask from another, without good reason.

1. The Application Form

1.1 Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing an application form in full. Forms should ideally be completed electronically and candidates will be asked to sign and date a copy of their form if they attend for interview. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed application forms for any roles.

1.2 All posts in the School involve some interaction with children and everybody has responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. It will be made clear in your job description and during your induction what your role is in safeguarding and the wellbeing of young people.

1.3 Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration prior to attending for interview. Please disclose any convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings (not subject to the DBS filtering) on the declaration. Please note that the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013, 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website www.gov.uk/dbs. You should be aware that we may carry out our own checks on successful applicants for shortlisting with the Disclosure and Barring Service or seek further clarification.

1.4 We will carry out an online search of all short-listed candidates. This will involve a basic Google search. The search will be carried out by someone who is not involved in the appointment process.

If any information comes to light that the panel may consider makes the candidate unsuitable to work with children, this will be discussed at interview.

1.5 The successful applicant may be required to complete an online DBS application. Employment is conditional upon a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and other appropriate checks for all applicants home and overseas. All vetting checks MUST be completed PRIOR to the successful applicant's start date.

1.6 An overseas national must have permission to work in the UK and the school will need to carry out additional checks to verify any qualifications and training not obtained within the UK.

Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas since the age of 16 for a period of 3 months or longer they MUST obtain such checks and confirmations as the School may require in accordance with statutory guidance. These may include the equivalent of DBS checks from those countries (often known as Good Conduct checks) and may involve the taking of fingerprints and provision of detailed information to the embassies or police forces of those countries as well as additional references. The School asks for this to be provided to cover the previous 10 years and the most recent check should have been obtained as close as possible to the candidate leaving the country.

1.7 You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency.

1.8. Details of anyone applying for a position which is a 'Regulated Activity' as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and who is barred from doing so by the DBS will be passed to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to apply for a role in regulated activity if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

2. References

2.1 We will seek references on candidates invited for interview and may request to approach previous employers whether or not named as a referee for information at any stage following receipt of an application form. Current employers will only be approached once authorisation is given from an individual, however it is an expectation that for Teaching roles references should be taken up before interview and unless there is a justifiable reason, these will be requested for non-teaching roles also. Candidates are asked to ensure that their referees are aware that a reference will be requested.

2.2 Employment is subject to the receipt of satisfactory references from suitable referees and references may also be verified by a telephone call. We will consider references from the previous six years or longer if certain circumstances, particularly where length of service dictates. We will also seek to verify the identity of the referee by checking against professional directories or databases and references should contain the name, title and a landline number for the individual.

2.3 If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer must be listed as one of your referees. They will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (current or time expired) and whether you have been the subject of any Child Protection allegations or concerns and, if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past, the previous employer will be asked about those issues (and should be listed as a referee). Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children. They may, where appropriate, answer that your duties have not brought you into contact with children or young persons. Where candidates have been employed in a school, one of the references should come from the Head or a member of the senior leadership team.

2.4 In the case of applicants who have been employed, but who are currently unemployed, one of your listed referees must be the most recent employer.

Newly Qualified Teachers should also list their course tutor as one of their referees.

3. Interview and Identification

3.1 If you are invited for interview, one of the areas which will be explored will be your suitability to work with children.

3.2 All successful candidates will be required, during the appointment process, to produce original documents confirming all educational and professional qualifications that are declared in the post. This will not include GCSE and A levels or equivalent, except where the post explicitly stipulates. (eg the original of examination certificates, diplomas etc). Where originals are not available, written confirmation or certified copies of the relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding bodies.

3.3. All successful candidates will also be required, during the appointment process, to produce original documents in order to satisfy the requirement for a DBS and Eligibility to Work in the UK; photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient:

If you are invited for interview you will be provided with a list of acceptable documentation and in addition we ask that, where appropriate, you provide any document evidencing a change of name, such as a marriage certificate. You will be expected to bring photographic ID that also includes your ID or separate documents that confirm both.

Acceptable documentation for verification of identification for an enhanced DBS check is a limited range. If those documents are unable to be produced, the candidate will be required to undertake an external ID verification check and if that does not provide appropriate confirmation the candidate will be required to undertake a fingerprint verification check with the Police.

3.4 Photocopies of the Identification and DBS documentation will be taken by the School and retained on file for all successful candidates. The details will also be entered onto the School's Single Central Register of staff, volunteers and governors.

4. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-appointment Checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received)
- Verification of identity and qualifications
- A check of the DBS Barring List
- A satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure
- Verification of professional status (where required) (e.g. satisfactory completion of PGCE course)
- Declaration of medical fitness
- Confirmation of the candidate's right to live and work in the UK
- A Self Declaration made under the Childcare (Disqualifications) Regulations where applicable

5. Warning

5.1 Where a candidate is found to be on the DBS Barring List, or the Enhanced DBS disclosure shows he/she has been disqualified from working with children, found to have provided false information in support of his/her application, or the subject of expressions of concern as to his/her suitability to work with children, the facts will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or the Police and it is likely that any offer of employment by Ackworth School will be immediately withdrawn.

6. General

The School requests applications as soon as possible from interested applicants, reserving the right to offer the post at any stage in the appointment process or not to offer the post at all.

6.1 Offers of employment will be made on merit and in accordance with the School's policy of equal opportunities.

6.2 Confirmation of a conditional offer of employment will only be made on satisfactory declaration of medical fitness, which may include a referral to Occupational Health if appropriate.

6.3 Confirmation of a conditional offer of employment will only be made on satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

6.4 Results for the statutory employment checks are recorded in the School's Single Central Register of staff, volunteers and governors.

6.5 The successful applicant will only be able to start when ALL the vetting checks have been completed.

6.6 For urgently required personnel, an earlier start may be permitted but only once a risk assessment has been made and a supervisory regime put in place by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Head. This will be reviewed every two weeks. In these cases all pre-employment checks must be in place, with the exception of a DBS or overseas police check, which must have been applied for.

Updated August 2023