



PEMBROKE HOUSE



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

**Reviewed: October 2022 – DBM, EW, CT & MAm
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1. Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Pembroke House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the School expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The aims of the School's 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;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2022 (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2021 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC); and
- to ensure that the School recruitment is based on best practice and takes account of the School's Equal Opportunity Policy in the HR policy, the Kenyan Employment Act, and all other relevant employment legislation and Sec. 41 of the Kenyan Constitution.
- to ensure that the School recruitment meets the Standards for British School Overseas (BSO) in their recruitment process and beyond.
- 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.

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- These checks include, but are not limited to (and are detailed under Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process on page 7) :
 - ID checks,
 - Enhanced DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC)
 - Barred list Checks
 - Kenyan Police Checks,
 - Police checks from all countries of residence/work,
 - Qualification Checks,
 - 2 Written and Verbal Reference Checks (3 if possible),
 - Medical Fitness Test

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff 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.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance (including KCSIE 2022 and Prevent Duty Guidance).

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

The School aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Pembroke House School.



3. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Council to:

- ensure the School has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance, the Kenyan Employment Act, 2022 and all other relevant employment legislation.
- monitor the School's compliance with them.
- It is the responsibility of the Head, Bursar and other Managers involved in recruitment to:
 - ensure that the School operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the School.
 - monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
 - promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

The Council has delegated responsibility to the Head (teaching staff) and Bursar (non-teaching staff) to lead in all appointments. Council members may be involved in staff appointments but only if trained in safer recruiting. However Council may be involved and make appointments of critical posts which include Head, Deputy Head and Bursar.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of the School will amount to "regulated activity" if it is carried out:

- frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- overnight, meaning between 2.00 am and 6.00 am; or
- satisfies the "period condition", meaning four times or more in a 30 day period; and
- provides the opportunity for contact with children.

Roles which are carried out on an unpaid / voluntary basis will only amount to regulated activity if, in addition to the above, they are carried out on an unsupervised basis.

The School is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List or International Child Protection

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Certificate (ICPC) unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The School is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) for all staff, supply staff and Council members who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, the School can also carry out an enhanced DBS check or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e. roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

4. Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement. Council have got authority to make employment offers without advertising. As long as it is in line with the Kenyan Employment Act, 2022 and all other relevant employment legislation.

Any advertisement will make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA ACT) and Kenya Personal Data Protection Act, 2019.

Application Forms

Pembroke House School uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history). Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. CVs alone will not be accepted. However CVs need to be sent along with an

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application form.

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 summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or the DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC).

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

References

References for shortlisted applicants will be sought immediately after shortlisting. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after the offer letter is sent, which will include a clause stating that the offer is subject to satisfactory references, checks and safeguarding interviews.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the School, but 3 references can be sought when possible. One of the references must be from the applicant'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. If no such work has taken place then the two most recent employers are to be approached. The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

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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. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised so that they do not support terrorism or any form of "extremism".

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The School does not accept testimonials or references from relatives, however will accept open references, but will follow up with a specific reference in the School Format,.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers, but preferably three, will see the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information with regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process, if it has not been disclosed on the application form.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training or refresher training as applicable. All candidates will be asked pre-determined safeguarding questions, the answers to which will be recorded as part of the interview notes.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents only will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed five years after the recruitment process, due to

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the Kenyan law stating that the documents should be kept on file to prove the process for inspections.

All interviews will take place with a Ministry of Education representative present in accordance with the law.

5. Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSIE 2022 and the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations and the *Boarding schools: national minimum standards*, the School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

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;
- verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified);
- the receipt of a minimum of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers to be satisfactory;
- for positions which involve "teaching work":

i. the School being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the National College for Teaching and Leadership, or any predecessor or successor body, or by the police or a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country which prevents the applicant working at the School or which, in the School's opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work at the School; and

ii. the School being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of any proceedings before a professional conduct panel or equivalent body in the UK or any other country for any reason which prevents the applicant working at the School or which, in the School's opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work at the School;

- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" the receipt of an enhanced disclosure

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from the DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) which the School considers to be satisfactory; (where applicable)

- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List*; (where applicable)
- confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from providing education at a school, taking part in the management of an independent school or working in a position which involves regular contact with children (Prohibition from Teaching List check);
- confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school (Prohibition from Management List check);
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role;
- any further checks which are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK; and
- verification of professional qualifications which the School deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where they have not been previously verified).

*The School is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The School is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) for all staff, supply staff and Council members who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, the School can also carry out an enhanced DBS check or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e. roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

Whether a position amounts to "regulated activity" must therefore be considered by the School in order to decide which checks are appropriate. It is however likely that in nearly all cases the School will be able to carry out an enhanced DBS check and a Children's Barred List check or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC).

A personal file checklist (Recruitment Log) will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in

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accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2020 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2020 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered ‘SPENT’ **must be** declared when applying for any position at Pembroke House School.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formerly known as CRB Disclosure) The School applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) in respect of all positions at the School which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2019 (as amended). The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information.

It is the School's policy that the DBS disclosure or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) be obtained before the commencement of employment of **any** new employee. If in exceptional circumstances this is not possible, the School's ‘Risk Assessment Checklist’ **must** be completed and a decision made in line with the risk as assessed.

It is the School's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) every three years and in addition any employee that takes leave for more than three months (ie: maternity leave, career break etc) must be re-checked before they return to work. Members of staff at Pembroke House School are aware of their obligation to inform the Bursar or the HR Department of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

Portability of DBS Certificates Checks Pembroke House School staff for whom DBS checks are possible all become members of the DBS Update Service so long as their most recent check was issued after 17 June 2013, for a fee of £13 per annum, which is payable by the school.

Copies of DBS Checks The DBS no longer issue Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees/applicants should bring their Certificate to the Human Resources Manager in the Bursary, (for employees within 7 days of issue or applicants before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity).

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Dealing with convictions The School operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2020 and also:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Human Resources Manager. A decision will be made following this meeting. If 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 Human Resources Manager and Bursar/Head will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC). In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the School may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

Proof of identity & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status All applicants invited to attend an interview at the School will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity according to DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) identity checking guidelines. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

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

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

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Medical Fitness The School is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School.

All applicants are requested to get a medical check from the school Doctor, and where appropriate an additional doctor's medical report may be required. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2019. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

Overseas checks Applicants who have worked abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a criminal records check / Police Clearance Certificate from the relevant country/s. The applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by the School. In some cases an overseas check is not possible (many require personal presence for a police check) – this will be noted and the reasons given and kept on file and will be included in the Risk Assessment Checklist.

Induction Programme All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the School policies and procedures, including the Child Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct and Part One of KCSIE, and make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Single Central Record of Members of Staff In addition to the various staff records kept in School and on individual personnel files, a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 requirements. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Human Resources Office. The Single Central Record will contain details of the following:-

- All employees who are employed to work at the School;
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to the School whether employed directly or through an agency;
- all others who have been chosen by the School to work in regular contact with children.

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This will cover volunteers, Council, peripatetic staff and people brought into the School to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members eg: sports coaches etc.

A designated Council member will be responsible for auditing the Single Central Record and reporting his/her findings to the full Council at least once a year.

Record Retention / Data Protection The School is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, the School will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, medical fitness and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help the School to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g. so that the School may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

This documentation will be retained by the School for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the School. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the Bursary office in a locked and secure cabinet.

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with School activities.

Pembroke House School will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 5 years, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (ie: shredded). The 5 year retention period is in accordance with the Kenyan Law to prove due process was followed.

6. Ongoing Employment

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

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7. Leaving Employment

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of serious misconduct or abuse against children and young people are raised. This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed. Whilst these are pre-employment checks the School also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) in circumstances where an individual:

- has applied for a position at the School despite being barred from working with children; or
- has been removed by the School from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child.

If the individual referred to the DBS or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) is a teacher, the School may also decide to make a referral to the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

8. Contractors and Peripatetic Teachers

Contractors and Peripatetic Teacher engaged by the School are expected to complete the same checks for their employees that the School completes for its staff, with a minimum expectation of a valid Police Good Conduct Certificate. The School requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before Contract employees can commence work at the School.

9. Pupil Aide's

Pupil Aide's employed directly by parents and not employed by the School are expected to complete checks to confirm Identity as well as a valid Police Good Conduct Certificate. Pupil Aide's will sign the Code of Conduct as well as the Pupil Aide Policy. The School requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before the Pupil Aide can commence work at the School.



10. Visiting Speakers (and The Prevent Duty)

The Prevent Duty Guidance requires the School to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised.

The School is not permitted to obtain a DBS disclosure or Children's Barred List or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) information on any visiting speaker who does not engage in regulated activity at the School or perform any other regular duties for or on behalf of the School.

All visiting speakers will be subject to the School's usual visitors signing in protocol. This will include signing in and out at Security, the wearing of a visitors badge at all times and being escorted by a fully vetted member of staff between appointments.

The School will also obtain such formal or informal 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 School. In doing so the School will always have regard to the Prevent Duty Guidance and the definition of "extremism" set out in KCSIE which states:

"Extremism' is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations."

In fulfilling its Prevent Duty obligations the School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age.

11. Volunteers

The School will request an enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) information on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with pupils at or on behalf of the School (the definition of regulated activity set out above will be applied to all volunteers).



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

It is the School's policy that a new DBS certificate or International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with the School for three consecutive months or more. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with the School on a regular basis will be required to sign up to the DBS update service, where applicable, as this permits the School to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

In addition, the School will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- formal or informal information provided by staff, parents and other volunteers;
- character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source; and
- an informal safer recruitment interview.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Human Resources Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the School. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly Safer Recruitment Evaluation audit which will be presented to the Headteacher/Bursar to report to the Governing Body.