

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Recruitment Policy

This policy and its procedures are designed to ensure that best practice is applied to the recruitment of all employees and volunteers. It is Step by Step's responsibility to ensure that it adheres to the requirement of the Department of Education's requirements for safer recruitment set out in their publication Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) which is updated at least annually ahead of the start of each academic year or in line with statutory guidelines and legislation. Step by Step will adhere to best practice and record and maintain all information on the checks carried out in the single central record (SCR). We follow Data Protection and GDPR requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

All governors are appointed using a safer recruitment checklist, including references, enhanced DBS check and 128 management checks in line with both KCSIE and ISSR Part 3.

Recruitment Decision Making Framework

	Part of Recruitment Team for	Approve	Other
Trustees/Governors	Head Teacher, School Business Manager, Senior Leadership posts, prospective governors	New posts, Management Structure, ABA Tutors or Teachers, Changes to Job Descriptions, pay scales, budget implications	Receives reports on staffing changes from HT/SBM
HT/SBM	Admin posts, Site Staff, Consultants, Finance, prospective governors other staff as required	Confirmation of posts	Leads all school recruitment Leads Operational HR in the School Submits New Staff Requests
Senior School Staff	BCBAs/ Qualified Teachers/Class Leaders, Lead Tutors/therapists		
Middle Leaders	ABA Tutors / Trainee ABA Tutors/placement students/Support Assistants		

Recruitment principles:

- There will always be a minimum of two staff members on the recruitment panel, one of which will be a member of the senior leadership team (SLT)
- At least one member of the panel will be successfully trained in Safer Recruitment requirements. The name of this person will be recorded in the interview records
- The person vacating the post to be recruited will not be on the panel
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The Recruitment Team's responsibilities

In accordance with the requirements of Safer Recruitment the Recruitment Team:

- Confirms the Job Description, Person Specification and, if required, the application pack
- Confirms the salary level for the post with the board of trustees
- Decides and implements advertising strategy
- Shortlists against Person Specification
- Applies for and makes checks on references prior to interview
- Conducts Interviews
- Selects and appoints, subject to pre-employment and DBS checks. Any job offer is subject to two satisfactory references and an enhanced DBS prior to start date

Equal Opportunities

All posts, will be advertised internally in the first instance. If there are no suitable candidates within the organisation posts are then advertised externally using our recruitment strategy. After interview, the most suitable candidate will be appointed as assessed against the Person Specification.

The Governors reserve the right to set the recruitment strategy that suits the posts for which they are recruiting.

Generally senior posts will be advertised both internally and externally, including SLT, Therapy Lead and Senior Behaviour Analysts.

Internal promotions to Tutor and Senior Tutor are made once the employee is working at the appropriate level and meeting the competencies of this role. Other promotions to middle leader and above can be made only if there is a vacancy at that level and agreed by the Governing Body. Even if an employee is performing at a level that is equivalent to a more senior post they will not be promoted without a vacancy.

All appointments and promotions must be made following a formal process.

Safer Recruitment Principles

Step by Step will be informed on its recruitment practices by the requirements of the DfE's KCSIE. These principles are taken from this annual publication. Our safer recruitment process and practices will:

- Be fully planned including a timetable, job description, person specification, application pack (for senior roles) and a standard application form
- Ensure that all job adverts include reference to our safeguarding statement.
- Note during shortlisting any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment history will be noted to explore at interview
- Ask candidates to complete a formal application form giving full employment history and to complete a confidential health questionnaire.
- Verify an applicant's right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 6 years afterwards.
- Ask for written references about previous employment history from a minimum of two referees including the most recent employer, and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. If necessary, further references will be taken.
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. The Government's Teaching Regulation Agency system is used to verify the award of qualified teacher status (QTS) and the completion of teacher induction or probation. Registration to HPC for therapists is checked.
- Ensure that interviews are conducted by at least 2 interviewers who have the authority to appoint and one of whom is Safer Recruitment trained
- Verify the candidate's identity via sight of at least one piece of photo ID for example passport/ driving licence and two other documents such as utility bill/bank statements or local authority evidence.
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity. Our use of DBS disclosures is governed by the DBS Code of Conduct and our DBS procedures are set out in Appendix A
- Ensure that, if they are employed to be a teacher, they are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, or have any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the GTCE before its abolition in March 2012. These checks are carried out using the DFE sign-in portal via the Employer Access Teachers Services web page.

- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, using the TRA Teacher Services system. In addition, criminal records checks, or their equivalent should be made: Home Office guidance on 'criminal records checks for overseas applicants' can be found on GOV.UK. In the event that the end of the Brexit transition period prevents the UK from being able to access the EEA/TRA system then we will follow the applicable guidelines from the DfE to complete appropriate checks.
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State. This check will include all Governors, Headteachers and members of the Senior Leadership Team, and our Finance Officer
- For any members of school staff working-with primary age children, we will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018. Information on the staff to whom these regulations apply, the checks that should be carried out, and the recording of those checks is detailed in the statutory guidance: Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

For the purposes of clarity, a Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not.

Offers of Employment

Conditional offers of appointment will be made subject to:

- Probationary periods
- References (if not obtained and scrutinised previously)
- Identity (if that could not be verified straight away at interview)
- Qualifications (if not verified on the day of interview)
- Permission to work in UK if required,
- Overseas criminal record checks (if applicable)
- Disclosure and Barring Service / Barred List check / Barring by Association / NCTL check (if applicable) / s.128 check (if applicable)

- Health checks – to verify the candidate is medically fit to undertake the role.

Appendix C

Recruitment Process Flowchart

The process flowchart sets out the high-level processes to be followed to fill a new and vacant post.

See Appendix B.

Policy	Safer Recruitment
Statutory Requirement	No
Date of Approval	May 2021
Responsible Officer	GA/CE
Responsible Governor	BG
Date of previous Version	Previously staff employment and development policy
Frequency of Review	Every 3 years (or as statutory guidance changes)
Date of next Review	May 2024

Appendix A. DBS Disclosures and Procedures

DBS Disclosures and Procedures

General principle

Step by Step will comply fully with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. The organisations also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and subsequent GDPR directives and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

Checking the DBS Barred list

We have a legal duty to check all employees of Step by Step (and anyone else at Step by Step who is employed in 'regulated activity') against the DBS Barred list before they commence in post. This applies even if they have transferred from a similar post in another children's setting and have had less than a three month break in service.

Keeping Children Safe in Education [KCSE] (DFE January 2021) sets out the statutory duties of schools, staff and governing bodies / proprietors to protect and support children.

- Newly appointed qualified teachers will not be permitted to commence in post until we have checked that they are not prohibited from teaching by the NCTL.
- Staff working in early years (children Reception) or providing wrap-around care to under-8s are required to declare that they are not disqualified, or disqualified by association, from working with children in Early Years or Childcare settings
- Individuals taking part in the management of an independent school are checked via Secure Access on the DfE website to ensure they are not barred from doing so under s.128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008

Enhanced DBS checks

Everyone who has regular or intensive access to the children or is employed in our school must have an enhanced check, whether they are paid or unpaid. All permanent staff must have an enhanced DBS certificate and any volunteer who will be in school regularly (once a week) or intensively (for more than 4 days in a month). All Governors will have an enhanced check. The check will be carried out as soon after a position has been offered. The necessity for an enhanced DBS certificate will be clearly advertised in all relevant job descriptions and recruitment adverts.

DBS checks and Disclosures

Step by Step does not use the DBS updates service and undertakes its own enhanced checks with each new proposed employee. The checks include both child and adult barred check lists. The school undertakes an adult check list as some of our pupils are adults and any member of staff could be called upon to engage in regulated activity with them when providing cover or needing to move classes.

Disclosure information is kept in electronic HR files, the Single Central Record and (if necessary) in paper form in a locked filing cabinet. Access is strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it. DBS

applications are processed by the School Business Manager. Individuals are required to bring their disclosure certificate into the organisation as soon as it is received and give it to HR for recruitment decisions. The information may also be seen by the Board of Governors.

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Disclosure of an Offence

In the case of a disclosure of an offence, final recruitment decisions relating to DBS certificates will be made by the Head teacher or SBM who will carry out a formal risk assessment taking into consideration the type of access the position entails, the relevance and severity of any offences, whether they are spent or unspent and the period of time that has passed since an offence, caution or warning. The SBM will consult the Headteacher before any final decision is taken on the recruitment of any applicant whose DBS reveals an offence.

Applicants are able to appeal against a recruitment decision by writing to the Head teacher or Chair of Governors.

Handling of Disclosure Information

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

We will retain a copy of the DBS disclosure in order to demonstrate 'safer recruitment' practice for the purpose of safeguarding audits and/or inspection by Ofsted.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

We will not retain copies of an individual's DBS certificate unless criminal information is disclosed that warrants further investigation/risk assessment. In these circumstances Step by Step will not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS and the

individual about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail. We recognise that we must have the consent of the individual to copy their DBS certificate.

Once the risk assessment is complete and/or any retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that the copy certificate and any information relating to criminal history is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure.

However, notwithstanding the above, we will keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested and the details of the recruitment decision taken. Details will be kept on a Single Central Record only accessible by those who are authorised to do so for the purposes of carrying out their duties.

It is our policy to recheck staff DBS checks every 5 years. However, rechecking of staff more frequently may be carried out at the discretion of the Head, SBM and DSL in line with national guidelines.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning.

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject and the type of certificate requested.

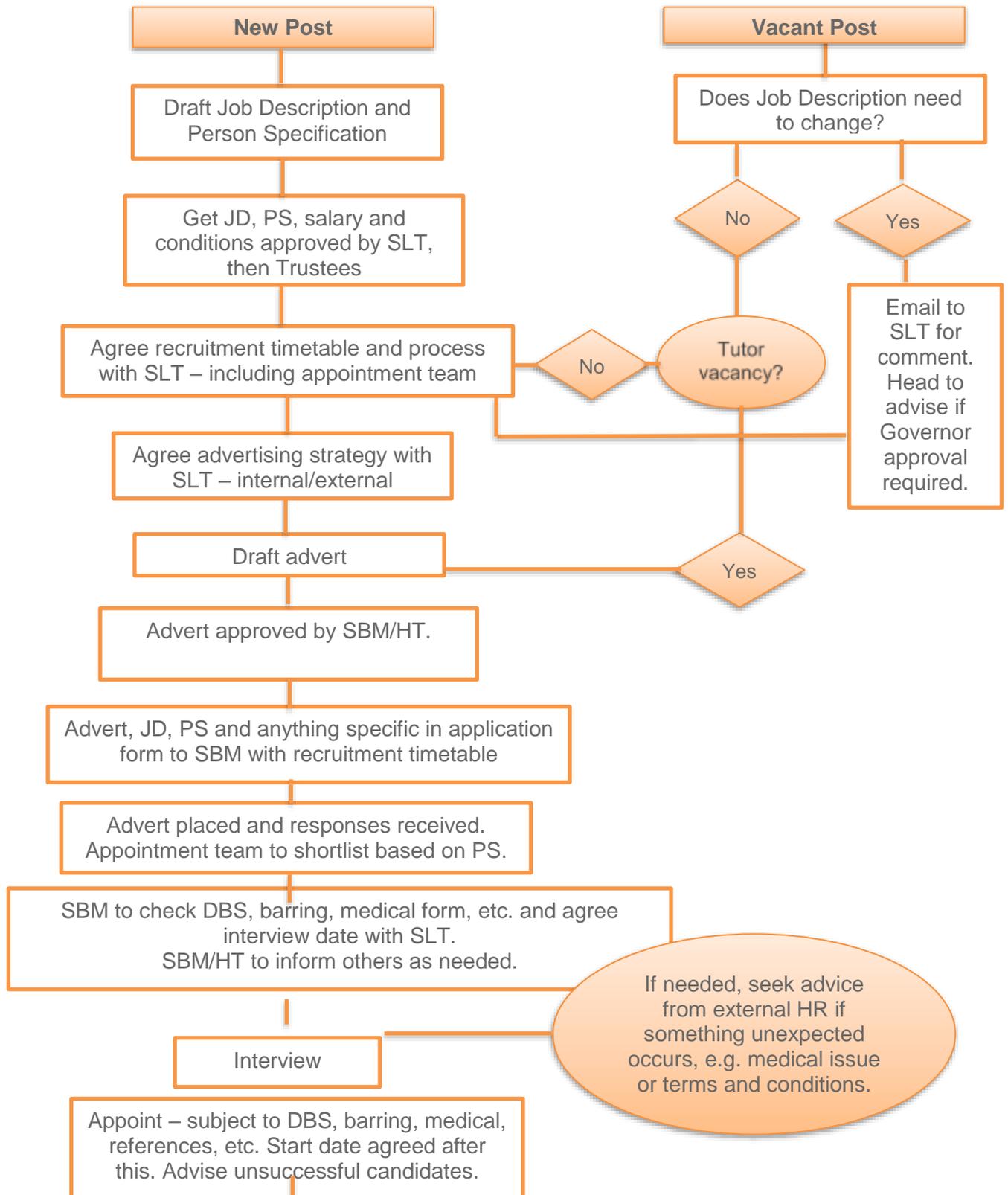
Employment of Ex-Offenders

It is a legal requirement that all registered bodies and prospective employers must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges registered bodies and employers who are Regulated Activity providers (including schools) to have a written statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders, as stated below and is sent out to applicants at the start of the recruitment process.

This statement on recruiting should be read alongside our Equal Opportunities policy.

- As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Step by Step complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- Step by Step is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical / mental disability or offending background.
- The Equal Opportunities Policy is available on our website and on request. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
- We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- As a Regulated Activity provider all paid employees at Step by Step are in regulated activity and therefore subject to checks with the DBS.
- In relation to volunteers and contractors, we only request a DBS check after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.
- We encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent (under separate, confidential cover) to the SBM and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- We ensure that all those in our organisation 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 and know where to seek advice if necessary.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Appendix B. Recruitment Process



Appendix C Confidential: Medical Questionnaire

You have applied for the post of:

Type of work: Working with children and young adults with autism requires mental and physical resilience.

Please complete the questionnaire below. The information is required with your interests in mind. As a result of the information you have given you may be referred to a doctor appointed by Step By Step School so that a medical examination can be carried out. If you wish, you may request an interview with the schools Human Resources Officer, either as an alternative to completing this form or to provide supplementary information or explanation. All the information you provide will remain confidential.

A. Have you ever:	No	Yes	Please give Details
1. Had an operation?			
2. Been seriously injured?			
3. Received in-patient treatment for a physical or mental condition?			
4. Been refused or dismissed from employment for health reasons?			
5. Received a disability pension?			Card No: Expiry Date:
6. Are you disabled?			
7. Been made ill by your work?			
8. Been refused a driver's licence because of ill health?			

B. Do you suffer from or have you ever had:					
Diabetes	YES/NO	Skin rashes/eczema	YES/NO	Swelling of legs/ankles	YES/NO
High blood pressure	YES/NO	Anaemia	YES/NO	Kidney/ stomach/ bowel/ bladder trouble	YES/NO
Asthma	YES/NO	Headaches Migraines (frequent)	YES/NO	Varicose veins	YES/NO
Cough (frequent)	YES/NO	Heart trouble	YES/NO	Rupture/hernia	YES/NO
Rheumatic fever	YES/NO	Chest trouble	YES/NO	Back/Neck trouble	YES/NO
Arthritis/joint problems	YES/NO	Fainting or dizziness	YES/NO	Ear trouble	YES/NO
Epilepsy/fits	YES/NO	Hay fever	YES/NO	Eye trouble	YES/NO
Shortness of breath	YES/NO	Jaundice/hepatitis	YES/NO	Repetitive Strain Injury	YES/NO
1. Do you take medicine regularly?	2. Do you need glasses to read?	3. Have you worked in a dusty trade?	4. Have you ever had a head injury?	5. Do you suffer from any other ailments or conditions?	
YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	

C. To the best of my knowledge and belief the information given above is correct.

I consent under the Data Protection legislation to the school processing the information I have provided on this Questionnaire for the purpose of assessing my health and suitability for employment. I understand and agree that the information will be retained for as long as the school deems necessary and that the information may be passed to a third party such as a Medical Assessor for comments.

Signature

Date

