DULWICH COLLEGE
FOUNDED 1619

RECRUITMENT POLICY

Purpose

The College needs to be able to recruit and retain high-quality staff as they are its most valuable resource and the key to its success. It also needs to ensure safer recruitment in line with its commitment to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. A professional approach to recruitment is essential to achieve this.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure that the recruitment, selection and appointment of staff is fair and consistent, does not unlawfully discriminate against any candidate and complies with employment law;
- ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed, including appropriate vetting checks for all staff before they start work at the College;
- ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including:
    - Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2026 (KCSIE),
    - Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs),
    - National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (September 2022),
    - Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (July 2026),
    - Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DUCA),
    - the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance), and
    - any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- ensure compliance with tax regulations for all staff recruited.

Scope

This policy is applicable to ALL staff recruitment, selection and appointments by Dulwich College. In order for the policy to be effective it is essential that any member of staff who is involved in any aspect of the recruitment of staff is aware of this document and follows it. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the College Leadership Team (CLT), in conjunction with the HR Department, to ensure that this is the case.

There are sections of this policy which may not be relevant for certain categories of staff. However, in order to ensure the College complies with legal requirements, the HR Department must be responsible for preparing and issuing the appropriate offer letter and contract to all new staff irrespective of their status.

Equal Opportunities

Dulwich College is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. Staff and job applicants will receive equal treatment, regardless of their so-called "**Protected Characteristics**", i.e. their age, disability, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation or gender re-assignment.

Recruitment will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination.

Preparation

Managers should give careful consideration to the vacancy before beginning the recruitment process. Consideration should be given to:

- whether it is necessary to replace all leavers;
- the type of position that is being recruited for;
- details of the duties to be undertaken; and
- whether the position is for a fixed period of time, whether it is temporary or permanent, whether it is an existing role or a new role and whether the role is full or part time.

Authorisation

Authorisation should be obtained before the commencement of the recruitment process, in accordance with the College's Staffing Authorisation Procedure (see separate document).

Job Description and Person Specification

A job description and person specification should be drawn up for all new or replacement employee positions. These documents set out the duties of the job and the skills needed to fill it. The appropriateness of drawing up job descriptions and person specifications for casual positions should be discussed with the HR Department. The HR Department will provide assistance with any of the recruitment documents required, including preparation of job descriptions.

Advertising

Managers should discuss the most effective means of obtaining suitable candidates with the HR Department. Normally vacancies (including job descriptions and application forms) will be advertised on the College's

website. If thought appropriate, external advertisements may be placed in the local or national press and recruitment agencies may be used.

The HR Department will normally draft advertisements, which will be submitted to the appropriate manager for approval.

There is a central budget for recruitment advertising, and the HR Department will be responsible for the placing of all advertisements.

Selection

Application forms, job descriptions, person specifications, this Policy and the College's (Child Protection) Policy are available to download from the College's website or will be supplied by HR.

All applicants for employee positions must submit a fully completed application form (a CV will not be accepted in place of a completed application form).

Appropriate selection procedures must be used for each position. Procedures may vary from position to position. Selection procedures may also include a skills test (Word or Excel for example), more than one interview, a tour of the College or other selection tools and, for teaching staff, teaching a lesson. At least two people should be involved in shortlisting and conducting the interviews, including one person who has undertaken safer recruitment training. A short note will be kept on file of the reason(s) why an applicant is not shortlisted for interview.

The College reserves the right to obtain background information about an applicant as is reasonable in the circumstances which may include online searches on shortlisted candidates (online searches). Online searches may include searches of internet search engines, websites, and social media platforms; they may be carried out at the shortlisting stage or after an offer of employment has been made (but prior to work commencing) but not before. The College will determine how it approaches online searches on a case-by-case basis, however, all applicants for a role will be treated consistently with regard to online searches.

All shortlisted applicants will be required to complete a self-declaration form prior to interview in which they will be asked to provide information about their criminal records history and other factors relevant to their suitability to work with children. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of interview.

References will be taken up on shortlisted applicants prior to interview where possible.

All interviewees attending interviews will be asked to bring proof of right to work in the UK, a copy of which should be taken at the time of their interview. The College asks for this information at interview to ensure that the person attending the interview is permitted to work for the College if appointed.

From a core set of areas for questioning and competencies (including motivation, communication, teamwork and "customer" service) a list of possible interview questions will be drawn up for each interview. The interview panel will agree the final list of questions.

Those interviewing should agree structured questions which will include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children,
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role,
- seeking satisfactory explanations on all gaps in academic or employment history (if not explained prior to interview),
- probing where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this, and
- any matters raised in their criminal record self-declaration form.

Regarding questions that may be asked of job applicants:

- Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic (see page 1). For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.
- Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with the approval of the Human Resources Department. For example:
    - Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
    - Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.

When all the candidates have been interviewed, the interviewers will decide on the best person for the job. Either the appointing manager or the HR Department will contact the successful candidate, agreeing a start date and salary. Candidates who have not been shortlisted and who have been unsuccessful at interview will also be informed.

Appointment

If the College decided to make an offer of employment, the HR Department will be responsible for preparing and issuing the appropriate offer letter to the successful candidate and any such offer will be conditional on the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract containing the College's standard terms and conditions of employment and the following:

- Verification of the applicant's identity;
- Verification of qualifications which the College takes into account in making the appointment decision;
- (As applicable) verification of successful completion of a statutory induction period (for teaching posts – applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999);
- Verification of the applicant's employment history and satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment;
- The College being satisfied that any information generated through online searches does not make the applicant unsuitable to work at the College;
- Verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK;
- Where the position amounts to "regulated activity" (as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended)) confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List;
- Where the position amounts to "regulated activity" the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the College considers to be satisfactory;
- (As applicable) overseas check(s) from each overseas country in which the applicant has lived for a period of three months or more in the previous 5 years (which may include an overseas criminal records check, certificate of good conduct or professional references and information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to, or is the subject of a sanction issued by a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country) (where applicable);
- The receipt of at least two references which the College consider to be satisfactory:
    - one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer;
    - if any reference is from a school, it should preferably from the headteacher and in any event, it must be countersigned by the headteacher;
    - from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children);

- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role (which verification shall only be made after the selection decision has been made);

- For positions which involve "teaching work", information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to, or is the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the College;

- (As applicable) confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from working in connection with early or later years provision i.e. a disqualification from childcare check pursuant to the statutory guidance Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (which shall include individuals concerned in the management of childcare);

- For management positions, information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to the Department for Education, or is the subject of a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the College;

- (As applicable) confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from acting as a trustee / governor or senior manager of a charity under the Charities Act 2011;

- Receipt of personal details (i.e., bank details, emergency contact details);

- Assessment of employment status, i.e.:

    - permanent or temporary employee,

    - casual worker (zero hours), or

    - self-employed.

Self-employed staff will need to be assessed to determine whether their relationship with the College is that of an employee or self-employed for tax purposes (see separate documents regarding Payments to Individuals).

All internal candidates who apply for a new role at the College will have their application assessed in accordance with these procedures. References may be taken up on internal candidates as part of the application process and can be provided by colleagues as the College will be the most recent employer and will previously have taken up references from past employers.

Delayed DBS Checks

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS disclosure the individual may be allowed to commence work in regulated activity prior to receipt of a satisfactory DBS certificate:

- after a satisfactory check of the Children's barred list (if the person will be working in regulated activity) and all other relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily;

- provided that the DBS application has been made in advance; and

- with appropriate safeguards (for example, supervision) in place, which will be determined through a written risk assessment,

except for individuals working at DUCKS and in the boarding houses who must have provided a satisfactory DBS certificate before commencing work.

If the individual is allowed to commence work as out above, the HR Department will send a temporary SAFEGUARDING CLEARANCE TO WORK until such time as a DBS certificate is received.

Contractors

Contractors engaged by the College (who are undertaking regulated activity) must complete the same checks for their employees that the College is required to complete for its staff. The College requires written confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the contractor can commence work at the College. Where an individual working at the College is self-employed, the College will either obtain the DBS check itself or request to see an existing certificate to ensure it is at the level required. Unchecked contractors will under no circumstances be allowed to work unsupervised at the College.

The College will independently verify the identity of the contractor on arrival.

Supply Staff

Before any supply staff (i.e. teaching or operational staff supplied to work at the College by an employment agency/business) start work at the College, the College must:

- receive written confirmation from the employment agency/business that all the employment checks which the College would otherwise complete for its staff (relevant to the post) have been completed before an individual can commence work at the College; and

- check their enhanced DBS certificate (original); the enhanced DBS certificate must have been issued no more than three months before the individual is due to begin work, unless the individual has worked in a school in England during those three months (the 'three-month rule') or is registered with the DBS Update Service (in which case a status check should be carried out instead).

The College will independently verify the identity of individuals supplied by the agency on arrival.

Volunteers

The College will request an enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List information on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with pupils at or on behalf of the College.

Under no circumstances will the College permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with pupils.

Visiting Speakers and the Prevent Duty

The Prevent Duty Guidance requires the College to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised. The College is not permitted to obtain a DBS disclosure or Children's Barred List information on any visiting speaker who does not engage in regulated activity at the College or perform any other regular duties for or on behalf of the College. The College has a Visiting Speakers Policy that sets its policy on obtaining background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and / or permit a speaker to attend the College having regard to, amongst other things, the Prevent Duty Guidance.

All visitors will be required to sign in and out at Reception, wear a visitor's badge at all times, and be accompanied by a fully vetted member of staff at all times.

Categorisation

The HR Department will be responsible for the categorisation of all staff appointed.

The appropriate contract will be put in place for each category of staff, appropriate checks and paperwork completed and recorded, and the appropriate system of payment followed to ensure tax and regulations are complied with.

Induction

Induction is the final stage of the recruitment process. Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed, they should report to the HR Department before starting work in order that the induction process can be commenced.

An initial general induction is carried out by the HR Department for Operational Staff, in accordance with the College's induction checklist, which includes making the starter aware of the key policies (including the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, and Whistleblowing Policy), undertaking child protection training and ensuring they have read Part 1 of KCSIE. The Manager or Head of Department/Subject is responsible for ensuring the College's induction procedure is followed, including ensuring that the new starter attends the initial general induction with the HR Department, attends safeguarding training and is given appropriate induction training regarding the specific requirements of their department and their role.

Teaching Staff attend a full day of induction at the beginning of their employment which includes safeguarding training,

The induction process is different for Events casuals and Sports Club workers, with the initial general induction being dealt with by the managers in those areas.

Data Protection

The College is legally required to carry out the pre-appointment checks detailed in this procedure. Staff and applicants will be required to provide certain information to the College to enable it to carry out the checks that are applicable to their role. The College will also be required to provide certain information to third parties, such as the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency. Failure to provide requested information may result in the College not being able to meet its employment, safeguarding or legal obligations. The College will process, share, retain etc. personal information in accordance with its Privacy Notice for Staff and Privacy Notice for Job Applicants.

Single Central Register

The College maintains a register in accordance with KCSIE and the ISSRs.

Reporting to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and Teaching Regulation Authority (TRA)

This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion and practice of safer recruitment. However, applicants should also be aware that the College has legal responsibilities to fulfil when employment comes to an end. In particular, the College has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS where an individual has applied for a position at the College despite being barred from working with children. The College also has ongoing legal duties to make referrals to the DBS and/or TRA as set out in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

Related Policies

- Staff Privacy Notice
- Privacy Notice for Job Applicants
- Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders and Security of Disclosure Information

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Policy Owner:	Clerk to the Governor
Last Reviewed:	October 2026
Date of Next Review:	As required (and no later than September 2027)