

The Croft Preparatory School

Safer Recruitment Policy

Whole School Policy, including Early Years Foundation Stage

Policy Reviewed (PM)	8 January 2026
Ratified by SLT	13 January 2026
Next Review Date	January 2027

The legal responsibility for ensuring that the Croft Preparatory School adheres to all relevant statutory regulations, as issued by the DfE, lies with the Proprietors. At their discretion, the Proprietors may delegate the monitoring of the efficacy with which the school discharges its statutory duties to the Board and Governing Committee.

Notwithstanding the above delegation, the Proprietors retain ultimate responsibility for how the statutory functions are executed.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SAFER RECRUITMENT

The Croft Preparatory School (the School) is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils, and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The School is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The School recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

This policy sets out clear systems of work and processes with regard to the recruitment of paid employment or casual workers. It is part of a portfolio of policies associated with Safeguarding and therefore should be read in conjunction with the other policies.

The aims of the School's Safer Recruitment Policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position, and that members of staff hold relevant qualifications for their role;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation as outlined in Equality Act 2010;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant recommendations and guidance including the recommendations of the Department for Education (DfE) in *'Keeping Children Safe in Education' ("The Guidance")* (KCSIE) and the code of practice published by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS);



- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks;
- to ensure that all employment checks are recorded clearly on the School's electronic Single Central Register.

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

Application Process

The following applies to applicants for a temporary or permanent employment contract:

- all applicants will receive fair treatment;
- the job description and person specification are essential tools and will be used throughout the process;
- employees will be recruited on the knowledge, experience and skills needed for the position;
- selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members of staff; at least one panel member will have completed the Safer Recruitment training successfully;
- selection will be based on a minimum of a completed School application or TES standard application, shortlisting and interview;
- The Disability Discrimination Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if the applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.

Equal Opportunities

The School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of selection and recruitment are fair and that applicants are not discriminated against on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation as outlined in Equality Act 2010.

Safer Recruitment Training

Safer Recruitment training is a requirement for senior management who are regularly involved in recruitment and selection. It is a requirement that at least one member of the interview panel has completed Safer Recruitment training. Such training will be updated every three years.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR EMPLOYED STAFF

Advertisement

When possible, the School will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible; usually via an external advertisement. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates, have candidates on Hold or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate. The advertisement will include the statement, 'The Croft Preparatory School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'



Role Information

For each role there will be a Job Information pack, including a job description and person specification. All applicants for employment will be required to complete a confidential application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed application forms has not passed. The school does not accept a curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

As part of the Job Information pack the following will be available for applicants:

- School application form (on website) or TES application (if the role is advertised via TES)
- Job description and person specification
- Links to the relevant School Policies and documents:
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
 - Safer Recruitment Policy;
 - Data Protection and Retention Policy.

Application Form

The School has a standard Application Form, which is applicable for all job roles. All applicants are expected to fully complete this form unless they have completed the TES application form (where roles are advertised via TES). This Application Form will be used to shortlist applicants.

As part of our duty to safeguard pupils, the school is legally required to carry out a number of preemployment checks which are detailed in the School Safer Recruitment Policy. With effect from January 2026, shortlisted candidates will be sent a Suitability to Work With Children self-declaration form to complete and return prior to interview.

Candidates are required to declare in this form any relevant convictions, adult cautions or other matters which may affect their suitability to work with children. We will use this information as part of our interview pre-screening. Candidates will be asked to sign the form at the interview.

SELECTION

Shortlisting

Candidates will be shortlisting according to the requirements of the role. Shortlisting for interview will be done by at least one Safer Recruitment trained manager.

Applicants will be asked, if successfully shortlisted, to account for any gaps in employment. The applicant will be invited to attend at least one formal interview at which their relevant skills, experience and knowledge of safeguarding will be discussed in more detail.



If successfully shortlisted and invited for an interview, applicants will be asked to provide photographic evidence of their identity on the day of the interview. For example a passport or driving licence.

Interview Panel

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements and explore their suitability to work with young people. The selection for people who work with children will always involve a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

The interview panel will have a minimum of two members.

The members of the panel will:

- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments;
- be appropriately trained;
- meet before the interview to consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and agree assessment criteria according to the person specification.

Scope of the Interview

In addition to evaluating the candidate's suitability for the post, the interview panel will also explore the candidates:

- attitude towards children and young people;
- understanding and ability to support the School's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- gaps in the employment history;
- concerns or discrepancies arising from information provided by the candidate and/or the referees;
- DBS declaration by asking the candidate if they wish to declare anything in the light of the requirement for a DBS check;

CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's standard Terms and Conditions of employment;
- the receipt of two satisfactory references (one of which should be from the applicant's most recent employer, if the applicant has been in recent employment) which the School considers, at its absolute discretion, to be satisfactory;
- the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the School considers to be satisfactory;
- verification of the applicant's identity;
- verification of the eligibility to work in the UK;
- an overseas check, where appropriate;
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role;
- verification of the applicant's qualifications, where appropriate;
- confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List, administered by the DBS, where the role falls within the definition of 'regulated activity';



- obtain a separate barred list check alongside all other required checks if an individual will start work in a regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- confirmation that the applicant, (teaching roles, peripatetic teachers and individuals that have QTS) is not the subject of a Prohibition Order, as defined by KCSIE;
- confirmation that any applicant for a management position is not subject to a prohibition from management directive (s.128);
- confirmation that the applicant is not prevented from working with children on the grounds of Disqualification.

Offers of employment, may only be authorised by the Headteacher or the School Business Manager. The HR Manager may verbally offer the role to the candidate and forward a formal written offer.

Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in an application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected. Where false information is provided in support of an application to work at the School, the School is required to report the matter to the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Police and other relevant professional bodies.

Children's Barred List

It is unlawful for the School to employ anyone to work with children if they are barred from doing so, and it is a criminal offence for a person to apply to work with children if they are barred from doing so. The DBS maintains the Adults' and Children's Barred Lists, and makes considered decisions as to whether an individual should be included on one or both of these lists and barred from engaging in regulated activity.

The School will carry out a check of the Children's Barred List after an offer of employment is made.

Enhanced DBS Certificate

The School applies for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all members of staff, casual workers, proprietors and volunteers who take part in regulated activity. If a candidate is successful in their application for a position at the school, they will be required to complete a DBS Disclosure Application Form.

An enhanced disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record (including those which are defined as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974), together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. An enhanced disclosure will also reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children by virtue of his/her/their inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children maintained by the DBS.

An enhanced disclosure may also contain non-conviction information from local police records, which a Chief Police Officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

DBS checks will be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including the equivalent of an enhanced DBS disclosure and/or a certificate of good conduct or equivalent from the relevant jurisdiction(s).



Employment with the School is conditional upon the School being satisfied with the result of the Enhanced DBS Disclosure. Any criminal records information that is disclosed to the School will be handled in accordance with any guidance and / or code of practice published by the DBS. For any person who has applied to the DBS update service the School will examine the original certificate, check it matches the individual's identity and run an online update check, which will provide information about any changes since the certificate was issued. If the check indicates that there has been a change then the individual must apply for a new certificate.

There is no requirement to obtain an enhanced DBS check if:

- in the three months prior to beginning work in their new appointment, the applicant has worked: in a school in England in a post which brought them into regular contact with children or in any post in a school since 12 May 2006; or
- in a college in England in a position which involved the provision of education and regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or young people under the age of 18.

In this situation the school will need to see a copy of the original DBS Certificate. The school will still apply for a barred list separately. Notwithstanding the above, it is the School's policy to always request a new enhanced DBS check with barred list information when a candidate is offered a position.

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS disclosure, the Headteacher has discretion to allow an individual to begin work, pending receipt of this, provided the following are in place:

- a written risk assessment has been undertaken which will be reviewed fortnightly (and which will then be retained by the School);
- they are appropriately supervised;
- all other pre-appointment checks have been completed;
- the person in question has been informed of these safeguards.

The appointment cannot be confirmed until a satisfactory Disclosure is seen by the School. The HR Manager will view the electronic DBS verification system to see the satisfactory Disclosure and a copy of the DBS Certificate will be taken and retained on the person's file.

Medical Fitness

The School is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

It is the School's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete and sign a self-declaration of medical fitness which forms part of the School's job application procedure. The School will arrange for the information contained in the self-declaration to be reviewed. This information will be reviewed against the job description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed timetable, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School etc.

If the School's health and safety advisor has any doubts about an applicant's fitness the School will consider reasonable adjustments in consultation with the applicant. The School may also seek a



further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment

Online Search

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022, part of our safer recruitment process includes conducting an online search. This includes a basic search engine check and also public platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. From January 2026, shortlisted candidates will be required to provide the following information as part of their application:

- the social media platforms on which they have accounts;
- the account names/handles for all of their social media accounts, including any under a nickname or pseudonym;
- any websites they are involved with, in or featured on or named on; and
- any other publicly available online information about them of which the School should be made aware.

The school will only search information that is publically available online and which relates to the candidates suitability to work with children. Candidates will not be required to provide account passwords or to grant the School access to private social media accounts. If the online search is not completed at shortlisting stage, and you are appointed to the role, your appointment will be subject to a satisfactory online search.

We are an Equal Opportunities employer and therefore any information obtained will not be used to unlawfully discriminate against or harass any person on the grounds of the protected characteristics.

Any issues or concerns will be discussed with the shortlisted candidate at interview (if checked before interview) and/or prior to confirmation of appointment.

Prohibition Order

Checks will be carried out on anyone employed to carry out teaching work to verify that the individual is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State. This does not apply to teaching assistants unless they have QTS. Checks will be carried out on any person employed to carry out non-teaching work if they have QTS.

Prohibition from Management

From August 2015, schools must check whether staff appointed to management positions after that date are subject to a section 128 direction. This also applies to staff promoted internally from September 2018. The following staff are considered to be in management positions for the purpose of this check:

- Headteachers;
- All staff on the senior leadership team (including non-teaching staff);



- Teaching positions with Head of Department or Head of Faculty;
- Proprietors

The checks will be carried out using the DfE sign in portal.

The School is also not permitted to employ anyone to work in a management position if they are prohibited from being involved in the management of an independent school. This applies to the following positions at the School:

- Headteacher, School Business Manager or Accounts Manager;
- teaching posts on the senior leadership teams;
- teaching posts which carry a departmental head role;
- support staff posts on the senior leadership teams or School Operations Finance team.

References

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the School at its absolute discretion. One of the references should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer (where the applicant has been in recent employment). If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should, where possible, be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

Where possible references may be taken prior to an interview, otherwise these will be taken after a conditional offer is made. All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.

Where the reference is applied for prior to an interview any queries can be explored further at the interview with the applicant. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, absence and disciplinary record
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures, involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired)
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant, that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people, or behaviour towards children or young people.

The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

If the School receives a factual reference i.e. one which contains only limited information about a candidate, additional references may be sought. If a candidate has previously worked overseas the School may take up references from their overseas employers. If the School feels it is necessary to



take up additional references for any reason we will contact the candidates to discuss this before approaching any party for an additional reference.

Written references are followed up with telephone calls, to verify the authenticity of the reference. This verification will be attempted two times. Where it is not possible to verify the reference with the referee, the person verifying must be satisfied that the source was genuine otherwise an alternative reference will be requested.

The School will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

Verification of Identity and Address

All conditional offers of employment are subject to the individual supplying 3 forms of evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications. This will normally be in the following form, although other documentation may be acceptable; all ID should be in date. Further information is available from the HR Department.

- Passport, Birth Certificate, Driving Licence, Utility bills or Statements
- Original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change e.g. original marriage certificate.

From April 2014, the School is required by the Guidance to retain photocopies of identity documents, right to work and qualifications.

SINGLE CENTRAL REGISTER

In line with DfE requirements, the School will keep and maintain an electronic Single Central Register (SCR). The SCR will list all staff who are employed at the School, casual workers, proprietors and regulated activity providers. The SCR will confirm the dates of the required pre-employment checks. The register comprises individual personal details, as stipulated by regulation and is updated regularly as new staff join or leave the school. The process of compliance checks is managed by the HR manager and the Facilities Manager and adhered to prior to commencement of employment at the School.

The following checks are completed and the information is recorded on the SCR: names, role information; identification checks; DBS enhanced, barred list, right to work, overseas (if applicable), prohibition teaching order, prohibition from management, references including reference compliance, standard application completion, medical screen, online check, EY childcare disclosure.

The SCR also has information related to Club Providers, Non-employed Site Residents, Governors and Volunteers in relation to individual personal details, as stipulated by regulation and is updated regularly as they join or leave the school.



Staff members have a duty through their contract to immediately disclose during their employment if they are:

- charged or convicted of any criminal offence;
- in receipt of a police caution, reprimand or warning, or if there is a formal child protection order;
- disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (when working in relevant childcare provision)
- barred from working with children or vulnerable adults; the subject of a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

ASSESSING RISK

Non-employee

Directors/Proprietors - are subject to, and shall be compliant with, the School's policy and practice with regard to safer recruitment. Full checks on school Directors are held on the SCR.

Club Providers – Agencies or Clubs acting on behalf of staff must provide date of DBS and put in writing that all other checks have been completed as well. The School must see a copy of the DBS disclosure and ID must be checked by the School when they first attend.

Volunteers – All volunteers, including parents/carers, are subject to, and must be compliant with this policy. If a visiting speaker, the school must first check their "suitability" to speak to the children in school.

Contractors – At no time will contractor staff have unsupervised access to children without a DBS check being in place; whilst on site, contractor staff will be issued with a daily visitor badge and asked to sign an undertaking that they will not knowingly place themselves in a situation where they are direct contact with children.

Guests & Visiting Speakers – guests and visiting speakers are to be accompanied at all times and will be provided with a daily visitor badge and require to sign in and out of the school.

POLICY ON RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

Background

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record, this will not automatically bar them from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

In view of the fact that all positions within the School will amount to "regulated activity" within the meaning of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). Details of any convictions and cautions will be requested only



after shortlisting and pre-interview stage. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of Gross Misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS, of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School.

If the School receives an application from a disqualified person; is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, it will report the matter to the Police and the DBS.

Assessment criteria

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person

It is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence; or
- serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud



If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

Assessment procedure

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Headteacher before a position is offered.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, s/he can do so by contacting the DBS directly. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position, were it not for the disputed information, the School will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

RETENTION AND SECURITY OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

The School's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information, but is under no obligation to do so.

In particular, the School will:

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents issued by the DBS securely, access to which will be restricted to the Headmaster and staff working within the Human Resources Department.
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary. Generally, this will be for a maximum of six months. The School will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken.
- ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means, such as shredding.

