

## **Safer Recruitment Policy**

### **Introduction**

South Bank UTC (UTC) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its core and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of its students and ensure that risk of harm is minimised, the UTC employs a safer recruitment policy which complies with national and local guidance. The UTC recruitment procedures take every precaution to ensure that we are satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to work with children.

### **Aims**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the minimum requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people
- observe employment law and is fair;
- be consistent with the UTC's commitment to equality.

### **Identification of Recruiters**

At least one recruiter on any appointment team must successfully have received accredited training in safer recruitment procedures.

### **Inviting Applicants**

When a post is identified an appropriate timeline will be drawn up that allows for all processes to be conducted safely. Advertisements for posts, whether in newspapers, journals or online, will include a safeguarding statement. Prospective applicants will be advised, as a minimum, of the following:

- Job Description:
- Person Specification:
- the UTC's recruitment policy (this document);
- the selection procedure for the post
- an application form.

NB some of this information might be supplied electronically or via reference to the UTC website. All prospective applicants must complete, in full, an application form and sign it.

## **Short-listing and References**

Where a large number of fully completed applications is received (10 plus) a long listing will occur soon after the application closure date against the person specification for the post. Where possible, references will be taken up before the short listing selection stage, so that any discrepancies can be probed during the selection stage.

References will be sought directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted. All UTC references must always be signed by the Principal (or member of the SLT in their absence). Where a current employer has not been given as a referee the UTC will seek permission from the applicant to approach the current employer. Where the current employment does not involve working with young people, and a previous employment has done, the UTC will seek a reference from that employer.

Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges. Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- referee's relationship with the candidate;
- the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people;
- details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant to the safety/welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of those concerns – conclusions reached and how the matter was resolved;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children;
- the candidate's suitability for this post.

A copy of the job description and person specification should be circulated with the reference request. UTC employees are entitled to see and receive, if requested, copies of their employment references. Appointments can only be confirmed when all references have been correctly scrutinised.

The referee should be reminded that they have a responsibility to give accurate information and not give misstatements or omissions and that they may discuss factual content with the applicant beforehand.

Short-listing of candidates will be against the person specification for the post. At short-listing, applications are checked for discrepancies, inconsistencies and gaps in employment (cross reference with the application form) - note, enquire further and consider if questions at interview are required.

## **The Interview and Selection Process**

The invitation to interview will provide basic details and a programme of the day, including details of how the formal interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore – including suitability to work with children. Interviews will always be face-to-face. Telephone interviews may be used at the shortlisting stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face interview.

Candidates will always be required to:

- provide proof of identity, including photo ID;
- explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to recruiters;
- declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS (formerly CRB) disclosure;
- demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people;
- bring sufficient documentary evidence to allow the successful candidate to confirm their qualifications and complete the DBS disclosure immediately on being offered the post.

The interview panel should comprise of at least two people. The panel should meet before-hand to discuss the interview and the issues to be explored with the candidate (panels can agree questions but they can be deviated from where supplementary information is required to pursue answers/thoughts/ideas).

Safeguarding questions in interview will:

- explore attitude towards children;
- explore candidate's ability to support safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- explore gaps in employment history
- address any concerns/discrepancies arising from references and application forms;
- candidates asked if they wish to declare anything in light of the DBS check.

### **Employment Checks**

All appointments will be conditional upon:

- two satisfactory references;
- proof of identity, including photo ID;
- completion of an enhanced DBS disclosure application and receipt of satisfactory clearance;
- providing actual certificates of qualifications, verification of qualifications/professional status/QTS via GTC/NPQH QTS;
- a prohibition check using the Employed Access Online Service
- completion a confidential health questionnaire/ verification of medical fitness;
- proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK;
- the successful completion of a probation period is a requirement before a permanent appointment is made.

### **Induction**

All employees who are new to the UTC will receive induction training that will include the UTC's Safeguarding Policies and guidance on safe working practices. Regular meetings will be held during the first 3 months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s). All employees will receive an appropriate level training in:

- child protection/safeguarding and promoting welfare of children/anti-bullying/antiracism/physical handling/intimate care/internet safety;
- safe practice and standard of conduct and behaviour advice for staff;
- disciplinary and whistle blowing policies

## Role and Responsibilities

The Principal has the responsibility for ensuring the integrity of the system overall; for providing checks and balances and ensuring concerns in relation to the policy are addressed immediately

The Principal together with the Principal's PA has oversight of the process and should ensure that all steps outlined in this policy are completed and will ensure that the timeline for appointments is followed. All employees involved in recruitment have the responsibility to be aware of its contents; to act in accordance with it and to use the UTC's Whistle Blowing Policy if there are any concerns regarding its implementation.

- Governors take their role in relation to this policy very seriously and governors with a child protection role actively engage in scrutinizing relevant documentation.
- If, one week prior to the commencement of employment a DBS has not been received, safe 'holding' arrangements must be put in place. Critically, in no circumstances may an employee start work until a satisfactory DBS has been received.
- On the first day of employment all new employees will meet with the Principal and VP who will formally welcome them to the UTC and verify that the appointments checklist has been completed and sign to confirm this.
- When DBS and other information are placed on our central record – it should be highlighted in red until satisfactory clearance has been received. When clearance arrives the colour should be changed to green. Only at this point a person can start employment.
- All checks will be confirmed in writing and copies of the relevant documents retained on file.
- Any discrepancies thrown up by the above checks will be discussed with Human Resources before a final decision on employment is made.
- The DfE Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit will be informed of any candidates:
- whose names are found on List 99/PoCA or whose DBS check shows that they have been disqualified from working with children by a court;
- who have given false information to support their application;
- who are found to have serious concerns about the working with children.
- Contractors who work continuously on site e.g. the Youth service and Community Library are expected to recruit employees safely, with the protection of young people as their top priority. UTC will ensure that safe recruitment is regularly discussed and that it receives proof that contractors are DBS checking all new employees.
- It is our policy that all governors are required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.
- All volunteers are required to undertake an appropriate an enhanced DBS check before commencing service.
- All agency staff and students in training must bring evidence of an enhanced DBS clearance prior to commencing work at the UTC.

### **Employment of Supply Staff**

A person supplied to the UTC from a supply agency will only be able to begin work at the UTC once we have received (in writing) confirmation of their identity, that they are not barred from regulated activity relating to children, their qualifications, the right to work in the UK, that an enhanced DBS certificate has been obtained in the last three months and that any disclosures are shared with the UTC.

To ensure that the person is suitable to work at the UTC they will be required to attend an interview prior to commencing work. At the interview the interviewee will be required to bring along suitable documentation so that the UTC can verify the identity of the applicant.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Board of Governors and Principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the UTC's Safer Recruitment Policy.