



RIPPLEVALE
SCHOOL

Safer Recruitment Policy

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Next Review Date: January 2026

Ripplevale School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the School's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this.

Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, health and safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole School is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values:

Ripplevale School provides a caring learning environment where our students make meaningful progress, relative to their individual starting points. Our aim is to encourage them to develop appropriate personal, social and employable skills enabling them to become confident, independent and aspiring young people

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Ripplevale School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the School's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full- or part-time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- Peninsula BrightHR
- Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)
- Atlantic Data (DBS)
- Educare (online CPD)

Ripplevale School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Ripplevale School.

The policy documents of Ripplevale School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions a significant revision, although promulgated in School separately, may have to take effect between the re-publication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in education. Ripplevale School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Ripplevale School takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, the school is committed to a thorough and consistent safer recruitment policy.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them, by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff. The School has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at the school, based on the applicant's abilities, qualifications, experience and merit - as measured against the job description and person specification. The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation. If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process. The policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Ripplevale School.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Cavendish Education to:

- ensure the School has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with any DfE guidance and legal requirements.

It is the responsibility of the all staff and other managers involved in recruitment to:

- ensure that the school operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school
- monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Cavendish Education have delegated responsibility to the Headteacher to lead in all appointments.

Recruitment and selection procedure

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible; normally, this entails an external advertisement. Any advertisement will make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the UK GDPR.

Application forms

Ripplevale School uses its own application form, and all applicants for employment will be required to complete this application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role. In addition, all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in their employment history. The candidate is to provide a reason for leaving their current or most recent post (if applicable); this can be clarified further if necessary during the interview process. The application form will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. CV's alone will not be accepted.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (e.g.: General Teaching Council for England).

The child protection policy and recruitment of ex-offenders' policy (appendix 1 of this policy) will be included in the application pack.

Job descriptions and person specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role. The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children and young people.

References

References for short-listed applicants will be applied for immediately after short-listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after the interview and prior to any formal offer of employment being made. Two

employer references should be provided; one should be the current or most recent employer and, if not currently working with children, one should be from a relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee, and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. The School ensures electronic references are from a legitimate source and direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Online searches

As part of the short-listing process and in line with advice from *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (2 September 2024)* (Paragraph 226), Ripplevale School will consider carrying out an online search on short-listed candidates to help identify any issues that are publicly available online.

An online search is considered part of the short-listing process and safer recruitment due diligence on short-listed candidates. This helps to identify any incidents or issues that we may want to explore with the applicant at the interview.

We will always conduct an online search for any candidate (internal or external) offered any post of employment in the School. Offers of employment can be made, but candidates should be aware that confirmation of employment will be subject to satisfactory completion of this check.

Interviews

There will always be a face-to-face interview and the same panel will interview all the short-listed applicants for that position. Pupils should be involved in the recruitment process of classroom-based staff in a meaningful way. Observing short-listed candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with pupils/students is common and recognised as good practice. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with safer recruitment training). The panel will explore any potential areas of concern prompted from the interview questions, such as:

- 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
- indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process. At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable. All applicants who are invited to an interview will be

required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Only original documents will be accepted for verification. The school may take photocopies, but these will be destroyed under GDPR guidelines for unsuccessful applicants at the end of the recruitment programme.

All of the information considered in the decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.

Offer of appointment and new employee process

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of:

- a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Certificate
- satisfactory references
- completed and signed rehabilitation form
- signed medical disclosure
- copies of qualifications
- proof of identity.

Professional qualifications will be verified as appropriate with the Teaching Agency Employer Access service used to verify QTS and to ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order. A section 128 check will be carried out on anyone appointed to manager position. A personnel file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with safer recruitment training. The checklist will be retained on personnel files.

All new appointments are to be approved by Cavendish Education.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to, pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared if an applicant is short-listed for any position at Ripplevale School.

DBS certificate

All staff at Ripplevale School require an enhanced DBS Certificate, and this will need to be obtained before the commencement of employment. If a DBS does not arrive in time prior to appointment then a barred check list will be carried out. It is Ripplevale School's policy for employees to join the DBS update service to enable the school to check annually for any information added to the certificate and to check any employee that takes leave for more than three months (i.e.: maternity leave, career break etc.). In such cases, the DBS must be re-checked before they return back to work. Members of staff at Ripplevale School are aware of

their obligation to inform the Headteacher of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

There is no requirement for a school to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate or carry out checks for events that may have occurred outside the UK if, during a period which ended not more than three months before the person's appointment, the applicant has worked, in a school in England, in a post:

- which brought the person regularly into contact with children; or
- to which the person was appointed on or after 12th May 2006 and which did not bring the person regularly into contact with children or young persons; or
- in another institution within the further education sector in England, or in a 16-19 academy, in a post which involved the provision of education which brought the person regularly into contact with children or young persons.

Portability of DBS certificates checks

It is School policy for all staff to register with the DBS Update Service. Staff are required to ensure they update this service annually. If they miss updating the service, they will be required to pay for a new enhanced check within three years of the current certificate's issue date.

Copies of DBS checks

The DBS no longer issues disclosure certificates to employers; therefore, employees/ applicants should bring their certificate to the School before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity.

Dealing with convictions

The school operates a formal procedure if a DBS certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and a formal meeting and risk assessment process will take place. Refer to Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy.

Proof of identity, right to work in the UK and verification of qualifications and professional status

All applicants invited to attend an interview will be required to bring their identification documentation - such as: passport, birth certificate, driving license etc. - with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in the UK in accordance with regulations set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and the DBS Code of Practice Regulations. In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position as claimed in their application form.

Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children and young people must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All applicants are requested to sign a medical disclosure form and, where appropriate, a doctor's medical report may be required.

Overseas checks

All new employees who have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. The School, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, will, if applicable, sponsor all new foreign members of staff (see Certificate of Sponsorship section). In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than three months will need to obtain a police check from the relevant country.

Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS)

If an appointed applicant is a national of a non-EEA country, a CoS may be required before any offer of employment is made.

Induction programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the School policies and procedures, including safeguarding and the child protection policy, and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Single Central Register of members of staff

In addition to electronic personnel files, a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfE's requirements. The Single Central Register will contain details of the following:

- all employees who are employed to work at the School
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the School, whether employed directly or through an agency
- all others who have been chosen by the School to work in regular contact with children and young people. This will cover volunteers, work experience and people brought into the School to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members e.g.: sports coaches, consultants, therapists etc.

The senior administrator will be responsible for monitoring the Single Central Register.

Record retention/GDPR

Ripplevale School will retain interview notes on all applicants for a period of six months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (shredded). The six month retention period is in accordance with UK GDPR and will also allow the School to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an employment tribunal. All information retained on employees is kept in the administration block in a secure and locked cupboard with limited access for HR staff only.

Ongoing employment

Ripplevale School recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The School will, therefore, provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the annual appraisal procedure.

Leaving employment at Ripplevale School

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely, there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee the School's disciplinary policy will apply. (These behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (i.e.: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect)). In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, Ripplevale School will inform the DfES and the Children and Young People's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances under which the employee is leaving Ripplevale School's employment.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher and senior administrator will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the school.