



Inspire Education Trust

Together we achieve, individually we grow

Recruitment & Selection Policy (Trust)

Policy Date: November 2025

Review Date: November 2026

Document History

Version	Status	Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1		Jan 22	Josh Smith (Head of HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes made to amend references from 'school' to 'Trust'. Addition of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act advertisement wording in Section 4 due to legislation changes. Updates to section 4 advertisement wording in light of KCSIE 2021 changes. Changes to section 9 following KCSIE 2021 changes. Self-declarations will be completed by candidates prior to interview. Section 14.5 – all existing staff will complete an enhanced DBS application after 5 years' service.
V2		Sep 23	Josh Smith (Head of HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3 <i>Amended</i> from 'local governing body' to 'board of directors' 1.5 <i>Amended</i> from 'trust executive' to 'Head of HR' <i>Section 8 and Section 12 – added</i> clauses regarding online searches for shortlisted candidates due to KCSIE changes <i>Section 18 - Amended</i> review of policy from every 2 years to every year <i>Section 18 – Added equalities monitoring clause</i> <p>External advice was sought from Browne Jacobson LLP.</p>
V3		Oct 23	Josh Smith (Head of HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.4 <i>removed</i> the word 'equal' which preceded 'gender balance' 3.5 <i>Removed</i> 'Headteacher' 10.2 <i>added</i> 'in conjunction with HR' when determining selection methods
V4		Jan 24	Josh Smith (Head of HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 16 <i>added</i> – Trust refer a friend scheme
V5		Nov 24	Josh Smith (Head of HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job titles updated 13.1 – removed reference to KCSIE 'annex f' 13.3 – tweaked for grammar purposes
V6		Nov 25	Cat Flowers (Head of HR Operations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job Titles updates 7.1.11 – added 'where permission from the applicant has been provide' in relation to references prior to interview 13.5 – amended the annual cost of DBS update service

Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Scope and Purpose	4
3	Safer Recruitment	5
4	Advertising.....	5
5	Job Description.....	6
6	Application form	6
7	References.....	6
8	Short-listing	7
9	Interviews	7
10	Other selection methods.....	9
11	Level of language proficiency.....	9
12	Pre-employment checks	9
13	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - new employees and volunteers	10
14	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - existing employees and volunteers	12
15	Agency staff.....	13
16	Breaches of the policy	14
17	Record keeping and data protection	14
18	Review of policy.....	14
	Appendix 1: Disqualification from Childcare information for new employees.....	15

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Recruiting the best people to our Trust is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our pupils.
- 1.2 Not appointing the right people to our roles can have a negative impact on the performance of our Trust.
- 1.3 In our academies the Headteacher is responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit to any post, with the exception of the Headteacher role, where the Trust Executive Team will be responsible with support from the Board of Directors. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit to central staff, senior and executive leaders in the Trust (including Headteachers) with support from the Director of People.
- 1.4 In carrying out our recruitment processes we:
 - 1.4.1 are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our pupils by operating safer recruitment practices in line with the statutory requirements and guidance.
 - 1.4.2 we will comply with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation (being the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018) and any implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time.
 - 1.4.3 our Data Protection Policy sets out how we will comply with Data Protection Legislation.
 - 1.4.4 will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and are committed to ensuring that throughout our recruitment and selection processes no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- 1.5 In the very exceptional cases where we are required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement this must be approved by the Director of People and Culture who will provide reasons for this requirement.
- 1.6 Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, knowledge, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.
- 1.7 If an applicant makes the Trust aware, at any stage of the recruitment process, that they have a disability then reasonable adjustments must be considered to ensure the applicant is not disadvantaged by the process.

2 Scope and Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting and appointing any employee to work within our Trust.
- 2.2 Sections 13 and 14 on Disclosure and Barring Service checks also applies to volunteers in our Trust.

3 Safer Recruitment

- 3.1 All recruitment must be in line with this policy to ensure that we identify, deter and prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with our pupils.
- 3.2 The recruitment of all applicants and volunteers to our Trust must, without exception, follow the processes of safer recruitment. All offers of employment will be subject to us being satisfied that the applicant or volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people.
- 3.3 Any person involved in recruiting to our Trust must read the "Keeping children safe in education" guidance (or updated statutory guidance) produced by the DfE and our Trust's child protection policy. These can be obtained from the Trust's website or by contacting HR.
- 3.4 All recruitment must be planned to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.
- 3.5 Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during recruitment must inform the Director of People and Culture immediately.
- 3.6 All of the checks described in Sections 12 and 13 must be carried out and have been determined as satisfactory before an applicant can start their employment in the Trust.

4 Advertising

- 4.1 Any vacant position will normally be advertised via the appropriate channels to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is obtained.
- 4.2 All advertisements will have the following statement about safeguarding children and young people and the requirement to have a DBS check:
We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and appointments will be subject to rigorous safeguarding checks including enhanced DBS and references. The postholder must share our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Candidates who have been successfully shortlisted will be asked to complete a self-declaration to confirm any (non-protected) criminal disclosures or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children.
- 4.3 All advertisements will also include the following statement if the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020:
- 4.4 The post is exempt from the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. Which means that when applying for certain jobs and activities certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found in the DBS filtering guide.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>

- 4.5 All applicants will be provided with a copy of our Recruitment Privacy Notice which sets out how we will gather, process and hold personal data of individuals during and after the recruitment process.

5 Job Description

- 5.1 A job description will be required for all posts which describes the duties and responsibilities of the post. It must be up to date, accurate and specific to the role. The job description must also include a person specification which outlines all of the necessary skills, abilities, experience, attitude, behaviours, qualifications and knowledge requirements for the post.
- 5.2 All job descriptions and person specifications must make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

6 Application form

All applicants are required to fill out the Trusts standard application form. CVs may be accepted but will not replace the application form.

7 References

- 7.1 All offers of employment will be conditional upon receipt of at least two satisfactory written references. References will:
- 7.1.1 be requested for all shortlisted applicants, including internal applicants;
 - 7.1.2 include the applicant's current or most recent employer and where an applicant for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, will include the applicant's most recent employment as a teacher;
 - 7.1.3 ask the current employer for details of any capability history in the previous two years, and the reasons for this;
 - 7.1.4 be directly from the referee, who will be a senior person with appropriate authority and confirmed as accurate by the headteacher/principal in respect of any disciplinary investigations
 - 7.1.5 not be accepted if they are 'to whom it may concern' letters;
 - 7.1.6 request information on the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people from the last employer where the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children);
 - 7.1.7 be verified with the person who provided the reference and, where the reference is provided electronically, verify that it is from a legitimate source
 - 7.1.8 be clarified with the referee where the information is vague or insufficient;
 - 7.1.9 establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post;

- 7.1.10 be compared with the information set out in the application form and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate;
 - 7.1.11 be requested before the interview where permission from the applicant has been provided; and
 - 7.1.12 be explored further with the referee and with the applicant during the interview if necessary.
- 7.2 Where it has not been possible to obtain references before the interview any concerns that are subsequently raised will need to be resolved before the appointment is confirmed.
- 7.3 In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, information relating to sickness absence will only be requested after a conditional offer of employment has been made.

8 Short-listing

- 8.1 Applicants will be short-listed against the requirements of the person specification. At least two people should carry out the short-listing and be part of the interview panel. The outcome of the short-listing process will be recorded and retained.
- 8.2 The equal opportunities monitoring form must be removed from the application and not provided to the short-listing panel.
- 8.3 The short-listing panel are responsible for scrutinising the application forms and identifying any gaps in employment or other areas that may affect an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. A satisfactory explanation for any concerns, including concerns as a result of online searches must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process.
- 8.4 The Trust may conduct searches, either themselves or through a third party, of the online presence and publicly available social media content of shortlisted candidates to identify any comment, image or other content that could cause reputational damage to the trust and/or give rise to a safeguarding concern. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks when they are invited to interview.
- 8.5 Management of online searches (either by carrying out the search or instructing a third party to do so), and the collation of information will be carried out independently from those managing the shortlisting process. Only information relevant to potential reputational damage and/or safeguarding concerns obtained from the search will be passed to those managing the shortlisting process.

9 Interviews

- 9.1 A face to face interview must take place for all applicants to all posts. The use of video conferencing, Facetime, Microsoft Teams or other similar technologies is acceptable for this purpose.

- 9.2 All those involved in interviewing must be properly prepared to undertake the role, which may involve appropriate interview training. At least one person on the interview panel must have passed the appropriate safer recruitment training.
- 9.3 The purpose of the interview is to assess the merits of each applicant against the job description and person specification to establish their suitability for the post and to work with children and young people.
- 9.4 Interviews should be conducted with a minimum of two interviewers on the panel ideally with a gender balance to enable one interviewer to assess the applicant, observe and make notes whilst the applicant talks to the other interviewer.
- 9.5 Before the interview commences the interview panel should have:
- 9.5.1 prepared appropriate questions for the role;
 - 9.5.2 prepared appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people;
 - 9.5.3 identified any areas for further probing, e.g. if a criminal record has been declared, any information about past disciplinary action/allegations, or if there are gaps in employment etc;
 - 9.5.4 agreed assessment criteria which reflects the person specification; and
 - 9.5.5 decided a structure to the interview and established which member of the panel will ask which questions.
- 9.6 A set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their response will determine whether that is followed up through further questioning.
- 9.7 Any gaps in employment history must be explored during the interview process.
- 9.8 Candidates shortlisted for interview will be asked about their suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further questions include:
- implication that adults and children are equal;
 - lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children;
 - inappropriate idealisation of children;
 - inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children; and
 - indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours;
- 9.9 Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Applicants will only be asked to disclose and discuss criminal convictions and/or cautions which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) that may deem them unsuitable. Where this is provided electronically, the shortlisted candidate will be asked to physically sign a hard copy at the point of the interview.

10 Other selection methods

- 10.1 In addition to a face to face interview with the interview panel a variety of other selection methods may be used, such as:
- 10.1.1 Observation of teaching practice in our Trust or in the applicant's current school or academy;
 - 10.1.2 One or more additional panel interviews (for example, a panel made up of pupils from our school(s));
 - 10.1.3 A presentation;
 - 10.1.4 In tray exercises; and
 - 10.1.5 Psychometric testing.
- 10.2 Those responsible for deciding the arrangements for recruitment to a specific post will determine the selection method(s) in conjunction with HR. They will be relevant and appropriate to the role and will be based on the requirements for the particular post as set out in the job description and person specification.
- 10.3 Candidates will be informed in advance if any selection methods are to be used in addition to a face to face interview and what these are.

11 Level of language proficiency

- 11.1 Under the "fluency duty" (Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016), public authorities are required to ensure that workers in public facing roles are fluent in English (or Welsh in Wales). Public facing roles are those members of teaching and support staff who, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, are required to speak to members of the public (including students in schools).
- 11.2 The Trust will accept a range of evidence of spoken English or Welsh language ability as follows:
- competently answering interview questions in English or Welsh;
 - possessing a relevant qualification for the role attained as part of education in the UK fully taught in English or Welsh by a recognised institution abroad,
 - passing an English or Welsh spoken language competency test or possessing a relevant spoken English or Welsh qualification at CEFR Level B1 or above, taught in English or Welsh by a recognised institution abroad (and from September 2017 this includes Welsh second language GCSE).

12 Pre-employment checks

- 12.1 An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following:
- 12.1.1 receipt of at least two satisfactory written references (one of which must be their current or most recent employer);
 - 12.1.2 verification of the applicant's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address;

- 12.1.3 verification of the applicant's medical fitness;
 - 12.1.4 verification of qualifications where relevant;
 - 12.1.5 verification of professional status where applicable. For teachers, this will include checking that the individual has the required teaching qualification and has successfully completed any statutory induction, if required, through the Teacher Services System;
 - 12.1.6 satisfactory enhanced DBS check (see Section 13);
 - 12.1.7 satisfactory online searches
 - 12.1.8 for management positions (Applicable to governors/trustees, Headteachers, members of the Senior Leadership Team and departmental heads only), verification that they are not subject to a section 128 direction by checking the Teacher Services System;
 - 12.1.9 for teachers and other employees who hold QTS who are working in non-teaching roles, verification that they are not subject to a prohibition order by checking the Teacher Services System;
 - 12.1.10 for teachers, satisfactory check to determine any restrictions/sanctions that have been imposed in other EEA member states, through the provision of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country that they qualified.¹
 - 12.1.11 a clear children's barred list check (except supervised volunteers);
 - 12.1.12 verification of right to work in the United Kingdom;
 - 12.1.13 any further checks where the applicant has lived or work outside of the UK including receipt of criminal record information from overseas;
 - 12.1.14 confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from providing childcare (if applicable to the role).
- 12.2 All checks must be confirmed in writing, retained on the personnel file and recorded in the single central record (SCR).

13 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - new employees and volunteers

- 13.1 The Trust will carry out a risk assessment to determine if a DBS check is required for each volunteer in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. If a volunteer is assessed as requiring a DBS check, the following DBS checks will be undertaken for new appointments, before the employee or volunteer starts work:

Who?	Definition	Type of check
Employees who will be engaging in regulated activity	<p>As an educational institution which is exclusively or mainly for the provision of full-time education to children, Inspire Education Trust is an establishment specified in the relevant legislation. Activity carried out in this establishment will therefore be regulated activity relating to children if it meets the definition in the relevant legislation, including that it is carried out:</p> <p>Frequently by the same person (for example once a week or more); or on more than three days in any period of 30 days.</p> <p>Note – personal care of a child because of age, illness or disability including physical help with eating, toileting, washing, bathing or dressing is always regulated activity regardless of how frequently it is carried out.</p>	An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check will be obtained
Unsupervised volunteers	As above	<p>An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check will be obtained</p> <p>Those applying for Chair of Trustee posts (after 01.04.17) must also have their identity verified for a stipulated professional as part of their DBS check as per the below link:</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/identity-verification-for-new-chairs-of-trustees</p>
Supervised volunteers	<p>Where an individual is a volunteer (e.g. carrying out activity that is unpaid) they will not be engaging in regulated activity if:</p> <p>They are being supervised by someone that is in regulated activity; and</p> <p>The supervision is regular and day to day (e.g. it is ongoing); and</p> <p>The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children (this may take into account for example, the age (including the variation in ages), number and vulnerability of children the individual is working with, the nature of the work and opportunity for contact with</p>	We are unable by law to obtain a barred list check on a supervised volunteer. We will however obtain an enhanced DBS check (with no barred list check) for supervised volunteers.

	children, whether other individuals are helping to look after them and how many workers a supervisor is supervising).	
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- 13.2 In exceptional circumstances a new employee or unsupervised volunteer may be able to start before the enhanced DBS check has been received, but not before the children's barred list check has been completed. The Trust must ensure that appropriate supervision is in place until the DBS check has been received.
- 13.3 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. All applicants must produce the disclosure when requested to do so. The disclosure will be scrutinised to ensure it is authentic and to detect any fraud. The DBS disclosure number and date of the check must be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR). We are not required to take a copies of the DBS certificate, however we may choose to do so for decision making purposes. Any copy will be held for no longer than necessary, and up to a period of six months and be processed in line with Data Protection Legislation.
- 13.4 Any applicant who refuses to produce their DBS disclosure will not be able to start work at the Trust and the conditional offer will be withdrawn as satisfactory checks are not in place. Any volunteer who refuses to produce their disclosure will not be able to volunteer in the Trust.
- 13.5 Applicants (free for volunteers) can have their DBS certificate kept up to date and take it with them from role to role where the same type and level of check is required. Applicants or volunteers should be asked if they have subscribed to this service. The cost of this service is £16 peryear. The expectation is that individuals personally fund this if required. The Trust may choose to fund this for exam invigilators and other casual postholders who regularly carry out work for the Trust. Where the applicant or volunteer has subscribed they should provide the Trust with the original disclosure document to be verified and the Trust will check the online update for any changes.
- 13.6 Applicants will only be asked to declare convictions and cautions that are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020).
- 13.7 Information relating to an individual's criminal record will only be shared with the relevant people to enable the Trust to make a decision about their suitability to work with children and young people.

14 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - existing employees and volunteers

14.1 An enhanced DBS check and a children's barred list check will be carried out for all existing staff and unsupervised volunteers (subject to risk assessment) where their contact with children or young people has increased from that at their time of appointment.

14.2 An enhanced DBS and children's barred list check may be carried out on any employee or unsupervised volunteer (subject to risk assessment) where the Trust has concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children and young people. An enhanced DBS (no barred list

check) may be carried out on any supervised volunteer (subject to risk assessment) where the Trust has concerns about their suitability to work with children and young people.

14.3 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. The Trust expects all applicants to produce the disclosure when requested to do so. Any existing employee who does not produce their DBS disclosure will be managed through the disciplinary procedure.

14.4 All existing employees are required to inform the Trust of any change in their criminal record. This includes convictions, cautions, arrests and police investigations which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020). The Trust may require all employees to sign a declaration on an annual basis that there has been no change in their criminal record. Action may be taken as a result of any change or any failure to inform the Trust of any change.

13.2 All existing employees must complete a new enhanced DBS application following 5 years continuous service at the Trust.

15 Agency staff

15.1 In the case of agency staff, the Trust must ensure that the arrangement with the agency imposes an obligation on the agency to carry out all recruitment checks as set out in section 12, including DBS and children's barred list checks, that the Trust would otherwise complete for its staff. The Trust must obtain written confirmation from the agency that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. This must be recorded in the single central record (SCR).

15.2 Upon the engagement of an agency worker, the agency must be supplied with a copy of the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy unless they have previously been provided with the most recent version of the managing allegations procedure.

16 Refer a friend scheme

16.1 The Trust operates a refer a friend scheme which grants an employee a £100 payment from the Trust, subject to tax and deductions, if they refer a friend or ex-colleague to an external trust vacancy and the person referred is subsequently successfully appointed to the role.

16.2 Employees can only refer a friend to an externally advertised vacancy. Employees must be currently and directly employed by the Trust at the time of making the referral to be eligible for the scheme.

16.3 A referral form must be completed by the employee before they are successfully appointed. Consent must be gained in writing by the candidate.

16.4 Any staff involved in the hiring process are not eligible for the scheme. This may include, but is not limited to, those participating on the shortlisting panel or interview panel.

- 16.5 Members of the Trust Executive Leadership team, Headteachers, Associate Headteachers, Directors, Governors, Members and the Trust's Human Resources team are prohibited from participating in the scheme.
- 16.6 Payments will be administered by those responsible for administering the monthly payroll.
- 16.7 No refer a friend scheme payment will be made unless all conditions set out in section 16 of this policy are met, the trust's refer a friend scheme form has been completed and submitted and, authorisation has been granted by the Headteacher / Executive Leader.

17 Breaches of the policy

- 17.1 Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 17.2 Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application will be managed through the Trust's complaints policy or grievance policy (for existing employees).

18 Record keeping and data protection

All written records of interviews, application forms and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept by the Trust in line with our Recruitment Privacy Notice, our Workforce Privacy Notice (for appointed candidates), our Document Retention Schedule and in line with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

19 Review of policy

This policy is reviewed every year by the Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

19.1 The policy will be monitored to ensure consistency of application and adherence to equalities legislation, to ensure the policy operates in accordance with duties to promote equality, to eliminate discrimination and to promote good relations between staff with protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010.

Appendix 1: Disqualification from Childcare information for new employees

This information is to make you aware of your obligations relating to disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 which came into force in schools and academies in late 2014.

Your role within our school has been identified as one which the disqualification declaration applies to.

So what does this mean in practice?

We need to make you aware that there are certain things that may mean that you are automatically disqualified from providing childcare (affecting your role within this school) by you having committed a disqualifiable offence or a disqualifying event. These broadly fall into the four below categories:

- 1 That you have a caution/conviction for certain violent/sexual offences
- 2 Grounds relating to the care of children
- 3 That you have had registration refused/cancelled in relation to childcare
- 4 That you have committed an offence overseas which would constitute an offence regarding disqualification under the 2009 Regulations if it had been done in any part of the United Kingdom.

Ofsted have provided a list of disqualifiable offences/events in tables A & B of the below guidance

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

You need to read through this and report to the Head without delay if there is anything to declare under the disqualification guidance. It is only the offences/events on this list that we require you to declare. If you are unsure of a specific offence/event is applicable after reading the Ofsted lists, then please let us know so that we can advise you appropriately.

You should also be aware that from this point forward if your circumstances change relating to the disqualification guidance, you are obligated to inform us of this without delay.

You will be required to sign to confirm that you are clear relating to your obligations regarding disclosure pertaining to Disqualification under the Child Care Act 2016, so please do make sure that you ask any questions that you are unclear on. If you wish to do this, please speak with the Head in person.

If you require additional information or help with any aspect of this, then please let the Head know so that we can take advice from HR on your behalf.

I have read and understood the information in this document.

Signed

Print name

Date

Reviewed by: Cat Flowers (Head of HR Operations November 2025)

Next Review Date: November 2026

Approved by Directors: 29 January 2026

Signed:



Lois Whitehouse
Chief Executive Officer



Jane Durkin
Chair of People Committee