

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURE

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Southport Education Group (“the College”) aims to recruit the best person for each vacancy through fair, systematic, effective recruitment and selection procedures. This will ensure that the College continues to deliver a high quality learning experience to all students and continues to attract high calibre staff.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the College’s Policy on Disclosure and Barring Checks.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all vacancies within the College. A separate procedure applies to those posts that are defined as senior postholders in accordance with the Articles of Government.

3. The Recruitment Process

3.1 Vacancy Authorisation

When a vacancy arises due an employee leaving or moving to a different role, it cannot be assumed that a “like for like” replacement is required, therefore the Line Manager is responsible for obtaining approval to recruit. This approval is based on the completion of the Staff Authorisation Form (SAF) by the Line Manager.

This form details the type of post, whether permanent or temporary, full or part time, funding arrangements and a summary for the justification of the post.

3.2 Agreement of Recruitment Arrangements

As soon as the Human Resources (HR) Department are notified of the SAF being authorised, a member of the HR Team will contact the Line Manager to discuss and finalise the recruitment arrangements. The Line Manager must allow adequate time for this stage to ensure effective arrangements are in hand. It is good practice to agree dates to short list and interview at this point.

3.3 Job Description and Person Specification

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 should detail 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.

In general, job descriptions will normally contain:

- The post title
- The main purpose of the job
- Who the person reports to
- If the person has reportees
- The main tasks or duties to be carried out
- The scope of the job to indicate its position within the organisation
- General statements relevant to all positions such as requirements relating to equal opportunities and health and safety

As all work at the College involves responsibility for the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people the job description will also make clear that the post holder may have direct or indirect contact with children and young people and as well as a commitment to foster the health, safety and welfare of children and young people they also have a general responsibility for safeguarding.

Person specifications drawn up may include:

- Any qualifications required for the post
- Knowledge, skills and abilities required to carry out the duties of the post
- Any specific training requirements
- The need for awareness of, and commitment to, equal opportunities issues
- The need for commitment to the promotion of health and safety at work and to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people.

The person specification should indicate whether the states criteria are:

- Essential – relating only to those areas without which the job cannot be performed; or
- Desirable – not essential to carrying out the duties, but which would be valuable. They may assist in the final selection process if several candidates all meet the essential criteria

It will also include how the criteria will be tested i.e. on the application form, at interview and/or through a task set as part of the selection process.

4. Advertising

- 4.1 The person specification and job description will be agreed in advance of the advert. The Line Manager will draft the advert in line with the approved person specification and agree with HR.
- 4.2 All positions will be advertised and promoted as per the College's Advertising Policy.
- 4.3 Ongoing advertising and Recruitment Open Days/Evenings may be held to promote any existing vacancies and to attract potential candidates interested in working on a supply/temporary basis (known as the "Bank"). Potential Bank staff will be selected through the normal selection process prior to being appointed from the "Bank".
- 4.4 The HR Department will provide advice, guidance and support in selecting the appropriate external media to attract potential candidates.

4.5 Safeguarding

The job advertisement provides potential candidates with their first impression of the College. An important part of the message of the advert is to inform anyone viewing it that the College is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people.

In view of this all advertisements will include statements to the effect that:

Southport College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and all employees are expected to share this commitment.

All appointments are subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks, including a satisfactory Enhanced criminal records check, with Barred List check if appropriate, through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

AND

CVs alone will not be accepted.

5. Recruitment Pack

- 5.1 Applicants should be provided with full and detailed information on the College and post for which they are applying.

5.2 Information provided may include the following and will depend on the level of the post:

- General Information about the College
- Application Form
- Guidance notes on completing the application form
- Job Description/Person Specification
- Safeguarding Policy
- Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders
- Any other suitable College publication(s)

6. Application Forms

6.1 All applicants are required to complete the College's pre-defined application form. CVs in isolation will not be accepted as they are left to the discretion of individual applicants and contain only information that they choose to provide whereas the College application form requires specific information from all applicants. The use of the application form helps to ensure that detailed information, critical to the recruitment process, can be gathered from all applicants in a consistent format.

6.2 The College requires applicants to provide:

- Personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number
- Details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
- Full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment
- Qualifications, the awarding body and date of award
- Details of referees (see paragraph 9.4 below)
- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

7. Shortlisting

7.1 Shortlisting is the responsibility of the Manager responsible for the appointment in conjunction with the HR Department who will provide advice and ensure that good practice in all respects is observed.

7.2 When shortlisting the Manager should:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them, and;
- Explore all potential concerns.

- 7.3 The Manager responsible will perform an initial first stage assessment to filter the applications. Only those that meet the essential criteria identified from the application form e.g. qualifications, will move through to Stage 2 selection assessment. The HR Department will ensure that all candidates being called for interview meet the essential criteria, and that the shortlisting has been consistent and fair.
- 7.4 As a Disability Confident Committed employer the College will ensure that disabled people are given an equal opportunity of applying and being considered for vacancies. Where the College is aware that a job applicant is disabled, consideration will be given to reasonable adjustments that can be made to suit the particular individual. All disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria detailed in the person specification will be guaranteed an interview.
- 7.5 The interview date should have been set when the selection arrangements were agreed and any timescale for agreeing the shortlist has to be adhered to. Where possible, the Manager responsible should finalise the shortlist 7 working days before the interview date. The HR Team will ensure as far as possible that candidates are given at least 5 days' notice of their invite to interview.

8. Online Searches

- 8.1 In accordance with the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance, the College will undertake online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence process.

Where possible, the individual performing the on-line searches will be different to the shortlisting and/or hire manager to avoid direct or indirect discrimination.

On-line checks will include checking social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and other such sites. On-line checks will also include searching for the candidate's full name, including any other known names or aliases, in a search engine and recording the returned results (if any).

The on-line checks will be recorded separately to the candidate's application form and if any content is found this may be explored with the applicant at interview.

All on-line checks will be saved to the applicant's file and, in line with the College's data retention policy, will be disposed of after 6 months for unsuccessful candidates. If the candidate is successful the on-line check will become part of their personal file.

9. Invitation to Interview

- 9.1** The HR Team will contact candidates to invite them to attend for interview and confirm all arrangements. On occasion, interviews may take place using appropriate technology for example, using video conferencing, where a candidate is unable to attend an in-person interview. This will be agreed at the College's discretion.

9.2 On-line Checks

Candidates will be informed that on-line searches may be done as part of due diligence, as detailed above.

9.3 Employment History

Prior to the interview, application forms containing details of the candidate's previous employment history will be checked by a member of the HR Team to ensure that the information is not contradictory or incomplete. Any inaccuracies or gaps in employment history will be raised with the candidate. This may lead to further enquiry and, where appropriate, this information may be shared with the interview panel.

9.4 References

The HR Department, with the candidate's permission, will obtain a minimum of 2 references.

References will normally be obtained before interview wherever practicable. Where this is not possible they must be obtained and verified before any appointment is confirmed.

One reference must be obtained from the candidate's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children (assuming that the applicant has previously worked with children). Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

On receipt, references will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily and, where appropriate, the referee will be contacted directly to provide further clarification.

Where an applicant is a previous employee or where they have worked for the College as part of a supply agreement and all relevant reference checks have already been made and verified, only one up to date reference will be required.

References will specifically request confirmation of the applicant's suitability to work with children and ask whether there have been any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that met the harm threshold. Information relating to allegations that were found to be false, malicious, unfounded or unsubstantiated will not be sought or considered.

Referees will normally be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role for which the applicant has applied for.

Any concerns arising from a reference must be satisfactorily resolved before an appointment is confirmed.

9.5 Proof of Identity

All candidates will be asked to bring a current form of identification.

9.6 Evidence of Qualifications

Candidates will also be asked to bring certificates confirming their professional and educational qualifications.

9.7 Self-Declaration

All shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration regarding:

- criminal convictions and cautions
- children's barred list status
- prohibition from teaching
- prohibition from management of an independent school
- childcare disqualification
- overseas sanctions/restrictions
- police or children's social care involvement relevant to safeguarding

10. Interviews

- 10.1 Interviews will be carried out by a recruitment panel of two or more people. All recruitment panel members will be appropriately trained or briefed. In accordance with statutory requirements, at least one member of the panel will have successfully completed safer recruitment training.
- 10.2 The structure of the interviews should be decided in advance by determining who should Chair the panel, what detail from the person specification should be included on the interview evaluation form and what areas of questioning are required to cover all of the key elements of the person specification.
- 10.3 The interview evaluation form should be prepared in advance and the criteria selected should be assessed consistently with all candidates at interview.
- 10.4 Consistent areas of questioning should be covered with all candidates. Supplementary questions should be used to probe for further information or clarification where answers are incomplete or ambiguous. Those interviewing should agree structured questions which should include:
- At least one safeguarding-focused question will be included in every interview and the panel will explore candidates' understanding of professional boundaries, safeguarding responsibilities, and maintaining appropriate relationships with children and young people;
 - Exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role, and,
 - Probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed their employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.
- 10.5 Interview notes can be taken to help the panel make an informed decision. Such notes should relate to how candidates demonstrate their knowledge, skills, experience, behaviours and abilities in relation to the person specification.

11. Selection Arrangements

The selection arrangements will be agreed with the Line Manager and HR once the post has been advertised.

11.1 Selection Methods

The selection process will be determined by the nature of the post and may include a selection of the following:

- Application Form
- Carousel Interview(s)
- Selection Tests
- Formal Panel Interviews
- References

It may also be appropriate for candidates to be given a tour of the College and/or the opportunity to meet staff and students.

11.2 Selection Tests

The exact nature of the selection process will be tailored to the level of the post.

Examples of selection tests are:

- Presentation/Teach
- Skills Test e.g. typing, IT- Word, Excel, Access
- Group exercises
- Written exercises/case studies
- In-tray exercises

The selection arrangements for all lecturing posts whether full or fractional, permanent or temporary, will involve both an interview and a presentation/teach. In addition, where possible, appropriately supervised students should be involved in observing candidates.

12. Post Interview

12.1 Making a Decision after Interview

The information obtained from the application, the interview, any selection tests and references will allow candidates to be assessed against the person specification and a selection decision to be made.

12.2 Appointment

Where the majority decision of the Panel is in favour of one candidate the HR Department will make the necessary contacts to initiate the formal offer of employment.

Feedback points to all candidates should be agreed at this point.

Where panel members cannot reach a majority decision a referral to the Director of HR will be required.

13. Offers of Employment

13.1 Any offer of employment made to a successful candidate will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

13.2 Verification of a candidate's identity

Identification checking guidelines can be found on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

13.3 Satisfactory References

As detailed in paragraph 9.4 above.

13.4 Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

All offers of employment will be subject to a satisfactory disclosure check (including children's barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children) and all candidates will be made aware of this throughout the recruitment process.

When using the DBS update service the College will still need to obtain the original physical certificate from the candidate.

If a candidate is required to start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available a separate children's barred list will be obtained.

13.5 Pre-employment Health Screen

All offers of employment with the College are subject to satisfactory health clearance in order to verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities.

Any reasonable adjustments should be considered for a disabled candidate. Once issues have been clarified, if appropriate, the appointment can be confirmed.

External advice will be sought as required e.g. from the Occupational Health Physician, which may impact on the ability to offer the post. Such matters should be referred to the Director of HR.

13.6 Right to work in the UK

Evidence must be obtained to verify the candidate's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether a candidate needs permission to work in the UK, then the advice on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website should be followed.

13.7 Overseas Checks

Further checks may be required, if deemed appropriate, for candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

13.8 Qualifications

Professional qualification should be verified, as appropriate.

13.9 Teacher Prohibition Check

The College will use the DfE Check a Teacher's Record service to undertake prohibition, sanctions, restrictions and teacher status checks.

14. Agency and Third-Party Staff (Supply Staff)

14.1 The College will obtain written notification from the agency, or third party organisation, that they have carried out the same checks as the College would otherwise perform on any individual who will be working at the College.

14.2 The College will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

15. Contractors

15.1 The College will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the College has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check.

15.2 Any contractor engaging in regulated activity relating to children requires an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information).

15.3 For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an

enhanced DBS check (not including children's barred list information) is required.

- 15.4 The identity of contractors will also be checked on arrival at the College.

16. Trainee/Student Teachers

- 16.1 As trainee teachers are likely to be engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate (including children's barred list information) will be required.
- 16.2 The College will carry out all necessary pre-employment checks for any trainee teachers who are salaried by the College.
- 16.3 Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks. The College will obtain written confirmation from the provider that it has carried out all pre-appointment checks that the school or college would otherwise be required to perform and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

17. College Governors

- 17.1 A Governors' eligibility to serve is established at appointment. This process is updated annually in line with the DfE [FE Governance Guide](#), including establishing if Governors are [fit and proper persons](#) via the completion of a self-declaration and checking of publicly available registers relating to disqualification as a Charity Trustee or Director.
- 17.2 In addition an enhanced DBS check, without children's barred list check, will be obtained for College Governors.

18. Visitors

- 18.1 The College is not able to request DBS checks or barred list checks, or ask to see existing DBS certificates, for visitors such as children's relatives or other visitors attending events, such as an open day/evening.
- 18.2 The Principal will use their professional judgement about the need to escort or supervise such visitors.
- 18.3 Where possible, names of visitors will be obtained in advance and Reception advised of who

to contact on their arrival.

19. Volunteers

- 19.1 The College recognises the valuable contribution made by volunteers. The safeguarding and welfare of children and young people remains paramount and appropriate checks will be undertaken before volunteers commence their duties.
- 19.2 The College will undertake a written risk assessment for all volunteer roles to determine:
- the nature of the work to be undertaken;
 - the frequency and level of contact with children and young people;
 - whether the role constitutes regulated activity relating to children;
 - the level of supervision that will be provided;
 - what pre-appointment checks are required; and
 - any safeguarding risks associated with the role.
- 19.3 Under no circumstances will a volunteer be permitted to commence duties until the College is satisfied that all appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed and any identified risks have been adequately managed.
- 19.4 Where a volunteer will be undertaking regulated activity relating to children, the College will obtain:
- an enhanced DBS check including children's barred list information;
 - proof of identity;
 - references where considered appropriate; and
 - any additional checks required by legislation or College procedures.
- 19.5 Where a volunteer is not undertaking regulated activity, the College will determine the level of DBS check required based on the findings of the risk assessment. This may include an enhanced DBS check without children's barred list information where the volunteer will have regular contact with children and young people.
- 19.6 The risk assessment will take account of:
- the duties to be undertaken;
 - the frequency and duration of contact with children;

- whether the contact is supervised or unsupervised;
- whether the volunteer has an existing professional relationship with the College;
- information obtained through references or other suitability checks;
- the age and vulnerability of the students involved; and
- any other safeguarding considerations relevant to the role.

19.7 All volunteers will receive appropriate safeguarding information and instruction relevant to their role, including information about:

- safeguarding and child protection arrangements;
- reporting concerns;
- the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies; and
- professional boundaries and expected standards of conduct.

19.8 The College will maintain records of volunteer risk assessments and safeguarding checks in accordance with statutory requirements and College procedures. Any checks undertaken on volunteers may also be recorded on the Single Central Record.

20. Single Central Record (SCR)

20.1 The College will ensure that it complies with statutory requirements for information to be recorded and retained on its SCR of pre-employment checks carried out in relation to employees and workers employed or engaged directly, as well as others who work in regular contact with children, including supply teachers, temporary staff and volunteers.

20.2 The College's SCR will cover details of staff, including agency and supply staff, providing education to children under the age of 18.

20.3 The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including salaried trainee teachers) is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- An identity check;
- A barred list check;
- An enhanced DBS check/certificate;
- Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK;
- A check of professional qualifications, where required;
- A check to establish a person's right to work in the UK.

20.4 In addition the College will record whether the staff member is engaged in regulated activity.

- 20.5 For agency and third-party staff the SCR will record receipt of confirmation that all required safer recruitment checks have been completed together with the date the confirmation was received.
- 20.6 The details of an individual will be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the College.

21. Data and Confidentiality

- 21.1 All personal and sensitive information collected during the recruitment and selection process will be managed in accordance with current UK GDPR and data protection laws.

22. Review

- 22.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Vice Principal – People and Culture, or in line with legislative developments and the need for good practice.