

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School

Safer recruitment policy

This policy applies to the whole School and is published to parents and staff

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In recruiting its paid staff – both teaching, support and those for whom working at RGS is not their sole occupation – the Royal Grammar School Newcastle (RGS) takes very seriously all aspects of the safeguarding of the students in its care. It endeavours to follow best practice, but recognises that some processes (for example, the interview procedure) may differ in independent schools from the model used in maintained schools. For clarity, “staff” is taken to mean all teachers, peripatetic teachers and coaches, therapists arranged by the school, part-time staff, students, administrative and other support staff, staff appointed from overseas and pupils paid to work at the school.

The School ensures that all appropriate checks are completed for each new member of staff (including volunteers) and that the following principles and procedures are followed:

- The School opts not to refer specifically to safeguarding issues in advertisements for posts. However, the *Information for applicants for teaching posts* and *Information for Applicants for Support Staff Posts* published on the School’s website in connection with details of posts vacant contain detailed conditions of appointment (including an Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS and subscription to its update service). The School’s policies on **Disclosure, Statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders, Safeguarding (Child Protection) and Equal opportunities and race equality** are published on its website. A copy of the latest version of the RGS *Information for applicants* is available on request if there is no vacancy advertised currently.
- The School has regard to **KCSIE (September 2016)** and therefore requires that candidates disclose their previous employment history. Where there are gaps in employment, the School will ascertain that they are satisfactory and take up any discrepancies at interview.
- The School uses a standard application form which includes a reminder to applicants that two references are required, one of which must be from their current or most recent employer. If the candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as teacher, the school will (where practicable) require a reference from the school where they were most recently employed to confirm dates of their employment and their reasons for leaving. References must state that there is no known reason why the applicant should not work with children. If a reference is taken by telephone, detailed notes will be taken, dated

and signed and the referee will be asked to send a written reference confirming the information they have given. When references are received, they will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered are satisfactory and the School will follow up any incomplete information.

- Applicants are required to confirm that they are not on the **Barred List** or disqualified from working with children, and that they have no convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not *protected* as defined by the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013)** or other orders of the courts made against them. On receipt of an application and if the candidate is likely to be interviewed, the Headmaster's Secretary or the Compliance Manager checks that employment history is complete and that there are no discrepancies or gaps. The Headmaster (or the Bursar for Support Staff) double-checks this when drawing up a shortlist.
- The School does not discriminate on grounds of disability and will make reasonable adjustments, so far as is practicable, to ensure that people with disabilities can be considered for employment and, if successful, able to carry out their duties effectively.
- References are sought for short-listed teaching candidates, including internal ones, before interview. Referees are asked specifically (by means of a form) to confirm that they know of no reason why candidates should not work unsupervised with children and that there has been no disciplinary procedures or complaints/allegations. An appointment cannot be confirmed until all references have been received and any discrepancies or concerns resolved. Open testimonials are not sufficient as references for the purposes of safer recruitment. Where employers will only confirm that an employee worked for them between specific dates the second reference must determine the employee's suitability to work with children.
- Interviews for teaching posts are usually conducted as a series of two or three interviews; the Headmaster, Deputy Head, Director of Studies and Pastoral Director try to ensure that they are consistent in their questioning of candidates. The Headmaster, Bursar, Pastoral Director and Head of Sixth Form have all undergone *Safer recruitment training* so as to be assured, through questioning, of the candidate's suitability for working with children. Interview notes are not kept. In the event of the Headmaster's absence from the process other trained, senior member(s) of staff will conduct safeguarding interviews.
- Following the provisional offer of a post and before appointment, the successful candidate's qualifications are checked from original documents, and standard, photographic, identity checks are also

carried out (using passport, driving licence or birth certificate), including Right to Work in the UK, noting the need to have regard to the rules for employing migrant workers (2008). We also ask for documentary evidence of current address.

- An Enhanced DBS and barred list check is completed, as is a health form. The School Medical Officer checks the latter. Where an Enhanced Disclosure is not received in advance of a member of staff starting work in a regulated activity (a rare event), then a separate barred list check will be undertaken. This is also the case where a pre-existing DBS check is accepted under the three month rule or a candidate who has subscribed to the DBS update service and the original check did not include barring information for the children's workforce. Staff with a DBS certificate from a previous employer which is not at the enhanced level will be subject to a new Enhanced Disclosure regardless of the date of the previous certificate.
- An Enhanced Disclosure is obtained for staff who will be involved in regulated activity. In the rare event where a Disclosure is delayed, the Headmaster may decide to allow the member of staff to commence work without confirming the appointment after a satisfactory barred list check has been provided. Further safeguards might include loose supervision, a risk assessment (reviewed fortnightly) and a briefing for the member of staff to inform them of the measures in place. A note to this effect will be added to the Single Central Register and evidence kept of the measures put in place.
- Anyone employed to carry out teaching work since April 2012 will also be checked against the Secretary of State's Prohibited List.
- If the applicant will take on a management role, e.g. Head of Department, a check for a section 128 direction will be carried out.
- Where an applicant is living/has lived outside the UK then the School will undertake whatever checks are available from that country to ensure that no relevant offences have been committed abroad, following the guidance issued by the Home Office and the Department for Education. This will include a check for information about any teacher sanction or restriction that an EEA professional regulating authority has imposed.
- Where a member of staff or volunteer will undertake supervisory work with children under the age of eight outside teaching hours, or manage the supervision of children under the age of eight, they will also be asked to inform the School whether they live with a person who is barred from working with children (included on the children's barred list) or if:

- They have been cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home or abroad
- Other orders have been made against them relating to their care of children
- They have had their registration cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering
- They are living in the same household where another person who is disqualified lives.

If there is nothing to declare the employee will sign a declaration to this effect. If there is an association with someone who might be barred from working with children, they may apply to OFSTED for a waiver prior to starting work.

- In the event of employees being transferred under TUPE (with a gap of three months or less and with information complete) information will be passed on to the new employer and a note made on the register that the details have been accepted under TUPE.
- When the School employs staff from a supply agency, it will contact the agency to confirm that the following checks have been carried out:
 - Identity
 - Enhanced DBS, renewed every three years
 - Right to Work in the UK
 - Barred list
 - Prohibition order
 - Qualifications
 - Overseas checks, where appropriate
 - Medical fitness
 - Previous employment history
 - Two references meeting the requirements of KCSIE
 - Disqualification by association declaration (if applicable)
 - Section 128 check (if applicable).

A record of these checks will be made on the *Single Central Register of Appointments (SCR)* and the School will carry out its own identity check to ensure the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks were made and will see the original DBS certificate. Usually the School will take a copy of the certificate to check the details on the SCR and then it will be destroyed.

- In the case of appointing a proprietor (i.e. Chair of Governors for RGS), the School will confirm that the person is registered with the DfE as being responsible for the management of the School and will make all appropriate checks in advance of appointment.

- The School maintains a *Single Central Register of Appointments* and records on it all current members of staff, the proprietorial body and all individuals who work in regular contact with children, including volunteers, supply staff and those employed as third parties.
- A checklist is completed for every appointment to ensure that all these stages have been completed satisfactorily. At the end-point of the process the appointment is confirmed and the documentation is filed for safekeeping in the appropriate places. The School's Compliance Manager keeps the register of DBS and other checks.

Volunteers

All volunteers are subject to some degree of check for their suitability to work with children before they undertake their work in school. **Under no circumstances** may a volunteer be left unsupervised with children until it is confirmed by the Compliance Manager or Pastoral Director that appropriate checks have been completed. The nature of this check will depend on the nature and frequency of the work they propose to undertake. There are many possible scenarios in which volunteers may be in school for example: parents helping with a school trip, undergraduate students seeking work experience, parents or friends of the school helping with sports coaching. In each and every situation the School undertakes a formal process to ensure appropriate checks are made, using *KCSIE (September 2016)* as its guide. It would be impossible for this policy to anticipate all future scenarios, but volunteers at RGS who are likely to come into contact with children more than occasionally helping on a school (day) trip can expect that:

- They will be asked for proof of identity
- They will be subject to an enhanced DBS check, (which may include the barred list) if they are likely to come into contact with students on a regular or unsupervised basis
- Their suitability for the role checked via references or others within the school community.

Staff who wish to bring volunteers into RGS are expected to inform the Pastoral Director and Compliance Manager prior to the volunteer starting work so that all relevant checks can be completed in good time.

Contractors

A contractor or an employee of a contractor who is administering personal or healthcare or who is engaged in teaching students is deemed to be in regulated activity and therefore the School will undertake an enhanced DBS with barred list check for the individuals concerned prior to them working on site.

Where a contractor is undertaking non-teaching work but their work either provides them the opportunity for regular contact with students or their work is unsupervised, then the School requires an enhanced DBS check (without barred list). If a contractor is in school at short notice and there is not time to carry out checks, the School will put suitable supervision in place and record what level of supervision was agreed.

During periods of prolonged building development, the School will take measures to ensure that those working on the building site have no need to access the main school site. The School, together with the site manager, will agree on procedures for contractors who require access to the main school site and this will be recorded.

All contractors will be asked for proof of identity on arrival at the School, they must sign in and will be provided with a contractor's lanyard to help colleagues to identify adults who are legitimately in school.

Host families

In line with the guidance in KCSIE, when RGS students are being hosted by a family (e.g. on sports tours), the School takes all reasonable steps to check the family's suitability, for example asking partner schools to confirm that checks have been made and asking for students to be hosted in groups of two or more. Staff overseeing such trips will also ensure students have access to mobile phones, points of contact and will have briefed students and parents on the risks and protective measures in place to support them.

The school cannot undertake to make any arrangements to host students from other schools unless DBS and Barred List Checks are made on all adults in the host family prior to the arrival of the students. If an arrangement is made directly between two families then this is a private arrangement which is not regulated activity. If a student aged under 16 stays with a host family for more than 28 days, regardless of the nature of the arrangement then they are deemed to be in a private fostering arrangement. In all cases of private fostering the School will notify the local authority of the arrangement.

Safeguarding training

Prior to beginning to work with students all employees and volunteers meet with the Pastoral Director to be briefed regarding their safeguarding responsibilities and to familiarise themselves with the School's procedures. In addition they will also be asked to attend safeguarding training provided by our external consultants on an annual basis, at least.

As both good practice and statutory requirements are subject to frequent change in this area, the School strives to ensure that it is always up to date with the latest guidance and requirements and that it follows best practice. For further information, please see the School's [Safeguarding policy](#).