



Fettes College

Safer Recruitment Policy 2023/24

Updated September 2023

Review Date September 2024

Responsibility: Wendy Davidson, Human Resources Manager

FETTES COLLEGE

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of the recruitment process and applies to all roles and to internal and external candidates.

The main aim of the Safer Recruitment Policy is to help ensure that those who may cause harm to students or are otherwise unsuited to working with them are identified and rejected.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Fettes College aims to maintain a competent, flexible and quality-conscious workforce, both teaching and operational staff. To this end, the school will ensure a recruitment process which encourages a diverse range of applicants in order to select the best person for each vacancy. At the same time, the school aims to provide all employees with the opportunity to develop long-term careers appropriate to their abilities and ambitions.

The aims of the recruitment policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible candidates are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered fairly and consistently;
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds relating to any protected characteristic (as set out in the Equality Act 2010) that they might have;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by Education Scotland¹, the Home Office² and any guidance or code of practice published by Disclosure Scotland³;
- To ensure that the school meets its commitments to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks; and
- To ensure that employees are given the maximum opportunity to develop their careers and achieve their work potential.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection process are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

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, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

In filling any vacancy, the school will encourage applications from suitably qualified internal candidates wherever possible. Permanent internal opportunities will be communicated direct to all employees via email and Firefly and where advertised externally will be listed on our website, and all vacancies notified to all staff by email from time to time. On occasions, such as during periods of reorganisation or restructuring, it may not always be possible to advertise every

¹ <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/who-we-are/policies-and-information/safeguarding/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revise-prevent-duty-guidance-for-scotland>

³ <https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme>

position internally where a suitable candidate can be located. Positions that are advertised internally only will be posted on Firefly: <https://fettes.fireflycloud.net/hr/internal-vacancies>.

Where it is perceived that there may not be sufficient internal expertise available, vacancies will be simultaneously advertised internally and externally

Vacancies for teaching staff are approved by the Head and vacancies for operational staff are approved by the Bursar. All Hiring Managers must complete the Recruitment Approval Form (which can be found on Firefly – Staff > HR).

Adverts and job descriptions for teaching staff are approved by the Deputy Head (Academic) and Human Resources Manager; for operational staff by the Head of Department, Senior Manager or Department Manager and Human Resources Manager.

Applying to Fettes

All new candidates applying for a vacancy at Fettes are encouraged to complete a Fettes College Application Form (teaching staff only) online via Teacheroo and submit a Curriculum Vitae and cover letter, outlining their suitability for the role. Candidates attending for interview will be interviewed by a minimum of two staff members, one of whom will be a Senior Manager or Department Manager.

Under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland Act) 2007 and the Disclosure (Scotland Act) 2020 it is unlawful for the school to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the school. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, or, if the applicant has been selected summarily dismissed. In such situations, the school will also make a referral to the police and/or Disclosure Scotland.

The school reserves the right to make a decision on the suitability for the role taking into account relevant information provided in the Disclosure Scotland certificate where the individual is not barred from working with children.

Job Description 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 process. It will clearly set out the duties and responsibilities of the job.

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 in a boarding environment.

Interviews and Selection

The recruitment and selection will be conducted in a professional manner and in compliance with current employment legislation and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates. With the candidate's permission, we may request to take up references before the selection stage and all references will be sought

directly from the referee. To confirm validity of the references provided, referees may be contacted directly.

Interviews will be face-to-face or conducted using Skype/Zoom/Teams where this is more appropriate for candidates, e.g. those living abroad. Telephone interviews may be used at the short-listing stage but will not be a substitute for a face-to-face/Skype-type interview. During the interview process, all candidates will be asked questions aimed at assessing their understanding of safeguarding practices and the responsibilities of the particular role for which they are being interviewed. Managers who conduct interviews are required to assess candidates objectively and all interview notes and any scoring or assessment used will be retained for no less than 6 months post interview.

For all successful candidates we will obtain two satisfactory written references which will be held in their personnel folder. For Teaching vacancies, references will be contacted prior to interview. At least one reference will be contacted by telephone to check validity. Identity, Right to Work as well as qualifications and training records will be verified, and copies retained in their personnel file. Successful candidates will be required to complete a new starter form and all personnel information will be uploaded to the Human Resources database (CIPHR) by the Human Resources Administrator. All hiring managers are to issue new staff with a copy of the relevant Employee Handbook (Teaching or Operational), or alternatively highlight the location of these on the school's intranet (Firefly).

Internal Candidates

All candidates will be required to complete a selection procedure (typically an interview with the Department Manager as a minimum), which will assess against a range of criteria. The selection process is based primarily on several factors such as individual job performance, appraisal and/or manager's evaluation of capability to assume more responsibility, experience, knowledge, skills and related qualifications, and career interests. These factors will be considered against the availability of openings and the relative qualifications of other candidates. Any employee applying for an internal vacancy is required to advise their manager, in advance, of their intention to apply, as a courtesy. Any internal changes will happen within a mutually agreed "notice" period, but within no less than 3 months.

Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG)

New PVG Scheme applications or PVG Scheme Updates are administered by the Human Resources Department for all staff. All employees are required to complete their part of PVG Scheme application or a PVG Scheme Update (whichever is relevant) in a timely manner in order to obtain PVG clearance from Disclosure Scotland. Although no records are held on site (see Disclosure Scotland policy) apart from the PVG number on the individual's CIPHR record, the Scheme is 'live', and the school is alerted to any changes or notifiable events. Employment is subject to a clean report being obtained and maintained from Disclosure Scotland in view of the contact staff will have with children during normal duties.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Fettes College follows the guidance⁴ issued on the exemptions from the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 for the purposes of assessing applicants' suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes.

⁴ [Guidance on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974-and-the-exceptions-order-1975)

All staff working at the school have direct access to young people and, in practice this means that all applicants must disclose all previous and pending convictions, even if they are considered “spent” or be liable to prosecution. This includes driving offences.

Apart from offences against children, a previous conviction will not automatically preclude an applicant from working at the school. All decisions will be made based on careful consideration of all the information available to us.

Applicants who have a conviction for a criminal offence must declare it in a letter to the Head and the Human Resources Manager which will then be destroyed.

The Head and Human Resources Manager will consider the following:

- Whether the conviction is relevant to the post;
- The length of time since the offence occurred;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of convictions;
- Whether the applicant’s circumstances have changed since the offence was committed.

At interview, or under separate discussion, we undertake to ensure an open and measured discussion about any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

An applicant is unlikely to be considered suitable for employment if they have been found guilty of a serious offence involving violence or dishonesty, any sexual offence, any offence involving Class A drugs or the supply of any other illegal drug.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in the Disclosure Scotland PVG Certificate with the subject of that disclosure before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

We ensure that all those in Fettes College who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of disclosure information.

General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS)

All applicants for teaching positions must be either registered, or be eligible for registration, with GTCS. If unsure of eligibility, candidates **must** check the GTCS website before applying (www.gtcs.org.uk). GTCS registration certificates for all teaching staff will be validated and records will be updated for all new and existing employees by the PA to the Senior Deputy Head. If any relevant circumstances arise during the application and recruitment process in relation to the information provided by the applicant, the school will consider if a referral to the applicant’s regulatory body is required.

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

SSSC registration is compulsory for individuals in certain roles in a boarding school environment. SSSC certificates will be verified and a copy retained for filing by the PA to the Senior Deputy Head. Certificates of qualifications relating to SSSC registration will be copied and placed in the employee’s personnel folder (CIPHR). Registration conditions will be supported and monitored by the school to include training and mentoring.

Ongoing Employment

The 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 an Annual Appraisal process. Staff will be asked to read and electronically sign the Code of Conduct for Staff on an annual basis, ensure they follow the Code during their employment and attend related training as required.

Contractor and Agency Staff

Contractors engaged by the school must complete the same checks for their employees that the school is required to complete for its staff. The school requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Contractor can commence work at the school.

The school will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency as all will require the provision of the original PVG certificate before contractors or agency staff can commence work at the school.

Induction and Training

All new employees will receive induction training suitable for their role from senior managers, colleagues and allocated “buddies”. All residential staff will be required to attend Fire Training and all staff will receive Child Protection and Prevent training.

References on Leaving Fettes College

The school takes the information in the provision of references seriously to ensure it assists other schools with their safer recruitment. The school will generally limit the information they provide in a reference to confirmation of start and finish dates and job title, although if any safeguarding or disciplinary issues have arisen during the period of employment, it will refer to any such issue. Further information or a full reference can be provided on request.

Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended in line with changes to statutory requirements as part of the programme of policy and guidance review.

Wendy Davidson

Human Resources Manager

September 2023

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