

Quality System



Policy Number

HRM015

Policy Title

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy applies to all operations of NC Group and to all of its workforce and volunteers.
- 1.2 In this policy, 'we', 'us' and 'our' means NC Group.
- 1.3 This policy has been developed to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures throughout NC Group and to support the creation of a safer culture by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in our care. This policy complies with guidance outlined in the Department for Education's [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#).
- 1.4 This policy reinforces the expected conduct outlined in our Staff Code of Conduct as well as our Whistleblowing Procedure, which all staff are expected to be familiar with. All successful candidates for paid or volunteer employment will be made aware of these documents.
- 1.5 This policy is an essential element in creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all learners, staff and others within NC Group and aims to ensure both safe and fair recruitment and selection of all staff and volunteers by:
 - attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to vacancies
 - deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable from applying for vacancies
 - identifying and rejecting those candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- 1.6 We are committed to using procedures that deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with our safeguarding and child protection procedures and practices.

2. Existing staff

- 2.1 If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.
- 2.2 We will refer to the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
 - We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
 - The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
 - The 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); or
 - The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left
- 2.3 We will also refer to the DBS an employee following a disciplinary investigation, who is dismissed or resigns because of misconduct towards a pupil, and we may refer any concerns we have before the completion of this process

Author:	Lee Childs	Date of last revision	10/09/2024	Version Number	3
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- 2.4 As an employer we are under a duty to refer any allegation of abuse against a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day of the allegation being made. A referral will be made if a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 NC Group will:
- Ensure we have effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department for Education guidance and legal requirements
 - monitor our compliance with them
 - ensure that appropriate staff, NC employees and directors have completed safer recruitment training (and repeat this every 5 years)
- 3.2 The Executive Director, Managing Director and Departmental leads will:
- ensure that all operations of NC Group operate safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
 - ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers within NC Group
 - monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this document
 - promote the safety and well-being of children and young people at every stage of this process

4. Inviting Applications

- 4.1 All advertisements for posts of regulated activity, paid or unpaid, will include the following statement;

“NC Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. All post holders in regulated activity are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory “Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Check”.

- 4.2 Advertisements for posts also make clear that staff will be expected to promote fundamental British values.
- 4.3 All applicants will receive website links for the following when applying for a post:
- A statement of our commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of the learners
 - Job description and person specification
 - The Safeguarding Policy
 - The selection procedure for the post
 - Our Whistleblowing Procedure
 - An application form
 - Copy of our Code of Conduct

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5. Identification of the Recruitment Panel

5.1 At least one member of the Selection and Recruitment Panel will have successfully completed training in safer recruitment within the last 5 years

6. Shortlisting and References

6.1 Candidates will be short listed against the person specification for the post.

6.2 We will normally seek two references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, normally before interview. References can be verified verbally or in writing, and will be a factual statement of time worked at their previous employer. These are usually gathered by either HR Lead or the prospective Line Manager. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. The references requested may also ask specific questions about the suitability of the applicant to work with children. Two references, one of which must be from the applicant’s current/most recent employer where possible, will be taken up before the selection stage so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the procedure.

6.3 References will be sought directly from the referee and, where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Where possible references will be requested in advance of interview.

6.4 Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies.

6.5 Referees may be used to ask specific questions about the following:

- The candidate’s suitability to work with children and young people
- Any substantiated allegations
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people
- The candidate’s suitability for the post, including the candidate’s ability and willingness to promote fundamental British values.

6.6 Reference requests will include the following:

- The time that the individual worked for the employer

References requests may include the following:

- Applicants current post and salary
- Disciplinary record

6.7 All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures, and DBS clearance.

6.8 As referenced in KCSIE 2023, it is now best practice to carry out online searches on shortlisted candidates for any new role. These searches may involve google, social media outlets such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and will be dependent on the role and the content found when carrying out initial ‘light searches’. A light search will involve typing an individuals name into google. These searches will to try to identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online and which might warrant exploration with the applicant at

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interview. When searches are carried out all candidates will be made aware, as per GDPR guidelines on use of personal data.

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7. Invitation to Interview

- 7.1 Candidates called to interview will receive:
- A letter confirming the interview and any other selection techniques
 - Details of the interview day including details of the panel members
 - Further copy of the person specification
 - Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
 - The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview
- 7.2 Candidates called to interview will be asked to provide proof of identity and relevant qualifications. Original documents requested are:
- Passport
 - Birth Certificate
 - Driving Licence
 - Marriage Certificate (if appropriate)
 - Utility Bill or Bank Statement (issued in the last three months)
 - relevant qualifications

8. The Selection Process

- 8.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.
- 8.2 Interviews will always be face-to-face, in exceptional circumstances this may be by video call. Interviews may include additional interview techniques such as observation or exercises.
- 8.3 Candidates will be required to:
- Explain any gaps in employment
 - Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel
 - Declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure
 - Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people and their ability and willingness to promote fundamental British values

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9. Employment Checks

- 9.1 An offer of appointment will be conditional and all successful candidates will be required to:
- Verify their identity and Right to Work upon seeing personal ID (birth certificate, passport)
 - 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 (see definition below).
 - Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
 - Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
 - Verify their 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 2 years afterwards
 - Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
 - Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher

- 9.2 Further additional checks will be carried out, 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
 - criminal records checks or their equivalent overseas police check for any individual who within the last five years* has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom, whether they are a British citizen or not

** Five years is a guide and we may carry out any further checks that we think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.*

- 9.3 We will check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (known as a Section 128 Check) direction made by the secretary of state. This check applies to:
- Any central post on the Executive Team and senior leadership team
 - teaching posts on senior leadership teams
 - teaching posts which carry a departmental head role
 - support staff posts on a senior leadership team; and
 - we will assess on a case by case basis whether the check should be carried out when appointments are made to teaching and support roles which carry additional responsibilities.
 - It also applies to appointments to NC Group's Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies.

- 9.4 The relevant information is contained in the enhanced DBS disclosure certificate (which we obtain for all posts that amount to regulated activity). It can also be obtained through the Teaching Regulation Agency Teacher Services system. We will use either, or both, methods to obtain this information.

- 9.5 Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

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- 9.6 “Regulated activity” means a person who will be:
- Responsible, on a regular basis in a NC setting, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
 - Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a NC setting where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
 - Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not
- 9.7 All checks will be:
- Confirmed in writing
 - Documented and retained on the personnel file
 - Recorded on our Single Central Record
 - Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received.
- 9.8 Employment will commence subject to all checks and procedures being satisfactorily completed.

10. Induction

- 10.1 All staff and volunteers who are new to NC Group will receive information on the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy appropriate to the department or operation where they will be based, and procedures and guidance on safe working practices which would include guidance on acceptable conduct/behaviour. These expectations will form part of new staff members’ induction training.
- 10.2 All successful candidates will undergo a period of induction and will:
- Meet regularly with their induction tutor or their line manager
 - Attend appropriate training including generalist child protection training

11. Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in “regulated” activity
- We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the [2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations and Childcare Act 2006](#). Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

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12. Contractors

- 12.1 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at a NC Group or any of our sites has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:
- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
 - An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children or vulnerable adults.
- 12.2 We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.
- 12.3 We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.
- 12.4 Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.
- 12.5 We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at NC premises.
- 12.6 Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

13. Staff Agency and associate staff

- 13.1 We will only use those agencies which operate a safer recruitment policy, and we will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. Any information disclosed as part of the DBS check will be treated confidentially. These agencies should be able to demonstrate that their staff have received appropriate safeguarding training.
- 13.2 We will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives at NC premises and we will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

14. Review process

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and as and when incidents or new legislation requires it.
- 13.2 It will be reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum.

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Appendix A - Record of changes / amendments

Section	Note of changes	Revision Date	Person Responsible
1.3	Keeping Children Safe in Education updated to latest version (2021)	28/10/2021	L. Noble
9.5	Removed section 9.5 and updated numbering	28/10/2021	L. Noble
6.8	Online searches for prospective candidates	29/08/2023	L. Noble

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