



Academies Trust

Safer Recruitment Policy

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1.0 Introduction

This document sets out the policy and procedures necessary to ensure that the recruitment process for the Co-op Academies Trust ("our Trust") is as safe as possible and helps to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It is applicable to all of our Academies, and includes our Trust's central/hub teams, Academy Community Councils and our Trust Board.

Our Trust Board has delegated accountability for recruitment below the level of Headteacher to its academies, with the exception of roles that are designated as central appointments. The procedures and standards in this policy must be followed by all those involved in the recruitment process within our Trust.

The policy and associated guidance are in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools and colleges "Keeping children safe in education" (part 3) which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education>. A brief overview can be found at Annex 1. In case of any questions arising, the current version of the statutory guidance should be referred to and followed as it is updated from time to time.

This policy / procedure will be applied with due consideration to our Trust's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and our co-operative values.

2.0 Preparing for recruitment

2.1 Job Description and Person Specification

At the start of the recruitment process it is important to define what the post holder's responsibilities for children/vulnerable adults will be over and above the qualifications and experience needed to perform the job. To make clear our Trust's commitment to safer recruitment, it is advisable to include the statement below on all person specifications.

"The Co-op Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as its number one priority. This commitment to robust recruitment, selection and induction procedures extends to organisations and services linked to our Trust".

When a post requires a DBS Disclosure, this must be reflected in the job description and person specification relating to that post. It is envisaged that due to the nature

of work in all primary and secondary Academies, and resultant contact with children, all posts will require an enhanced DBS Disclosure and, in most cases, a check of the children's barred [and adult barred list where applicable - identified roles in secondary special schools only] . Where the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 requirements also apply to a post, this should also be reflected in the person specification (see 4.5).

All job descriptions must detail:

- Main duties and responsibilities of the post;
- The post holder's specific responsibility towards the promotion and practice of safeguarding the welfare of children that they come in to contact with through their job

All person specifications must detail:

- Qualifications required to do the job
- Professional Registrations (if required);
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure required / if Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 applies;
- Whether the post is in regulated activity and therefore requires a check of the children's barred list, or where relevant the adult barred list
- The experience, skills and competencies required, if appropriate referencing qualities relating to the safeguarding of children, such as:
 - Motivation to work with children;
 - Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children;
 - Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
 - Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.
- A statement that *"All our colleagues are expected to demonstrate a commitment to co-operative values and principles, British Values and the Ways of Being Co-op"* or similar wording

It is good practice to state on the person specification how these issues will be tested – e.g. application form, interview, or test . It is expected that all of the essential criteria on the person specification should be evidenced either in a candidate's application form or through the interview and selection process.

2.2 The Advert

Promoting commitment to safeguarding and child protection can act as a deterrent to would-be abusers. Advertisements for all vacancies should demonstrate our Trust's commitment to safer recruitment and vetting procedures (see wording in 2.1).

Advertisements should also make clear our commitment to equality and diversity, by including the following statement:

“Co-op Academies Trust is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage or civil partnerships.”

2.3 Application

The importance of safeguarding and protecting children within our Trust should be promoted as much as possible throughout the recruitment process in order to deter unsuitable candidates.

The “application pack” for any recruitment includes:

- o Application Form (CVs should not be accepted)
- o Job Description and Person Specification (ideally one combined document, but may be two separate documents)
- o Guidance for Applicants [*document 2.5 in recruitment toolkit*], which includes important information for applicants on safer recruitment such as:
 - o reference to individual Academy Child Protection Policies
 - o DBS – A Guide for Applicants and information on filtering (Annex 2)
 - o Guide to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and amendments 2020 (filtering of offences), and 2023 (Annex 3)
 - o Information about pre-employment checks that will be completed

3.0 Interview Process

The applicant’s identity should be checked when they attend for an interview (see 4.2).

The interview process should allow time for any discrepancy in a candidate’s application or references to be scrutinised and clarified. With this in mind all candidates should have their qualifications verified, employment gaps explained, criminal record disclosed, reference issues and their attitude towards children discussed at interview. This means that when a candidate is successful, any issues surrounding their application and references have been fully explored before they are offered the post.

Every interview must be carried out on a face-to-face basis (in exceptional circumstances i.e. during Covid 19 - these can take place virtually). The points below are written in relation to recruitment for academy-based roles, however, they should also be adopted in the recruitment of central team / hub staff.

3.1 The interview panel

The interview panel must contain at least one member of staff who has been through appropriate safer recruitment training. This is essential training for School Business Managers, Headteachers/Principals and other senior leaders and for other appropriate and nominated staff members who are regularly involved in recruitment processes.

Academies are responsible for ensuring that relevant staff have received this training. Each Academy must keep a register and a copy of the certificate of staff and governors who have completed this training, including the date of the training and the training provider. There is no statutory requirement to repeat the safer recruitment training course after a certain period of time, however, colleagues who wish to update/refresh their knowledge are welcome to attend refresher training and often find benefit from doing so. Our Trust recommends that colleagues attend refresher training after no longer than 5 years.

Safer Recruitment training (including refresher training) is now provided in-house, delivered jointly by Regional HR Managers and Regional Safeguarding Leads. Dates for training, and details of how to book, are available via our [Colleague Portal](#).

3.2 Online checks

- In line with the requirement introduced by KCSiE 2022, an online search must be carried out as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates for directly employed posts, and as part of the recruitment process for volunteers and Community Council Members (CCMs)/trustees.
- There is an expectation that agencies, third party employers and contractors will also give consideration to carrying out online searches as part of their recruitment processes, in line with KCSiE.
- These checks should be completed after shortlisting but before the date of interview, and the results of the online search documented.
- A Google search should be conducted, reviewing the first three pages of results for each the following key search terms:
 - candidate name
 - name + town of residence (particularly if a common name)
 - name + current employment
 - name + previous employment
 - name + school/college/university
 - name + job title

- The recruiting manager should be informed of any matters of concern that come to light which need to be explored further at interview.
- If major concerns of immediate unsuitability for employment are identified, advice from a Regional HR Manager should be sought, and it may be appropriate to terminate the recruitment process. The candidate concerned should be informed of the reason for the invite to interview being withdrawn, and have the opportunity to discuss this (e.g. if they believe the information found relates to a different person)
- A record of the check should be added to SCR Tracker for the successful candidate.

3.3 References

No-one should be permitted to start work until two satisfactory references have been received. One of the referees must be the candidate's current or most recent employer. Open references must not be accepted in any circumstances.

References must be signed by the headteacher of the school giving the reference, or if not a school, then the person who can answer the question about conduct / suitability to work with children.

Wherever possible, these should be requested for shortlisted applicants, and ideally be received back, prior to interview. However, it is acknowledged that – particularly with applicants not currently working within education – they may not wish their current employer to know that they are seeking alternative employment.

If the applicant has indicated on their application form that they are unwilling for a referee to be contacted prior to a post being offered, the academy should make contact with the applicant to understand the reasons for this and then make a decision as to whether to:

- contact the referee, having agreed this with the applicant
- ask the applicant for an alternative referee, and take this up prior to interview
- go ahead with the interview without requesting the reference, and take up the reference if a conditional offer of employment is made
- withdraw the offer of an interview.

A note of the discussion with the applicant should be kept.

References must be sought for internal candidates applying for a post outside of their current academy (or central / hub team), but are not required in relation to job moves within an academy.

Reference requests must be issued on our Trust's Reference Pro-forma (Leadership, Teaching or Support Staff version, as applicable), which ensures that certain questions are asked about all candidates. This helps to avoid receiving references that do not address all of the areas that we would like to know about.

The Reference Pro-forma asks about the candidate's relationship with children in their current or previous role and if they have ever been involved in any disciplinary action concerning children.

The references should be scrutinised by the Recruiting Manager prior to interview. If there are any discrepancies or issues with the references, the panel should explore these at interview¹ and to make an appointment decision with reference to all the facts available at the time. Obviously, this relies entirely on the speed with which referees return them, which may not always allow for them to be seen prior to interview, but it should be aimed for, as best practice. Offers of employment may still be made subject to references, DBS and other pre-employment checks.

Where references are not seen prior to interview any offer must be made 'subject to references'. When the references are received they should be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the person's appointment is confirmed. If specific questions have not been answered satisfactorily, for example if the answers are vague, the referee should be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate. Information should also be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form, and any discrepancies taken up with the candidate.

All references that have been received electronically should be verified to confirm that they have come from a legitimate source.

3.4 Employment Gaps

At the interview, gaps in employment history must be discussed with the candidate. If there are gaps in their history, the candidate should declare the reasons for their break from work. These should be documented and signed by the candidate. Valid reasons for gaps in employment may be: the candidate did not need to work, travelling, bringing up a family, caring responsibilities, family bereavement, a period of sickness, or time out of work in relation to a disability. It is important to ensure that the candidate is able to give as much detail as possible, in order for the panel to make an informed decision .

¹ DfE Guidance: "Keeping children safe in education"

Note: at this stage of the recruitment process focus on documenting the reason for any gaps in the employment record, to ensure that you are clear on the reasons, rather than getting into a discussion about possible implications for their suitability for future employment. This is particularly true for reasons linked to family responsibilities or health. Remember, any offer of employment, for any candidate, would be subject to completion of a pre-employment health declaration. If a gap is identified where the explanation concerns you, please seek advice from HR.

In addition to employment gaps, it is strongly advisable to discuss patterns of repeated change in career or employers at interview, ensuring that the reasons for this are fully explored and satisfy the interview panel.

3.5 Qualification Verification

At interview essential qualifications required for the post including those set by statute must be verified as a minimum, other qualifications stated on the application form may also need to be verified.

A photocopy of all the original qualification certificates must be taken and if the candidate is successful these should be placed on their personal file and recorded on the Single Central Record. If the candidate is unsuccessful, these should be destroyed.

3.6 Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure

As they involve direct contact with children, all Posts within our Trust's academies are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions 1975) (amended 2020, 2023). As a prospective employer, you should inform all candidates of their responsibility to disclose any unspent cautions, convictions or bind-overs, and any offences that would not be filtered, during the application stage. See Annexes 2 and 3 for more detail.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to submit a self-disclosure form and should return this to the headteacher (or Trust HR Officer for central/hub recruitment (*Annex 6 and document 3.2 in recruitment toolkit*) prior to interview. Disclosed information should be assessed to ensure that it is either unspent or not protected / filtered, as protected offences must not be discussed with the candidate even if they have self-disclosed. Should a positive disclosure be made, it is expected that advice is sought from your Regional HR Manager or Regional Safeguarding Lead to agree next steps, which may include discussing the disclosed information with the candidate at interview. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily bar a person from working with children and should not be used to automatically discount applications.

The successful candidate will be required to complete a DBS Disclosure application form. Once the Enhanced DBS Certificate is returned, any conviction information will need to match up with the candidate's original disclosure to the interview panel. This information will not be retained if the candidate is not successful and should be destroyed.

3.7 Commitment to Safeguarding Children

Interviews allow our Trust to explore a potential candidate's views and expectations in relation to working with children. The recruiting panel should seek to identify the candidate's experience or views on the following points:

- Motivation to work with children;
- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children;
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
- Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.

Providing questions that ask candidates to draw on their experience of situations with children will give a good impression of the candidate's understanding of the points above. It will enable the panel to probe issues or lack of knowledge that candidates may have and explore their motivation to work within an Academy environment or with children.

3.8 Use of AI

When reviewing application forms panel members should be alert to the increasing potential for possible AI-generated job applications / application form content. This can often be generic, impersonal and may not accurately reflect an applicant's qualifications, knowledge, skills, and experiences. There's also a risk that AI can generate false or misleading information.

There's no hard and fast way of identifying AI-generated content, and care must be taken not to mistake this for circumstances where English is not the job applicant's first language. However, look out for:

- stilted, impersonal language (robotic sounding)
- inconsistency in the language, writing style or tone of voice throughout the application form (mismatches of style between different sections)
- overly long or complex sentences that have a range of unusual vocabulary, patterns or phrases.

The interview and selection process for all roles should be robust. If the panel suspects that AI could potentially have been used, this does not prevent the

candidate being taken forward for interview, but the panel must ensure there are thorough assessment methods to further test the knowledge and skills required for the post and allay any concerns regarding suitability.

4.0 Pre-Employment Checks

No candidate will be offered a post with our Trust unconditionally. All offers will be subject to satisfactory completion of the appropriate checks as listed below. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that these checks take place.

These checks should be made clear to candidates at the interview. Any offer of employment should be a conditional offer subject to satisfactory clearances being received and checked. Only when all of these checks are completed and returned will an offer of employment be confirmed.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is in the best interests of the Academy / Trust for a candidate to start prior to all (see below) of these checks being completed, a rigorous risk assessment must be completed and approved by the Headteacher, and be countersigned by either the Regional Safeguarding Lead or Regional HR Manager, and should be documented on the SCR platform. For Headteacher appointments and/or Central Team roles, this risk assessment should be shared with the Regional Director / Trust SLT members / Trust CEO (as applicable). An individual who will be in regulated activity must never be allowed to commence work before the DBS barred list has been checked. Anyone appointed to a teaching post must be checked against the TRA prohibited list, GTCE list (and s128 if relevant) before they commence in post.

4.1 References

Our Trust should request and have returned two references for every potential employee, one of these references must be from their current or most recent employer. For academy-based roles, as the post requires working in an environment with children, it is important to have a reference, if available, from an employer or voluntary agency demonstrating the candidate's previous work experience, paid or unpaid, of working with children. Two satisfactory references must be received before the person commences in post. *See 3.2 above for more information.* Record in SCR Tracker.

4.2 Verification of Candidate's Identity

It is vital that our Trust knows who their employees are and have evidence to prove this. For all employees of our Trust a copy of the documents used to verify the candidate's identity, including birth certificate (if seen), and right to work in the UK

(see 4.9) should be placed on their personal file and logged on the Single Central Record. The copied document should be marked 'identity / right to work check undertaken on [Date] by [Name]' and then signed by the person undertaking the check.

Information checking guidelines can be found [here](#). Evidence of identity should be seen at the interview so it's clear that the correct person is being interviewed, and full verification of identity must be completed before the person commences in post.

It is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available. However, sensitivity should be exercised around this matter as individuals may change their name for many reasons. Note: a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) is not required to enable a trans person to change their name and our Trust will never ask an individual if they have a GRC to verify a name change.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) offers a [confidential checking service](#) for transgender applicants in accordance with the Gender Recognition Act 2004. This is known as the 'sensitive applications route', and is available for all levels of DBS check - basic, standard and enhanced.

4.3 Prohibition Check, and s.128 checks

Any candidate with QTS should be checked against the prohibited list if they are being recruited to a post which includes teaching work. Applicants for HLTA and Cover Supervisor positions must also be checked (whether or not they are known to have QTS).

"Teaching work" is defined as work not subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher (or other person nominated by the head teacher to provide such direction and supervision) which involves one or more of the following:

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
- delivering lessons to pupils
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
- reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

This check ensures that a teacher is not prohibited from teaching and has been a statutory requirement since April 2014, but there is no requirement to retrospectively check teachers who commenced their current employment prior to that date. Existing staff will have been checked in line with previous guidance for

checking QTS status. Further information is in the TRA publication “Teacher misconduct: the prohibition of teachers”.

The individual’s teaching record should be printed off and placed in their personnel file and the date of the check must be recorded on the Single Central Record. Under no circumstances should anyone in a teaching post commence work without the check having been undertaken.

To ensure that you are able to carry out the check prior to appointment, academies must register on the Teacher Services system. This is a free service. Further information on how to register and access can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers>. This replaces the database previously managed by the GTCE which listed any teacher who may have been the subject of a suspension or conditional order and confirmed that a teacher had QTS and had completed their induction.

You can check whether a teacher you are considering employing has:

- qualified teacher status (QTS)
- completed their induction
- a mandatory qualification for teachers of hearing impaired or visually impaired pupils
- an active teaching restriction
- been the subject of a decision by the Secretary of State not to impose a prohibition order for unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the teaching profession into disrepute or conviction of a relevant offence
- been prohibited from teaching
- been prohibited under s128 from taking up a management position in an independent school (including an academy or free school). This check should also apply to members of the central/hub teams who are in leadership roles.
- a suspension or conditional order imposed by the General Teaching Council for England that is still current
- failed their induction or probation period

It is important that the checker also ‘claims’ the teacher on the Teachers Services website.

Please note: The prohibition order check is different to the barred list check operated by the DBS (see 4.4.3). Some new appointments will require an enhanced DBS check, a barred list check and a prohibition order check.

4.3.1 Who is required to have a Section 128 check?

The Headteacher (Trust CEO for central/hub staff) is responsible for deciding which posts are defined as “management”. This should include, but is not limited to:

- Members of an Academy’s senior leadership team, including the Headteacher / Principal themselves
- Anyone with a leadership role (e.g. on the leadership pay scale)
- Anyone with a line management responsibility
- Any other staff with a management role, for example Office / Business / Finance / HR Managers
- Senior Trust/Hub staff
- CCMs (see 5.7) and trustees (see 5.8).

Section 128 checks should be completed via the process outlined in 4.3, and is applicable regardless of whether or not the post-holder has QTS.

4.4 DBS Disclosure

An overview of the process for DBS and barred list checks is shown at Annex 1.

The DBS check shows our Trust any previous convictions held on file for a potential employee, other than those which are “filtered” by the DBS (see Annex 2). There are three types of check: “standard”, “enhanced” and “enhanced including barred list”.

If the DBS certificate has not been received prior to the employment commencing the academy must ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a barred list check (4.4.3), have been completed. A risk assessment should be completed - please seek advice from HR.

A preliminary barred list check by name can be completed via the TRA. If the name is not recognised then no one by that name is on the list and the individual may start work subject to risk assessment. If the name is recognised, then employment must not commence until the full DBS check has been completed and received back. It may not be the same person e.g. there are lots of Sam Smiths.

For most appointments an enhanced DBS certificate with children barred list information, will be required as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity as they:

- are employed to work regularly in a specified place (i.e. school/college), and/or
- are responsible, on a regular basis, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or driving a vehicle only for children, or

- carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly which provides an opportunity for contact with children, or
- engage in intimate or personal care, or an overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

In rare circumstances an employee in one of our academies may be in 'regulated activity' with adults (persons aged 18 and over), in this case the adult barred list must be checked before the individual commences in post, or engages in any 'regulated activity'. Note, this does not apply to all staff working with students aged 18 or over, only if they are engaging in regulated activity as set out below.

In relation to adults, the following activities are classed as regulated activity:

- Healthcare for adults provided by, or under the supervision of, a regulated healthcare professional.
- Personal care for adults.
- Social work provided by a social care worker.
- Assisting an adult with cash, bills or shopping because of their age, illness or disability.
- Assisting in the conduct of an adult's own affairs under a formal appointment.
- Conveying or transporting adults because of their age, illness or disability to or from places where they receive healthcare, personal care or social work.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children but who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate which does not include a barred list check will be appropriate. The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any individual, including volunteers, who are not engaging in regulated activity.

All members of the central / hub teams will undergo an Enhanced DBS Disclosure as part of the recruitment process, and the certificate number / date the certificate was seen, will be made available for the Single Central Record of each Academy.

4.4.1 Checking the DBS certificate

The applicant must show their original DBS certificate to the academy before they take up post, who should log the certificate number and date the certificate was seen on their Single Central Record – along with a note of the person who checked the certificate.

Having a conviction will not necessarily bar someone from working in a job with children or vulnerable adults. The severity, nature, circumstances and timing of the conviction will need to be taken into consideration. Candidates will be given the opportunity at the application stage to declare any *unspent* convictions they may

have, as well as any offences that are not protected. Any declaration they make will be compared with the returned criminal record disclosure. DBS certificates should be checked with reference to the list of relevant offences in the "Teacher Misconduct - Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006" guidance. If a positive DBS disclosure is received, please contact your Regional HR Manager A risk assessment should be completed - please seek advice from HR.

4.4.2 Record Keeping

Academies do not have to keep copies of DBS certificates in order to fulfil the duty of maintaining a Single Central Record. Where a copy is taken, in order to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act (which includes the rules set out in the General Data Protection Regulation) academies should have a good reason for doing so.

Where there is a positive DBS and a risk assessment is completed, a copy of the DBS certificate should be kept with the risk assessment for as long as the risk assessment remains in place (this is now permitted as national guidance has changed).

4.4.3 Barred List

This is a list of people barred from working with children, compiled by the DBS. There is also a separate list of individuals barred from working in regulated activity with adults. For posts in regulated activity this check should be done as part of the DBS Application Process (see above). If a person is not in, or seeking to enter, regulated activity it is unlawful to check the barred list. If a school knows or has reason to believe that an individual is barred, it commits an offence if it allows the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity. Candidates in regulated activity must never be permitted to commence in post before the barred list check is complete.

There are a limited number of circumstances when a stand-alone children's barred list check must be undertaken, for example

- a) where an existing member of staff moves from not regulated activity to a post that is in regulated activity and a new enhanced DBS certificate is not required
- b) where a new employee in regulated activity is to be allowed to commence in post before the enhanced DBS certificate has been received
- c) where a new recruit will be transferring from a similar role in another school or academy, with a break in service of 3 months or less and a new enhanced DBS certificate is not required

If someone moves from regulated activity with children to regulated activity with adults, a new DBS certificate will be required.

4.4.4 DBS Update Service

Individuals can join the DBS Update Service at the point an application for a new DBS check is made, enabling future status checks to be carried out to confirm that no new information has been added since its issue. This allows portability of a certificate across employers. Before using the Update Service, academies must:

- Obtain consent from the applicant to do so,
- Confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity, and
- Examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate, or enhanced including the relevant barred list information.

The academy can then subsequently carry out a free online check to identify whether there has been any change in the information recorded since the certificate was issued and advise whether the individual should apply for a new certificate. Individuals will be able to see a full list of those organisations that have carried out a status check on their account.

4.5 Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DfE Regulations 2018)

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 sets out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified and may not provide relevant early or later years childcare or be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Schools are prohibited from employing a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision in certain settings, and the employer commits an offence if they contravene this unless they can prove that they did not know, and had no reasonable grounds for believing, that the person they employed was disqualified.

Full details of these requirements are set out in the DfE's statutory guidance on "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006" updated by the DfE in August 2018 which can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

It is expected that Headteachers / Principals will familiarise themselves with the statutory guidance, which apply to people who provide, or are directly concerned with the management of:

- Early years' provision – all staff caring for children under the age of 5 (therefore nursery / reception / foundation staff). This includes any supervised

activity (such as breakfast clubs, lunchtime supervision and after school care provided by the school) both during and outside of school hours for children in the early years age range.

- Later years' provision - if the school has wrap around care (before / after school care, holiday scheme) for children aged under 8, it applies to all staff working in that care. - childcare provided by the school outside of school hours for children who are above reception age but who have not attained the age of 8. This does not include education or supervised activity for children aged 5 and above during school hours (including extended school hours for co-curricular learning activities, such as the school's choir, hobby clubs or sports teams) but it does include before school settings, such as breakfast clubs, and after school care provision.
- It also applies to Headteachers of all our Trust's Primary Academies, plus relevant senior / middle leaders, such as Early Years co-ordinators / Foundation Stage Managers.

Academies should exercise their judgement about when and whether such staff are within scope, evaluating and recording any risks and control measures put in place, and taking advice when appropriate.

If these regulations apply to the post being recruited, applicants should be provided with information about the regulations and the preferred candidate should be asked to complete a declaration form (see *Annex 4 and document 5.8 in recruitment toolkit*). If a declaration is made this will need to be considered and discussed with the candidate. If a post is offered, the offer must be conditional, and the applicant should apply for a waiver. If a waiver is not granted, the conditional offer should be withdrawn.

Academies must keep a record of those staff who are employed to work in or manage relevant childcare and should record the date on which disqualification checks were completed; this may be kept as part of the single central record or as a separate list and forms completed by successful applicants will be placed on their personnel file. Information received from all applicants during the recruitment process should be treated in line with the Data Protection Act (2018) which includes the rules set out in the General Data Protection Regulations (see statutory guidance for further detail).

It is expected that all staff / volunteers working in roles to which these regulations apply are reminded about Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 on an annual basis and asked to confirm whether or not their circumstances have changed (see Annex 7). Should this identify any staff/volunteers who are disqualified, advice must be sought from the academy's Regional HR Manager.

Co-op Academies Trust expects all staff (not just those working in early or later years childcare) to discuss with their Headteacher / Regional Director / Trust SLT member / or Trust CEO (central / hub team members) any criminal charges brought or caution / conviction acquired during their employment with us and any relationship or association (in the real world or online) which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the academy (see section 17 of the Staff Code of Conduct) so that an appropriate risk assessment can be carried out. Academies are expected to complete an annual declaration process for all staff; but staff should not wait for this, and should raise any matters at the earliest opportunity. Please seek advice from the Academy Safeguarding Lead and/or Regional HR Manager if appropriate.

4.6 Medical Clearance

Once an offer of employment is made, a potential employee must complete a copy of our Trust's health declaration form and associated guidance. Depending on the answers given by the candidate, our Trust's Occupational Health provider may be asked to carry out further enquiries to confirm mental and physical fitness for the specific post. Record in SCR Tracker.

4.7 Verification of Qualifications

Any essential qualifications required to perform a particular job, such as QTS, as stated in the person specification, need to be evidenced by the potential employee. A copy of original certificates should be taken and placed on their personal file and the date seen logged on the Single Central Record. This should ideally be confirmed at the interview stage.

4.8 Verification of Professional Registration

Some posts require a professional registration with a regulatory body, such as the General Teaching Council etc. This again needs to be evidenced and placed on file, if the person specification states it as an essential prerequisite.

4.9 Right to Work in the UK

It is a legal obligation that every employer in the UK verifies whether a potential employee has the right to work in the UK:

- Step 1 – you should ask for and be given an acceptable document, or combination of documents. Only original documents must be accepted;
- Step 2 - you must take all reasonable steps to check that the document is genuine and to satisfy yourself that the holder is the person named in the

document. You should also check that the document allows them to do the work in question. If you are unsure, you can contact the Home Office employer helpline on 0300 123 4699;

Step 3 - you must take and retain a copy of the document, in a format which cannot later be altered. The copied document should be marked 'identity / right to work check undertaken on [Date] by [Name]' and then signed by the person undertaking the check. Add the details to the SCR.

Further information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work>, with a helpful step-by-step checking process at <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk> and detailed information and guidance at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/311668/Code_of_practice_on_preventing_illegal_working.pdf. Failure to meet legal requirements can attract a fine of up to £15,000. If further support is required, please contact your Regional HR Manager.

It is also a legal obligation to carry out appropriate overseas criminal record checks (see 4.11 below).

4.9.1 Employing EU citizens in the UK

- EU, EEA or Swiss citizens and their family members who lived in the UK by 31 December 2020 needed to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue living in the UK after 30 June 2021. The deadline for applying was 30 June 2021.
- You have a duty not to discriminate against EU, EEA or Swiss citizens who have settled status. However, you may ask them to show you their status under the EU Settlement Scheme.
- EEA Nationals employed from 01 July 2021 should be treated the same as non EEA Nationals and you should request to see their EU Settled Status (EUSS) or other form of leave to remain. You can no longer accept biometric residence cards or permits. Ask the applicant for a share code instead and [click here to verify](#) using the Government's right to work service. You must keep a secure copy of this online check (either electronically or in hard copy), for the duration of the employment and for two years after. The [Right to Work checklist](#) produced by the Home Office can be used to assist with conducting the check.
- EU citizens applying for a skilled worker visa need to show they have a job offer from an approved employer sponsor to be able to apply.
- Please speak to your Regional HR Manager for further guidance, including around sponsorship.

4.10 Employment History

If appropriate, follow up on any outstanding concerns from the interview relating gaps in employment or noticeable patterns when the candidate changed their employment. Ensure that the information received is not contradictory or incomplete.

4.11 Overseas checks

If the potential employee has lived or worked outside the UK for a period of time (whether or not they are a British national), then a UK DBS Disclosure will not give a full picture in respect of any criminal record they may have but must still be completed in all cases.

Good practice would be to explore the travels with the candidate during the interview.

In addition to the usual pre-employment checks listed elsewhere in this policy, where an individual has lived or worked abroad in recent years², academies must make any further checks they think are appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. For example:

- An overseas criminal record check, where available. The overseas criminal record certificate may also be referred to as a certificate of good conduct or police character certificate (etc.) depending on the country in question. Full details can be found by following the link below.
- Obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the [Regulated Professions database](#). Applicants can also

² * "Recent years" - our application form and pre-interview disclosure form ask applicants whether or not they have lived or worked overseas in the past 5 years, however, there is no precise 'cut off point' and an academy may make checks going back further than this if they consider it to be appropriate e.g. if someone has spent more than 12 months overseas in the last 10 years. Different requirements apply in relation to overseas applicants working under a visa / sponsorship arrangements. With effect from 6th April 2017 the Home Office confirmed that an overseas criminal check will be completed for everyone in an education role applying for a visa to work in the UK. The requirement is mandatory to applicants from overseas applying under certain Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes, including teaching and school leadership. The requirement to provide an overseas criminal record certificate applies to anyone that has lived abroad for 12 months or more in the last 10 years.

contact the [UK National Information Centre](#) who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

- An employment reference from the overseas' employer, even if this is not the last two employers
- Where the vetting documents are received in a language other than English, the translation must be completed by an accredited translator

Since 01 January 2021 the TRA Teacher Services system no longer maintains a list of those teachers who have been sanctioned in EEA member states and therefore this check is no longer required. This column on your SCR must remain as evidence that this was part of your checks from 18th Jan 2016 to 31st Dec 2020.

Under KCSiE there is no requirement to carry out checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, in the three months prior to their appointment, the applicant has worked in a school (or the further education sector or 16-19 Academy) in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children or young persons. However, notwithstanding this, an academy may make any further checks they consider to be appropriate in the circumstances of the individual case.

Where this information is not available schools and colleges should seek alternative methods of checking suitability and or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment.

If the individual is a Visa Applicant, additional statutory requirements to provide criminal record certificates apply. Please speak to your Regional HR Manager for further support.

Academies should ensure that their SCR includes a confirmation of whether an overseas criminal records certificate is required and, if so, the date this was seen / verified.

Further information:

The Home Office has published guidance on criminal record checks for overseas applicants, on a country-by-country basis

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

The DfE has also issued guidance on the employment of overseas-trained teachers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employing-overseas-trained-teachers-from-outside-the-eea>

5.0 Other people attending the Academy

5.1 Temporary / short term staff employed directly ~~by the Academy~~

Temporary colleagues should be recruited and treated in the same way as any other member of staff ~~in the Academy~~. This means that they should also have all the appropriate pre-employment checks carried out before their employment is confirmed.

Temporary / short term staff that are not employed by our Trust on a continuous basis should have their DBS Disclosure (and Prohibition status if applicable) re-checked every 12 months (unless there is a gap in service of 3 months or more in which case a new disclosure must be sought before they work in the academy again); and should also be asked to complete a Disqualification under the Childcare Act declaration annually (if applicable). This is due to the casual and ad-hoc nature of their work, which may mean they do not actively work in our Academies for a few months at a time.

If a colleague is predominantly based at one Academy, it is recommended that the Academy organises and funds the re-check and should encourage the individual to register with the update service. If the colleague is mobile and only works for us a few days at a time (but is employed direct, rather than via an agency or other body – see 5.2 below), they should organise their re-check through a Local Authority or Umbrella Body and fund it themselves and / or should be encouraged to register with the update service.

5.2 Temporary staff employed via a third party (e.g. Local Authority Peripatetic Tutors and Agency Staff)

(including Agency Workers employed in central/hub roles, Agency Supply Teachers and students and staff from other agencies or educational institutions, for example social workers)

It is important that evidence of the necessary checks is obtained in relation to staff providing services such as music tuition, specialist sports coaching, supply teaching, specific courses, or other work that require staff to work on Academy premises whilst children are present. This is equally important for agency workers engaged in central / hub roles.

It is expected that the same standard of checks will be carried out (or evidence of them having been carried out will be obtained) for all staff and the extended provision even if they are not employed directly by our Trust. With this in mind, all

outside providers should be requested to provide evidence that relevant pre-employment checks have been undertaken. It is for the employer / agency to determine which checks are required. If the academy does not believe the employer / agency has completed the necessary checks, they should discuss this with the employer / agency and seek advice from their Regional HR Manager. This should be given in writing and in advance of the provider starting work and should be agreed as part of any contract with the provider.

In the case of supply agencies, the recruiting manager must ask to view the original copy of the DBS Certificate from the agency: the agency must provide a copy of the DBS before the person turns up for work so the recruiting manager can decide whether they are happy with the person's suitability. This does not apply to other providers. Confirmation of relevant checks from external providers will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

If confirmation / evidence is not provided, then the recruiting manager must not allow the peripatetic tutors or agency staff to have unsupervised access to children. On an exceptional basis a risk assessment will be undertaken but this will not be considered the norm. If the individual is in regulated activity they will not be permitted to work until confirmation is received that the barred list check has been undertaken and the person is not barred.

Individual Trust Academies are responsible for ensuring that any supply teaching agencies they use can demonstrate robust recruitment and selection procedures e.g. ensuring that their employees are DBS / barred list / Prohibition cleared, completed a Disqualification from Childcare Act declaration if applicable, have a full face-to-face interview and all the appropriate pre-employment checks and child protection / safeguarding inductions are carried out. More information about what to expect of a supply agency in relation to safer recruitment can be found at <https://www.rec.uk.com/membership/recruitment-industry-sectors/education/putting-pupils-first>

All persons employed by the academy, any regular visitors employed by a third party such as an agency, and all regular volunteers should be included on the Academy's Single Central Record.

As with any external persons coming on to Academy premises the Academy will verify their identity, the provider should be asked to show documents such as a passport or driver's licence unless they have company ID. The Academy will be given the names of expected guests or outside providers in advance of their arrival on site. The Academy will be very clear that the named individual is who they say they are.

5.3 Host Families involved in Exchange Visits

Host families will have unsupervised contact with children under the age of 18, such arrangements could amount to “private fostering” under the Children Act 1989 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, if the arrangements are not made by the child’s family and/or the host is paid to provide this arrangement. In these circumstances it could amount to a regulated activity, and the academy (or a third-party provider, such as a language school) is the regulated activity provider and should request a DBS certificate (including barred list).

Where arrangements are made to stay with families overseas, it should be remembered that DBS cannot access criminal records held overseas. Academies should work with a partner school abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to a visit. Further information is in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 annex E).

In preparation of a forthcoming Exchange Trip where the exchange pupils will be staying with families of our Trust’s Academy pupils/students, the following steps will be taken:

- Determine who are the responsible adults of host family groups.
- These people will be requested to complete the DBS application administered by the Academy hosting the visit as soon as possible.
- In addition, there may be circumstances where an academy wishes to undertake vetting checks on others over the age of 16 in the same household – if so, this will usually be an enhanced DBS without barred list information.
- ID checks need to be witnessed by staff in the Academy (perhaps an evening for prospective host families to attend and bring their ID documents).
- All the DBS applications and ID checks must be completed at least eight weeks prior to the exchange visit. This is in order to have all the DBS checks returned to the Headteacher before the exchange takes place.
- The enhanced DBS certificate should be with barred list information for all the responsible adults outlined and any results provided back to the Headteacher straight away.
- All host family DBSs can be marked as ‘*Volunteers*’, unless they are paid fees/expenses (e.g. by an external provider)
- DBS Disclosures are returned to the host families who will bring the original certificates to school and any issues discussed with the Headteacher.

5.4 Volunteers

This section should be read in conjunction with our Trust’s Educational Visits Policy, and the Volunteers Recruitment Toolkit.

Volunteers in Academies often have the same or similar access to children as employees. A child will not consider a distinction between a volunteer and a member of staff, when seeking help or support. This means that volunteers should have certain checks completed as they are in a position of trust.

As with any new staff member an identity check should be carried out, and it is also important to request and receive two references on behalf of the volunteer. These checks must be carried out for all volunteers and not just for those unknown to the Academy.

An enhanced DBS Disclosure should be carried out prior to a regular volunteer starting their duties within the Academy, unless there are clear reasons why it is not relevant and proportionate to do so in relation to the post concerned (e.g. nature of the work, what is already known about the volunteer) – see 5.4.1 below.

- Volunteers who teach or look after children regularly on an unsupervised basis, or who provide personal care on a one-off basis, will be in regulated activity. In this case, an enhanced DBS check including barred list information should be obtained.
- If planning to allow volunteers to work unsupervised with children, the academy should confirm with their insurer that adequate cover is in place
- An enhanced DBS check (without barred list check) may be requested for volunteers who are not engaging in regulated activity but have the opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis (e.g. supervised volunteers).

Although there is not a requirement to re-check volunteers in regulated activity at prescribed intervals, academies may conduct a repeat DBS check (including barred list information) on any volunteer about whom they have concerns.

- If no DBS check is completed the reasons for this should be documented and the volunteer must be supervised* at all times and must not engage in regulated activity.
- If the volunteer is providing teaching work, checks of the relevant TRA lists should be completed
- If the volunteer is working in an area which is subject to the Disqualification from Childcare Act, they should also be asked to complete a declaration form prior to commencing.

If a volunteer becomes a paid employee, then the usual pre-employment checks for new employees should be carried out, e.g. their right to work in the UK should be assessed, a medical questionnaire completed, etc. It is a legal requirement to apply

for a new Enhanced DBS Disclosure (including barred list check, if applicable) as well to reflect their change to an employee.

If assisting on a one-off Academy trip and not carrying out a regulated activity (see 4.4), a volunteer does not require a DBS Disclosure, but must be supervised³ at all times.

5.4.1 Risk assessing volunteers

There must be a written risk assessment (see Volunteers Recruitment Toolkit) in place for all volunteers that are not in regulated activity – this risk assessment should determine whether or not the individual needs an enhanced DBS (without barred list check), taking into consideration what is already known about the volunteer, the needs of the pupils, the nature of the activity, level of supervision and the views / feedback from staff, other volunteers and / or referees. More information can be found in KCSiE.

5.4.2 Supervision

If the volunteer is to be supervised whilst undertaking an activity that would be regulated activity if it was unsupervised, the statutory guidance must be followed (see Annex F of Keeping Children Safe in Education, ~~2020~~). The nature of the supervision planned should be included in the written risk assessment.

5.5 Contractors and Consultants

Where academies use contractors to provide services, they should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and our Trust.

Academies should ensure that any contractor/consultant, or any employee of the contractor/consultant, working in the school has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check prior to starting work. Contractors/consultants engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information). For all other contractors/consultants, who are not engaging in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (without barred list) will be required. In considering whether the contact is regular it is irrelevant if the contractor/consultant works on a single site or across a number of sites.

Under no circumstances should a contractor/consultant be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity if appropriate checks have not been obtained.

³ NB 'supervised' does not always mean 'accompanied' - see also DfE definition of supervision – Keeping children safe in education 2019 annex F

5.5.1 Building Contractors

Children should not be allowed in areas where builders are working for Health and Safety reasons, so there should be little opportunity for workers to be unsupervised with children. However, it is difficult to say that there will not be times when contact with a child occurs if work is being carried out in term-time. It is therefore recommended that staff working on-site for Building Contractors undergo a DBS Standard Disclosure (without barred list check) and that this clearance is stated in any contract struck with an Academy, and is paid for by the contracted company.

The Academy can process the DBS checks on behalf of the contractor, but the cost will be paid for by the Building Contractor's company and work should not commence before the relevant DBS checks have been completed. Building Contractors employees who are most likely to come into the Academy and potentially engage with children are site managers, who will liaise with the Headteachers/Principals or Business Managers.

5.5.2 Emergency Call-Out Contractors

Contractors that are called out in an emergency may not be checked and known to the Academy prior to the 'call-out'. It is not necessary to obtain a DBS Disclosure for such staff, as they will only have contact with children on an ad hoc or irregular basis and are unlikely to be left unsupervised with children. It is best practice to monitor these staff in the building by getting them to sign in or out in a visitor log and to have them escorted by a DBS cleared member of staff at all times.

Any contractor, maintenance worker or agency staff coming on to Academy premises should verify their identity, providing documents such as a passport or driver's licence or company / Local Authority ID. The Academy should be very clear that the named individual is who they say they are.

5.6 Visitors

Academies have different types of visitors, for example, those with a professional role working with children i.e. educational psychologists, social workers etc, those connected with the building or grounds maintenance, children's relatives or other visitors attending an activity in school such as a sports day, or for other reasons such as trade union representatives, or visitors from external companies / schools outside of our Trust. Academy safeguarding policies should set out the arrangements for individuals coming onto their premises.

For visitors who are there in a professional capacity working with children, check ID and make sure that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or if employed

by a third party, that the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks - see paragraph 5.2).

Other than where referenced elsewhere in this Policy in relation to particular categories of visitor, Academies should not request or ask to see DBS checks for visitors.

Headteachers/Principals should use their professional judgement about the need to escort or supervise visitors. Visitors should be given information about safeguarding arrangements.

5.7 Community Council Members⁴

Each new CCM is required to provide two references and must complete an enhanced DBS check (without barred list, unless they will be engaging in regulated activity) prior to appointment. The individual may attend meetings of the ACC as an observer until checks are complete; this will normally be for no longer than one term. Individual academies are responsible for carrying out DBS checks for their CCMs. There is no requirement to repeat DBS checks after a certain period of time, however, an academy may do so if it has cause for concern.

CCMs undertaking more than one role within our Trust will only require one Enhanced DBS Disclosure, but must be prepared to show each academy a copy of their DBS at their first meeting.

A person shall be disqualified from serving on the ACC at any time when they are included in the DBS children's barred list, or has at any time been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended in 2013.

All members of the ACC must be checked under a Section 128 direction, which prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management (including being a governor of an independent school, including academies and free schools). A check for a section 128 direction ("prohibition check") can be carried out using the Teacher Services System, and the information should be included in the Single Central Record. See 4.3 above.

⁴ Our Trust's governance structure includes Academy Community Council Members, not Governors. However, these roles most closely align with "governors" in terms of KCSiE.

5.8 Trustees

Specific requirements are placed on the “proprietors of independent schools including academies”, which includes the Chair of a body of people which is the proprietor. This requires the Secretary of State to carry out an enhanced DBS check (including a barred list check if appropriate), confirm the individual’s identity and, if the individual has lived outside the UK, to make any other checks considered appropriate. This requirement therefore applies to the Chair of our Trust Board.

The Chair of our Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that enhanced DBS checks are undertaken, and identity checks completed (with any additional checks taken as appropriate if an individual has lived or worked outside the UK) for the other members of our Trust Board before, or as soon as practicable after, they take up their position.

All members of our Trust Board must be checked under a Section 128 direction, which prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. A check for a section 128 direction (“prohibition check”) can be carried out using the Teacher Services System, and the information should be included in the Single Central Record. See 4.3 above.

5.9 Foreign Language Assistants

Foreign Language Assistants working in the UK will need to provide a police clearance or certificate of good conduct prior to taking up their posts. At least one reference from the home nation will also be sought. It is the Academy responsibility to ensure that this document is provided (see 4.11 Overseas Checks above). It should not be more than six months old when the Assistant produces it, and should have been translated by proper means if relevant. Right to Work in the UK should also be verified (see 4.9 above).

5.10 Work related placements within our Academies and placement of students outside our Academies

5.10.1 Teacher or Teaching Assistant Training Students

The requirements depend on whether the trainee is employed by our Trust (e.g. salaried School Direct), or on a non-salaried route and therefore not directly employed. There are also specific considerations around data protection and the sharing of information. For more information see Annex 5 – and in particular the section on sharing of information.

Where the trainee is salaried, the academy must ensure that all necessary checks are carried out as for any other member of staff.

For all students not employed by our Trust and placed with us from other Academies, Universities or FE Colleges, evidence should be provided in writing to our Trust (in the same way as a Supply Agency would do) that the supplying body has carried out all the same checks that our Trust would have done if they were their own staff (including DBS Disclosure, prohibition check, Childcare Disqualification Regulations declaration if applicable, Identity check, etc.) An ID check should be carried out to establish that the student who has arrived for the placement is who they say they are, but details e.g. DBS number / date should not be requested. There is no requirement for the school or college to record details of fee-funded trainees on the single central record. However, schools and colleges may wish to record this information under non statutory information.

5.10.2 Our Secondary Students placed in a School, College or Nursery for work experience

It is expected that these students should be supervised at all times during their placement and will therefore not need an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. It is unlawful to seek a criminal disclosure for a young person under the age of 16. The Academy organising the placement should ensure that the student is suitable for the placement environment. If the young person carrying out the work experience is aged 16 years or over, they may be asked to complete a DBS check if the organisation providing the placements considers it to be appropriate.

5.10.3 Our Secondary Students placed in environments outside our Trust (other than schools / nurseries)

It is important to make businesses or organisations who take on secondary students for work experience aware of their vulnerability during such placements. It is impossible to DBS clear all staff who work with such students, but awareness of the potential risks needs to be assessed and policies / procedures put in place to protect children from harm. Where the child is under the age of 16, the specific circumstances of the work experience should be considered and an enhanced DBS (including barred list check if it constitutes regulated activity) may be requested for the person supervising the placement.

5.11 Existing Staff

There is no requirement to re-check all colleagues after a certain period of time. However, if an Academy has concerns about an existing staff member's suitability to

work with children, they should carry out all relevant checks as if the person were a new member of staff.

Similarly, if an employee moves to a post which requires a different level of check, then the relevant checks must be carried out, e.g. from a post that was not regulated activity in to work which is regulated activity (with children or adults), in to a post to which the Disqualification from Childcare Regulations apply, or in to a post where s.128 checks apply.

Academies have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult (or where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that individual has committed a listed relevant offence) and where that individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity – or would have been removed had they not left. Referrals should be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual,

Where an employer (including an agency) dismisses or ceases to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed / ceased to use their services had they not left first, they must also consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State (Education Act 2002).

6.0 Single Central Record

As required by the DfE, each Academy will keep a Single Central Record to provide confirmation that relevant checks have been taken for:

- all staff (including agency / supply staff and trainee teachers) who work in the school even if they only work for one day
- all members of the “proprietor body” e.g. relevant information for CCMs, trustees, and central/hub trust staff

Where checks are carried out for volunteers, these should also be recorded on the Single Central Record.

A Single Central Record will also be maintained by our Trust separately for the central / hub teams. This is available to academies as part of their SCR via SCR Tracker.

The Single Central Record should include factual information about each individual concerned, and a note of the person who checked the information and the date of the check / when the evidence was seen. All relevant fields on SCR Tracker should

be completed promptly during the recruitment/onboarding process, and be fully maintained at all times, in line with training / guidance provided.

For agency / supply staff, academies should check the ID of the person on arrival and have already gained written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received, and should also receive a copy of the DBS certificate.

This record must be complete for all staff in the Academy and will be available to be assessed by Ofsted and HMI Inspectors. *For further details of the records that must be kept see Part 3 of KCSiE and Part 4 of the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.*

The details of an individual should be removed from the single central record once they no longer work for our Trust.

7.0 Induction

All new staff and regular volunteers will be provided with induction training which will include as a minimum:

- the academy's child protection policy and procedures
- the Colleague Code of Conduct
- the academy's pupil behaviour policy
- the Whistleblowing Policy
- Online Safety Policy, Social Media Policy and Acceptable Use Policy
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead, and their contact details
- safeguarding risks of children missing education

In addition, all individuals will be provided with a copy of:

- The relevant sections of Keeping Children Safe in Education, depending on the level of contact with children
- What to do if you're worried about a child (DfE 2015)
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Individuals will be asked to confirm in writing that they have read and understood these documents. If they are unsure of anything, advice should be sought from the designated staff.

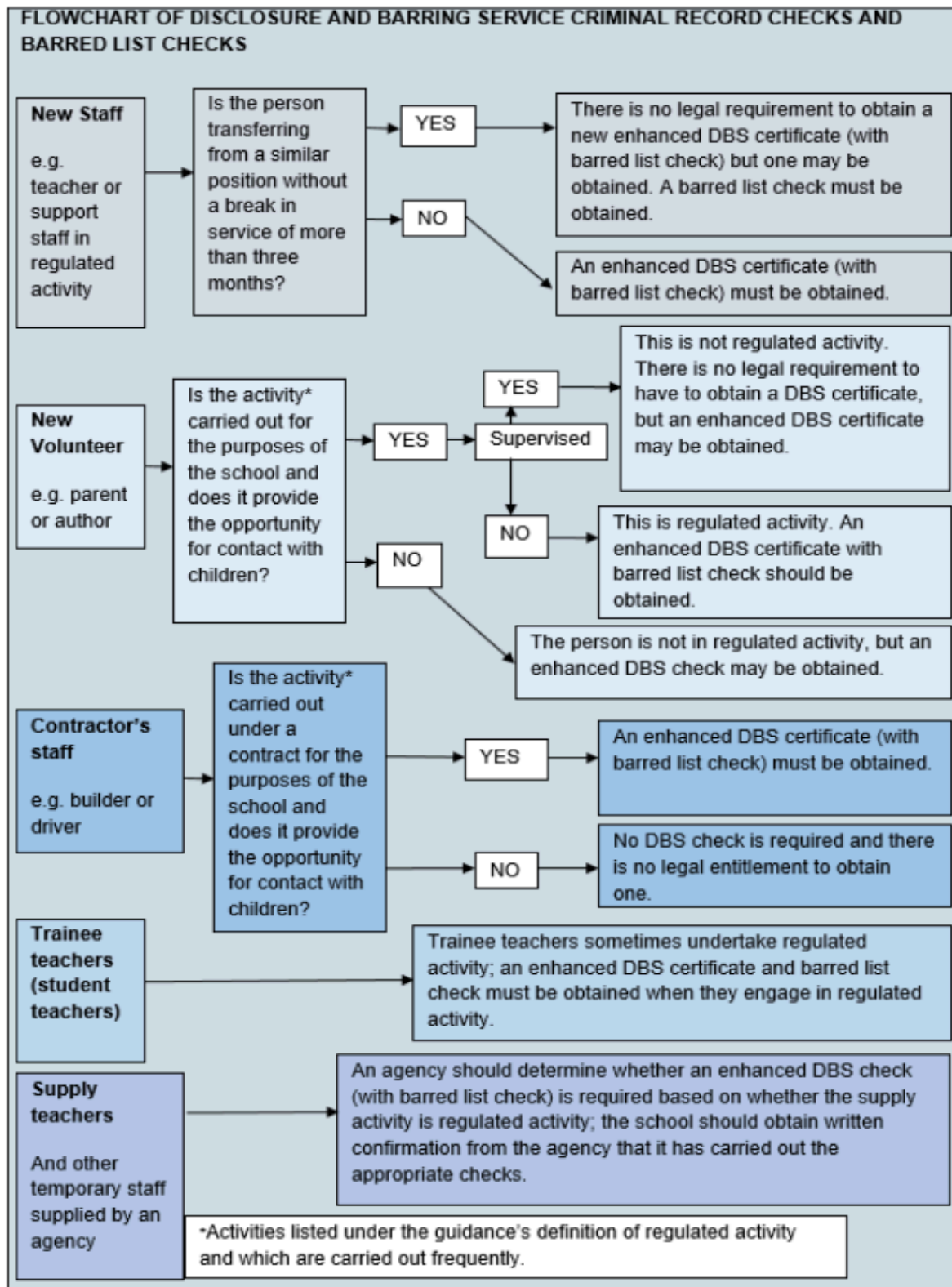
At some academies, staff will also be required to undertake online safeguarding training in line with the relevant Local Multi-Agency Partnership guidelines.

8.0 Review

Our Trust's policy on safer recruitment will be reviewed in consultation with our recognised Trade Unions bi-annually, or when the Department for Education (DfE) issues revised guidance on this topic.

Annex 1- Flowchart of DBS and barred list checks

Note: this is minimum national guidance, and our Trust policy may over-ride this e.g. a new DBS check must be completed for all staff new to our Trust.



Annex 2 - What will be filtered by the DBS?

Disclosing to employers - Information series

Since May 2013, standard and enhanced DBS checks stopped disclosing all cautions and convictions after the introduction of a process referred to as 'filtering'. In response to a Supreme Court ruling in 2019, the Government announced further changes to the process which came into force on 28 November 2020.

The changes which have been made to the criminal records disclosure regime apply to jobs and voluntary roles that involve a standard or enhanced check issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The new rules mean that;

- Warnings, reprimands and youth cautions (including conditional cautions) will no longer be automatically disclosed on a DBS certificate.
- The multiple conviction rule has been removed. This means that individuals with more than one conviction will have each conviction considered individually against the criteria, rather than all being automatically disclosed

How it works

'Filtering' is similar in its concept to the rehabilitation periods under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, instead of establishing what is 'spent' and so what doesn't get disclosed on a basic check, 'filtering' establishes what *doesn't* get disclosed on a standard or enhanced DBS check.

Information that is filtered will be removed from a DBS check automatically the next time you apply for one. But it doesn't get 'removed' or 'wiped' from police records. In practice, it means that if you're applying for a job or role that involves a DBS check, you are legally entitled to withhold the details of anything that would now be filtered.

Types of offences

Eligible for filtering	Not eligible for filtering
Common assault	Offences involving violence ABH, GBH
Drunk and disorderly	Safeguarding offences
Many motoring offences	Sexual offences
Drugs offences only involving possession	Drugs offences involving supply
Theft (where no violence is involved)	Causing death by dangerous driving
Possession of an offensive weapon	Robbery

What will be disclosed on a standard or enhanced DBS check?

The rules around what cautions and/or convictions are automatically disclosed are set out in legislation. The table below provides details of what a standard or enhanced certificate must include:

Disposal	Age when given/sentenced	How long since given/sentenced
Caution for a specified offence*	18 or over	Any time
Caution for non-specified offence	18 or over	Less than 6 years
Conviction for a specified offence*	Any age	Any time
Conviction resulting in prison sentence	Any age	Any time
Conviction for non-specified offence	Any age	Less than 11 years
	Under 18	Less than 5.5 years

For more information see <https://unlock.org.uk/topic/about-criminal-records/>

Annex 3 - Policy statement on the recruitment 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 not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. Registered Bodies and employers who are Regulated Activity Providers (including schools) are obliged to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is available to DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

Policy Statement

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust. Our Trust 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.
2. Our Trust is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of gender, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, culture, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, marital and civil partnership status, education, learning styles, caring responsibilities or offending background.
3. A summary of this policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is available to all DBS applicants on request.
4. 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, knowledge and experience.
5. As a Regulated Activity Provider (RAP) most paid employees of our Trust are in regulated activity with children and therefore subject to checks of the DBS children's barred list in addition to enhanced DBS certificate.
6. In relation to volunteers and contractors, we only request a DBS check after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.

7. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
8. We expect shortlisted applicants to provide details of any criminal record history that is not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013, 2020 and 2023) prior to interview. This should be done using the disclosure at Annex 6.

Applicants should disclose details of any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, bind-overs and final warnings you may have in addition to any criminal proceedings pending against you. You should not disclose any criminal history that would be protected or filtered.

If the completed disclosure is not returned prior to interview, our Trust reserves the right to withdraw the offer of interview.

9. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Disclosed information will only be considered for shortlisted applicants. Disclosures for applicants that are not shortlisted will be confidentially destroyed and will not be considered during the recruitment process.
10. We ensure that everyone within the Academy who is involved in the recruitment process has been suitably briefed 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 its amendments and know how to access advice and support.
11. At interview, or on a separate occasion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any relevant offences or other matter that may 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.
12. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. This discussion and any subsequent risk assessment may be undertaken by our HR team, our Trust safeguarding and child protection lead or another trained member of our Senior Leadership Team.

Annex 4 - Information on Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

The role you have applied for has been identified as one where Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 applies. Please read this guidance carefully. If you are offered a post you will be asked to complete a declaration form.

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 sets out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified and may not provide relevant childcare provision or be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Academies are prohibited from employing (or using as a volunteer) a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision in certain settings. A copy of the statutory guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

Who is disqualified?

Under the legislation a person is disqualified if they are found to have committed a 'relevant offence', which includes (a) being convicted of a relevant offence or (b) on or after 6 April 2007, being given a caution, reprimand or warning for a relevant offence. A list of the relevant offences that lead to the disqualification of an individual is set out in the tables in the statutory guidance.

By way of a summary, a person is disqualified if any of the following apply:

- they have been cautioned for, or convicted of certain violent or sexual criminal offences against adults and any offences against children;
- they are the subject of an Order, direction or similar in respect of childcare, including orders made in respect of their own children;
- they have had registration refused or cancelled in relation to childcare of children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering.

What does this mean in practice?

Anyone offered a role which falls within the scope of the Childcare Act will be asked to complete a declaration form to the best of their knowledge. A copy of the form is provided for information only at this stage.

Further information on what you should, and should not, declare is contained within the statutory guidance. You only need to provide information on relevant offences. For example, cautions, reprimands and warnings only amount to disqualifying offences if issued on or after 6 April 2007, and you are not required to disclose the

spent cautions or convictions of a person who lives or is employed in your household. You are asked only to complete the form, not to provide copies of supplementary information.

Information will be treated in the strictest of confidence and in line with our Trust's Data Protection Policy which includes the rules set out in the General Data Protection Regulation. If you think you have relevant information about yourself, your completed form should be provided in a sealed envelope, clearly marked "Strictly Confidential – for the attention of the Headteacher only".

What happens next?

If you are the preferred candidate and are offered a role, this will be a conditional offer and you will be asked to complete and return the declaration form. If you declare any relevant information on your completed form this will not necessarily preclude you from employment with us. It is possible to apply to Ofsted for a waiver. If relevant, the academy will contact you to discuss the information that you have provided and advise you about how you can apply for a waiver.

You are not required to provide the academy with further information of the order, restriction, conviction, caution etc. However, Ofsted may wish to consider such documents in order to exercise their power to waive disqualifications (in which case, such information should be sent directly to Ofsted).

If the waiver is not granted, the conditional offer will be withdrawn.

Further information on applying for a waiver can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-to-waive-disqualification-early-years-and-childcare-providers>.

Questions

If you have any questions about this information, please refer to the statutory guidance and/or contact the academy who has advertised the role.

Disqualification Declaration Form

This form must be completed by all applicants offered a post which would be considered 'relevant childcare' (i.e. early or later years childcare) (whether paid or voluntary roles).

Name:	
Post:	

Important – Please read the attached guidance before completing the declaration. You must answer the questions below to the best of your knowledge and sign the declaration at the end of the form.

Questions relating to you:	
Have you been cautioned or convicted of any offences against a child?	YES / NO
Have you been cautioned or convicted of any violent or sexual offences against an adult?	YES / NO
Have you been barred from working with children by the Disclosure and Barring Service?	YES / NO
Have your children ever been taken into care, or been the subject of a child protection order?	YES / NO
Has a court order ever been made against you in respect of a child under your care?	YES / NO
Have you been refused registration or had registration cancelled in relation to childcare or a children's home or have you been disqualified from private fostering?	YES / NO

In signing this form, I confirm that the information provided is true to the best of my knowledge and understand my responsibility to safeguard children and am aware

that I must notify the Headteacher of anything that arises in the future which may affect my suitability.

Signed: Date:

To be completed by the Headteacher:

I have reviewed the answers provided and no further action is required.

Or:

I have reviewed the answers provided above and the following action has been taken.

Signed:

Date:

Annex 5 - DBS checks for ITT trainees

Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers guidance on Disclosure and barring checks (DBS) for initial teacher training (ITT) trainees

Introduction and background

This leaflet addresses some of the most common questions about DBS and criminal record checks for teacher training students that are asked by schools, local authority staff and others. It reflects existing statutory requirements and guidance. The guidance is an update of previous versions produced in July 2010, September 2012 and March 2014. It does not represent a comprehensive explanation of the DBS and criminal records check requirements and should be read alongside relevant statutory guidance and advice.

ITT providers are responsible for ensuring that they do not admit applicants to training who are unsuited to work with children. Barred list and criminal record checks are one way of doing this. However, some unsuitable applicants will not have been convicted of any offence or barred from working with children. Vigilance will still therefore be required. Partnerships will also have to ensure that applicants have the intellectual, personal and other characteristics they will need in order to meet the teaching standards.

Responsibilities

All entrants to ITT programmes must by law be checked against the DBS barred list and subject to criminal record checks. DBS certificates will be issued to individual applicants and not, as in the past, to registered bodies such providers. ITT providers have a responsibility to ensure that entrants on all routes, including salaried School Direct programmes, have been subject to these checks, although how this is done for trainees on salaried routes does differ.

The responsibilities are:

- For trainees on routes other than School Direct salaried, the accredited provider such as an HEI or a SCITT is responsible for ensuring that checks have been completed by requesting sight of the original DBS certificate and keeping a record of the fact that it has been seen. Copies of the certificates can be requested, but not required, from the individuals concerned. Providers should confirm to schools that checks have been made.
- For trainees on salaried School Direct programmes, the employer is responsible for ensuring that checks have been completed by requesting sight of the original certificate and keeping a record. Schools can also request, but cannot require, permission to keep copies. Schools should

confirm to accredited providers that checks have been made and providers should make a note of this.

For those training to teach in FE colleges, the ITT provider is responsible for ensuring that checks have been completed in respect of pre-service trainees, while employers are responsible for those on in-service programmes. In each case the responsible organisation should confirm to the other that checks have been made.

Further checks should not be made by providers, schools or colleges if they have received notification from the responsible organisation that a satisfactory enhanced check has been obtained.

Sharing of information

It is an offence under the 1997 Police Act, and a breach of the DBS Code of Practice, for registered bodies to share copies of DBS checks, or any information contained in a trainee's disclosure, with a third party. Accredited providers must not therefore share information about fee-paying students with schools and schools must not share information about salaried School Direct trainees with providers. Organisations must not request information for which they have no legal entitlement from either providers or from trainees. This includes information about DBS numbers or the dates of DBS checks.

Childcare Disqualification Regulations

Regulations that require employees in childcare or early years settings to disclose to head-teachers details of any criminal convictions that they might have do not apply to teacher training students unless: they are employed through salaried training routes; or they hold any form of direct managerial responsibility for the centres concerned.

Other key points

Other key things to take into account are:

- Trainees can, at the Head-teachers' discretion, go into school pending the completion of a criminal records check provided that checks have been made against the DBS barred lists and subject to normal recruitment procedures.
- There is no requirement to complete separate checks in respect of time spent in separate schools
- Additional checks are not required during the course of programmes, including those lasting for more than three years. Requests for repeat disclosures should be refused unless there is cause for concern.

- Minor convictions or cautions from several years ago will not now be shown on enhanced DBS certificates. Providers, schools and colleges should not ask applicants about any such convictions or cautions.
- ITT tutors who only have occasional contact with pupils and do not carry out regulated activity do not require checks provided they are at all times accompanied by someone (e.g. a trainee) who has been checked.
- Overseas trainees should be subject to barred list and criminal record checks. Certificates of good conduct and references should also be requested for overseas trainees and those who have spent time living overseas
- Further checks should not be carried out on anyone entering training after completing a subject knowledge enhancement programme, provided they are continuing their training with the same provider and the gap between the ending of the enhancement programme and the beginning of the ITT is shorter than three-months.

Partnership agreements

Schools, colleges and providers within ITT partnerships should establish a common understanding of convictions that might pose a barrier to joining, or continuing with, a programme of ITT and the circumstances under which concerns about a particular trainee should be referred to the police. Agreement should also be reached on the extent to which trainees have access to sensitive information.

Further information

DFE guidance on the ITT requirements:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-criteria>

Statutory requirements:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/disclosure-and-barring/>

On the filtering out of 'minor' convictions and cautions:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>

UCET/NASBTT guidance on 2011 teaching standards:

<https://www.ucet.ac.uk/>

Published by UCET, January 2015

Annex 6 - Pre-interview self-disclosure form

Please return this disclosure to the [name of headteacher] at [name of academy/college] at least one day prior to the interview. If we have not received this, we reserve the right to withdraw the offer of interview.

POST APPLIED FOR:

Surname:	Previous name(s) (if any):
Forename(s):	Preferred title:

Co-op Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all staff to share this commitment. For this post, pre-employment checks will be carried out, references will be sought and successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced DBS check and other relevant checks with statutory bodies.

We comply with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) code of practice and have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, both of which are available on request.

As you have been shortlisted, you are required to declare criminal proceedings pending, and any relevant convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, warnings or other matters which may affect your suitability to work with children (or vulnerable adults, where relevant). As a result of amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) in 2013, 2020 and 2023, some minor offences are now protected and should not be disclosed to potential employers, and employers cannot take these offences into account. Please read the information provided in our Guidance for Applicants (also Annexes 2 and 3 of our [Safer Recruitment Policy](#)) before answering the following questions. There is more information on filtering and protected offences on the DBS website.

1. Do you have any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974? Yes / No

2. Do you have any criminal proceedings pending? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details here

<p>3. Do you have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020, and 2023? Yes / No</p>
<p>If yes, please provide details here</p>
<p>4. Are you included on the DBS children's barred list? Yes / No</p>
<p>If yes, please provide details here</p>
<p>5. (Qualified Teachers only) Are you, or have you ever been, prohibited from teaching or sanctioned by the GTCE? Do you have an interim prohibition order? Yes / No / Not applicable</p>
<p>If yes, please provide details here</p>
<p>6. (Management posts only) Have you been prohibited from management of a school / academy (s128)? Yes / No / Not applicable</p>
<p>If yes, please provide details here</p>
<p>7. Have you lived or worked outside the UK for more than 3 months in the last 5 years? Yes / No</p>
<p>If yes, please provide details here</p>
<p>8. Are you subject to any sanctions in the EEA Yes / No</p>
<p>If yes, please provide details here</p>

9. Applicants for posts in early years or later years childcare (wrap around care) only

The Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Regulations (2018) state that anyone employed to care for children in early years (children under the age of 5) or later years (wrap-around care for children under the age of 8) is disqualified from that work if they meet certain criteria. These criteria include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Certain serious criminal offences
- Court orders relating to the care of your own child
- Being prohibited from private fostering

Do you have any reason to believe you are disqualified from working in childcare? Yes / No

If yes, please contact us for more information on the Regulations.

Please complete the declaration below:

I declare that all the information I have provided in this disclosure is full and correct at the time of application and that I have not omitted anything that could be relevant to the appointment of someone who will work with children. I understand that the recruitment panel may be made aware of any relevant information that I have disclosed in order to discuss the matter(s) with me as part of the recruitment process and that, if my application is successful, a risk assessment of the disclosed information will be held securely on my personnel file.

Signed:

Date:

Please note that, if you are unsuccessful, this disclosure form will be securely destroyed within 6 months of your application.

Annex 7 - Disqualification from Childcare, annual check

Date

Dear Colleague,

In line with our Colleague Code of Conduct, each year we ask all relevant colleagues to reconfirm that they are not disqualified from childcare - this letter gives more details. Please read the letter carefully, and then sign the declaration at the end, and return a copy to insert local contact point. If there are any changes to your circumstances that may make you unsuitable to work with children since we last asked you, please speak to name of Headteacher as soon as possible so that we can understand the situation.

The "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006" sets out the circumstances in which an individual will be disqualified and may not provide relevant childcare provision or be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Schools are prohibited from employing (or using as a volunteer) a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision in certain settings, unless a waiver is granted by Ofsted.

A copy of the statutory guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

Under the legislation a person is disqualified if they are found to have committed a 'relevant offence', which includes (a) being convicted of a relevant offence or (b) on or after 6 April 2007, being given a caution, reprimand or warning for a relevant offence. Further information on 'relevant offences' is set out in the tables in the statutory guidance.

By way of a summary, a person is disqualified if any of the following apply:

- They have been cautioned or convicted of any offences against a child
- They have been cautioned or convicted of any violent or sexual offences against an adult
- They have been barred from working with children by the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Their children have ever been taken into care, or been the subject of a child protection order
- A court order has ever been made against them in respect of a child under their care

- They have been refused registration or had registration cancelled in relation to childcare or a children’s home, or have been disqualified from private fostering

If you have any questions about the content of this letter, please speak to insert name.

Best wishes,

Name

Job Title

Your declaration

By signing this declaration you are confirming that you understand the content of this letter, and that your circumstances have not changed since your previous declaration.

Print name:	
Signature:	Date: