



Recruitment Policy & Procedure

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Document Control

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The electronic version is the definitive version of this document.

The content of this procedure may be subject to revision from time to time following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

Version Changes

Version	Page Number	Details of Change	Agreed By	Date
1.0	5	In bullet point 3.5 the following has been added (for clarification): As a minimum this should be competition of the SSS online Safer Recruitment Training including passing the assessment.	SELT	22/02/2022
1.0	9	6.2 Bullet Point 8- Added 'For recruitment costs of over £3,000 a 'value for money' statement is required with each purchase order'.	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	22/07/2022
4.0	All	Terminology Changes Throughout Document ESM to SIO (School Improvement Officer)	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024

Version	Page Number	Details of Change	Agreed By	Date
4.0	All	Where 'school' is referenced, 'department' or 'Trust' has also been added to ensure the procedures are used for the whole Trust.	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024
4.0	5	3.1- Additional text added- "The entire recruitment process requires oversight by a team member who holds current Safer Recruitment training".	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024
4.0	7	5.2 bullet point 4- Additional text added- and the panel contains at least one experienced member who can ensure a fair recruitment process.	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024
4.0	8	6.1- bullet point 2- Wording changed from "The approver will vary depending on whether the role is a like for like replacement, or a new role" to "All approvals are provided by CFO".	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024
4.0	10	7- bullet point 3- examples added- "e.g. a remote interview, IT equipment, visually accessible materials, adjusted timings"	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024
4.0	13	8.2- bullet point 2- Text added after google; 'as the first source to check' and wording added after to say 'Then, potentially, also:'. The reference to Twitter has been updated to the correct name of 'X'.	SELT/JCC/Board of Directors	18/10/2024

1. Vision and Values

- 1.1. Plymouth CAST is a multi-academy trust of Catholic schools which is part of the mission of the Catholic Church dedicated to human flourishing and the building of a kingdom of peace, truth and justice. The Trust is to be conducted in all aspects in accordance with canon law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and at all times to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1.2. Our vision and values are derived from our identity as a Catholic Trust. Central to our vision is the dignity of the human person, especially the most vulnerable. Our academies are dedicated to providing an education and formation where all our pupils and young people flourish in a safe, nurturing, enriching environment. All governors in our academies are expected to be familiar with the vision, mission, values and principles of the Trust and not in any way to undermine them. They should support and promote the vision and conduct themselves at all times in school and on school business according to the vision and principles of the Trust.
- 1.3. Plymouth CAST expects all its employees to recognise their obligations to each school within the Multi-Academy Trust, the public, pupils and other employees and to provide consistently high standards of education and performance at all times and in accordance with Plymouth CAST's vision, mission and principles.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy is designed to clarify the expectations for safer recruitment and selection within Plymouth CAST. It outlines our recruitment procedure and is in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', the DfE statutory guidance on safeguarding and must be read in conjunction with the Trust's Safeguarding policy.
- 2.2. Through this policy, the trust aims to embed safer recruitment practices and procedures to ensure a robust safeguarding culture within the Trust.
- 2.3. The safe recruitment of staff within the Trust is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Plymouth CAST is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils in its care. As an employer, the Trust expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This policy reflects the requirements expected of safer recruitment practice.
- 2.4. Plymouth CAST believes that our employees are at the heart of everything that we do and are a key component to our success. A consistent and fair approach to recruitment processes ensures that we attract, appoint and retain those who possess the necessary skills and attributes to fulfil our aims and support our values.
- 2.5. This policy details the key principles to be followed in relation to recruitment and selection and the responsibilities in all of those involved.

- 2.6. Plymouth CAST recognises its responsibilities to provide job opportunities to internal and external candidates in a fair, consistent and equitable basis. All appointments will be made on merit and the recruitment and selection process is designed to ensure that the best person for the job is appointed.
- 2.7. The aims of this policy are to;
- Ensure that the best possible staff are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the role.
 - Ensure the recruitment of all staff is conducted in a fair, effective and economic manner.
 - Ensure applicants are not treated unfairly on any grounds in accordance with the Equality Act.
 - Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
 - Ensure that the Trust meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

3. General Principles

- 3.1. Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy. The entire recruitment process requires oversight by a team member who holds current Safer Recruitment training.
- 3.2. Those who are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process will demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently, and fairly with all internal and external applicants.
- 3.3. Panel members should seek to appoint the best applicant for the role at all times based on the applicant's abilities, qualifications and experience measured against the job description and person specification.
- 3.4. Recruitment and selection of staff should be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.
- 3.5. Selection will be carried out by a panel with at least two members. At least one panel member will have received appropriate training on the recruitment and selection process as recommended by the DfE. As a minimum this should be a competition of the SSS online Safer Recruitment Training including passing the assessment.

- 3.6. Selection will be based on a minimum of a completed application form, shortlisting and interview. In the case of Teaching staff, whenever possible, it will involve the teaching of a class.
- 3.7. If a member of the recruiting panel has a close personal relationship with the applicant, they must declare this as soon as it is known and avoid involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process where possible.
- 3.8. All applicants should receive full details of the vacancy including the job description.
- 3.9. The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process, if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability. This applies to the entire recruitment process, from advertisement to appointment.
- 3.10. Seek support and guidance from HR / school business managers as appropriate. Any significant deviation or variations in practice must be discussed with HR to ensure that actions comply with the relevant legislation, to minimise any potential risk to Plymouth CAST.

4. Equal Opportunities

- 4.1. The Trust is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair. Recruitment and selection procedures should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against.
- 4.2. A recruitment monitoring form is issued with the application form so we can obtain information and where necessary report on the range of applicants we receive. This form is not mandatory.
- 4.3. The recruitment and selection policy must always be applied fairly and in accordance with employment law and the Plymouth CAST Equal Opportunities Policy including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants.
- 4.4. Advertisements for vacancies will not include wording that stereotypes in any way or discourages groups of people from applying. Advertisements will be placed where they can reach a wide and diverse pool of potential candidates. The exception to this will be for the recruitment to “protected posts” such as a Head teacher/Executive Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher and Assistant Head teacher, where there is a requirement to be a practising catholic. Please see appendix 2 for further guidance.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. Chief Executive Officer

- The CEO will work with the Board to ensure that they meet their statutory responsibilities with regards to recruitment, including the development, dissemination, and implementation of this policy.
- The CEO will use the Trust structure to maximise the procurement of strategic resources and expertise, such as training, for onward deployment across the Trust.
- The CEO will intervene where it is apparent that a school is not implementing this policy effectively, or where there are clear breaches of the policy that could reflect poorly on the reputation of the Trust.
- The CEO will develop and promote improvement strategies to raise recruitment standards throughout Plymouth CAST.
- The CEO will ensure that recruitment reporting accountabilities are clearly defined and communicated.

5.2. Line Managers

- Line Managers are responsible for ensuring the recruitment and selection of staff is compliant with the provisions of this policy.
- Line Managers are responsible for ensuring the appropriate authorisation to recruit has been obtained.
- Line managers will ensure the most cost-effective use is made of resources in the recruitment and selection process.
- Line Managers are responsible for ensuring at least one member of the panel has received safer recruitment training and the panel contains at least one experienced member who can ensure a fair recruitment process.
- Line Managers will ensure their School/department operates a safe recruitment procedure and ensures all appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers before they commence employment and that they are recorded on the Single Central Register.
- Line Managers will ensure that the requisite training in relation to safer recruitment, including during inductions, is delivered to staff in a timely manner.

5.3. HR and School Business Managers

- Are responsible for advising managers on the application of this policy.

6. The Recruitment Procedure

6.1. Staff authorisation process

- Appointing managers should complete the appropriate staff authorisation request form with the support of their SBM/SIO where appropriate, ensuring there is sufficient information about budgetary provisions for the role, including details about any external funding.
- All approvals are provided by the CFO.
- The approver will carry out the following:
 - Seek to understand the reason behind the request i.e., is the current postholder leaving.
 - Ascertain that the post is actually required for the School/Trust to continue to deliver the educational and student care services required.
 - Be confident that the post cannot be filled by rearranging existing staff members, where such an arrangement does not cause undue strain on any pupil or employee.
- If approved, appointing managers may proceed with advertising the post. If declined, it will be for the appointing manager with the support of their SBM/SIO to come up with alternative solutions.

6.2. Job description, Person Specification and Advertisement

- To ensure equal opportunities, the School/department will advertise all vacant posts to encourage a wide field of candidates where possible. As a minimum, vacancies should be advertised on the Plymouth CAST website and circulated to the Trust. Where there is a reasonable expectation there are sufficient qualified internal candidates, or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement only may be considered appropriate. Senior posts will be advertised more widely and include national platforms.
- Only in extenuating circumstances may a decision be made to waive the need to advertise; guidance should be sought from HR in such circumstances.
- Headteachers/line managers should ensure Plymouth CAST job descriptions, person specification and advertisements are used for all vacancies and that they are accurate and fit for purpose.
- Adverts should be written in Plain English, based on the information contained within the job description and person specification. This will ensure candidates can make informed decisions around their suitability for the post.

- Where there is a need for a new job description and person specification i.e., in the event of a hybrid role, advice should be sought from HR.
- It is best practice to advertise vacancies with the shortlisting and interview dates.
- Vacancies should be advertised using the most appropriate and cost-effective means in order to maximise the number of suitable candidates.
- For recruitment costs of over £3,000 a 'value for money' statement is required with each purchase order.
- All adverts will include a clear statement about safeguarding checks and our commitment to equal opportunities.

6.3. Application form

- Appointing managers should ensure the Plymouth CAST application packs are used to obtain the core data from all applicants. The application pack contains the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 disclosure form which should be completed by the candidate at the application stage.
- The application pack can include:
 - A copy of the advertisement
 - Job description and person specification
 - A brief outline of the school, it's values and aims.
 - An application form.
- To ensure equal opportunities the Trust does not accept CV's, a Standard Application form must be used. In the event a CV is submitted in application for a role, the candidate should be asked to complete a Plymouth CAST application form, otherwise they cannot be considered for the vacancy.
- If an application form is returned without a signature, this must be obtained at the point of interview.

6.4. Shortlisting

- Recruitment and selection must follow an evidenced based process. Candidates should be assessed against an agreed criterion based on relevant knowledge, skills, competencies, experience and qualifications. Plymouth CAST shortlisting matrices should be used.

- The Equal Opportunities Monitoring form and Self Disclosure form must be removed prior to any shortlisting taking place. It is discriminatory to use any self-disclosed information for shortlisting. Once shortlisting has taken place, the disclosed information may then be considered.
- Application forms must be anonymised before shortlisting.
- There should be a minimum of two people on a recruiting panel, and a balance of gender where possible.
- No-one should be shortlisted who does not, as a minimum, meet the defined essential criteria within the person specification. Location should not be taken into consideration when shortlisting.
- Application forms should be scrutinised by the recruiting panel identifying any gaps in employment that have not been accounted for on the application form. Where an applicant is shortlisted, any gaps will be discussed at interview.
- Shortlisted candidates must be invited to interview either by letter or email. Any invites made over the phone, should be followed up in writing.
- Shortlisted candidates can be asked to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status, by asking them to produce documentation on the day of their interview. If the original documents are not available, a certified copy will be required. Where applicants have obtained qualifications abroad, a certified comparability check will be required.
- References for shortlisted candidates should be requested after shortlisting, except where the applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such circumstances, this reference will be taken up immediately after the interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.

7. Interviews

- When inviting a candidate to interview they must be informed of:
 - The date, time, location, and approximate length of interview.
 - Details of the interview process i.e., competency-based questions or any other selection methods they may need to prepare for.
 - Who to contact if further information on recruitment arrangements is required, or if any specific requirements are needed to enable them to attend their interview, e.g. a remote interview, IT equipment, visually accessible materials, adjusted timings.

- Candidates should be asked to provide:
 - Proof of identity
 - Proof of qualifications
 - Eligibility to work in the UK.
- Interviews are an opportunity to assess each candidate in line with the requirements of the role, their suitability to work with children and young people and their ability to support the Trust's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Interviews should be conducted by the same shortlisting panel, unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent this.
- The selection process will always include a face to face interview (video calls can be used in extenuating circumstances), even if there is just one candidate. For Senior posts it is encouraged that there are more than one candidate to interview. Other selection methods and processes can be used, as long as they are specific and relevant to the job role and can be fairly assessed as part of the selection criteria.
- Panel members should provide candidates with the opportunity to declare anything in light of the requirement for an enhanced DBS check. They must also ensure that care is taken to avoid any questions that could be deemed as discriminatory. These would include questions relating to gender, ethnic origin, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation etc.
- Assessments of candidate's application forms, interviews and/or other selection methods must be documented and stored by either the School or Plymouth CAST HR if it is a Head Office vacancy. For unsuccessful candidates these should be retained for six months, after which they should be confidentially destroyed. For successful candidates these documents should be stored within their personnel file.
- Where there are any concerns about an element of an application, these will be discussed during the candidate's interview, i.e., any unexplained gaps in employment history. Where appropriate evidence/explanations are given, these will be recorded in writing. Discussing areas of concern will not be limiting to the selection of a candidate unless the evidence provided does not provide appropriate reassurance. Where this is the case, a candidate will no longer be considered.

8. Pre-employment checks

8.1. Provisional offer of employment

- Provisional offer letters of employment will be issued by HR, after receiving the appropriate instruction from the School/Department via the online starter form.
- A number of checks will need to be undertaken before confirming an offer of employment. An offer of employment to the successful candidate(s) will be conditional upon:
 - Verification of the candidate's identity using photographic ID and proof of address.
 - Verification of eligibility to work in the UK (right to work; passport, NI).
 - Further checks for those living or working outside the UK which could include, where applicable, overseas criminal record checks. For Teaching positions, obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating body in the country in which the applicant has worked. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK advice should be sought from the GOV.UK website.
 - Pre-employment health questionnaire.
 - Receipt of two satisfactory references, one of which should be from the current or most recent employer. For protected posts, there is a requirement to obtain a third reference, which should come from the candidate's Parish Priest.
 - The required DBS check for the role.
 - Verification of qualifications and professional membership if required.
 - For teaching employees:
 - Verification of professional status of Teachers where required (QTS status, NPQH etc)
 - Disqualification from childcare where relevant (self-declaration form)
 - Prohibition from teaching check
 - A section 128 check where applicable.
- Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or by other means (e.g., marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to bring documentary evidence of the change.
- All checks will be documented and retained on the personnel file and recorded on the relevant central record database (SCR).

- Any unsatisfactory pre-employment checks or discrepancies will be followed up by the line manager.

8.2. Digital footprints

- Plymouth CAST are committed to safeguarding the children and young people in our care as a top priority. Therefore, where appropriate a potential candidate's social media presence or other online activity can be checked prior to appointment, with records made of any offensive or inappropriate material.
- The process for checking a candidate's digital footprint can include:
 - Google - as the first source to check.
 - Then, potentially, also:
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - LinkedIn
 - X(previously known as Twitter)
 - YouTube

8.3. References

- Where possible references will be taken up before the interview using the Plymouth CAST reference request templates.
- The school/Trust will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or open references of testimonials. The Trust will not accept references from relatives of the applicant or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend.
- References will be compared to the application form to ensure that the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant and/or the referee before any appointment can be confirmed.
- Without exception, references must be taken up before the candidate can commence employment. This includes volunteers.
- Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.
- Advice can be sought from HR where references obtained after an interview for a preferred candidate provide any areas of concern.

- Employees are entitled to see and receive, if requested, copies of their employment references.
- Any concerns raised through contact with referees will be put to the candidate. Records of these conversations will be made.
- For candidates who have had a considerable time out of employment or for young persons with no employment history, please seek advice from HR with regards to references.

8.4. **Pre-employment health check**

- The Trust is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.
- All applicants who have received an offer of employment must complete the Plymouth CAST Pre-employment health questionnaire. The line manager will review the information provided to determine if a referral to Occupational Health is required.
- An offer of employment should not be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining professional medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment where possible.

8.5. **Disclosure and Barring Service Check – DBS (including regulated activity)**

- Appendix 1 provides a flow-chart of DBS criminal record checks and barred list checks.
- There are three types of DBS check Standard, Enhanced and Enhanced with barred list check.
 - Standard: provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer.
 - Enhanced: provides the same information as a standard check, plus any approved information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and ought to be disclosed.
 - Enhanced with barred list: where people are working, or seeking to work in regulated activity with children, this allows an additional check to be made as to whether the person appears on the children's barred list.
- Such checks should be made via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of staff, proprietors and volunteers across the Trust workforce.

- For the purpose of this policy and in accordance with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance a person will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they:
 - will be responsible, on a regular basis (in a school or college) for teaching, training instructing, caring for or supervising children; or
 - will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
 - engage in intimate or personal care, or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

- For staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate. For staff engaging in regulated activity an Enhanced check with barred list check must be undertaken.

- An enhanced disclosure check 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 reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DBS.

- An enhanced disclosure may contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

- Candidates recently returning from overseas applicants will be asked to provide further information, including the equivalent of an enhanced DBS disclosure, from the relevant jurisdiction(s).

- For individuals who have applied to the DBS update service, the School/department will obtain the original certificate and check it matches the individual’s identity. They will carry out an online check which will confirm if there have been any changes since the certificate was issued. If the check indicates there has been a change, a new certificate will be required. <https://secure.crbonline.gov.uk/crsc/check?execution=e1s1>

- Where a School or the Trust requires an individual to commence employment in regulated activity before a DBS certificate is available, they must ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other pre-employment checks, including a separate barred list check, have

been completed. A risk assessment should also be undertaken by the School/Trust. The risk assessment will be reviewed every two weeks and a note added to the single central record.

- Copies of DBS certificates do not need to be retained.
- In the event of an individual living or having lived outside the UK for three months or more in the last five years, a DBS check is not considered sufficient as this would not cover offences committed abroad, only those on the UK Police National Computer. The application process for criminal records checks or 'Certificates of Good Character' for someone from overseas varies from country to country. The individual will need to apply in the country or to the relevant embassy in the UK.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>
- If appointing managers have concerns about information contained on a candidate's DBS, they should refer to HR in the first instance.

8.6. Section 128

- A section 128 check should be carried out for employees considered to be in a management position. For the purpose of a 128 check the following staff are considered to be in management positions:
 - Plymouth CAST Central leadership team.
 - Trustees.
 - Headteachers/Executive Headteachers.
 - All staff on the senior leadership team within Schools (including any non-teaching).
 - Teaching positions with departmental headship.
 - Proprietors.
 - Governors.
- Schools should carry out their own Section 128 staff using their individual login information and visiting <https://teacherservices.education.gov.uk> HR will conduct Section 128 checks for the central leadership team.
- A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. If an individual has a Section 128 sanction against them, this should be referred to HR.

9. Contractors and agency staff

- 9.1. Contractors and agency staff engaged by the school/Trust must complete the same pre-employment checks as others employed within the School/Trust. The

school/Trust requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the contractor can commence work at the School/Trust.

- 9.2. Such confirmation must be obtained in writing from the agency/third party to confirm all necessary DBS and pre-employment checks have been completed.
- 9.3. The school/Trust/department must obtain confirmation that the individual who presents for work is the same person for whom the checks have been completed. A copy of photographic identification would be appropriate.

10. Volunteers

- 10.1. Where a volunteer is recruited to engage in work which is not considered to be 'regulated activity' (see section 7.5.3), an enhanced DBS certificate will be obtained.
- 10.2. Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis teach or look after children regularly, or provide personal care on a one-off basis, will be in regulated activity. The school/Trust must obtain an enhanced DBS certificate including a barred list check.
- 10.3. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not had or provided a DBS certificate be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

11. Trainee/Student Teachers

- 11.1. Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by the school, they must ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. As trainee Teachers are likely to be engaged in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS including barred list check must be obtained.
- 11.2. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks. Schools should obtain written confirmation from the provider that it has carried out all pre-appointment checks that we would otherwise be required to perform, and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.
- 11.3. There is no requirement for the school to record details of fee-funded trainees on the single central record.

12. Recruitment to reserved posts.

- 12.1. Reserved posts include the following roles:
 - CEO
 - Executive Headteacher
 - Headteacher
 - Deputy Headteacher
 - Assistant Headteacher
 - Head of School

- RE Lead

12.2. Please refer to Appendix 2 for the policy on the appointment to reserved posts.

13. Single Central Record

13.1. In line with DfE requirements the School and Trust will keep and maintain a Single Central Record (SCR).

13.2. Please refer to the Plymouth CAST guidance document in relation to Single Central Records and the requirements of capturing information obtained as a result of the recruitment process.

14. Recruitment of ex-offenders

14.1. The Trust will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed.

- Appointment decisions should be made on the basis of merit and ability, taking into consideration other pre-employment checks undertaken.
- If an individual has a criminal record this will not automatically bar them from employment within the Trust. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective 'Assessment criteria' set out below.

14.2. All applicants are required to disclose all spent convictions and cautions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975 unless it is a 'protected' conviction/caution under the amendments made to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions) Order 1975 (in 2013) and, therefore, not subject to disclosure. Guidance on the filtering of 'protected' convictions and cautions can be accessed on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

14.3. Assessment criteria

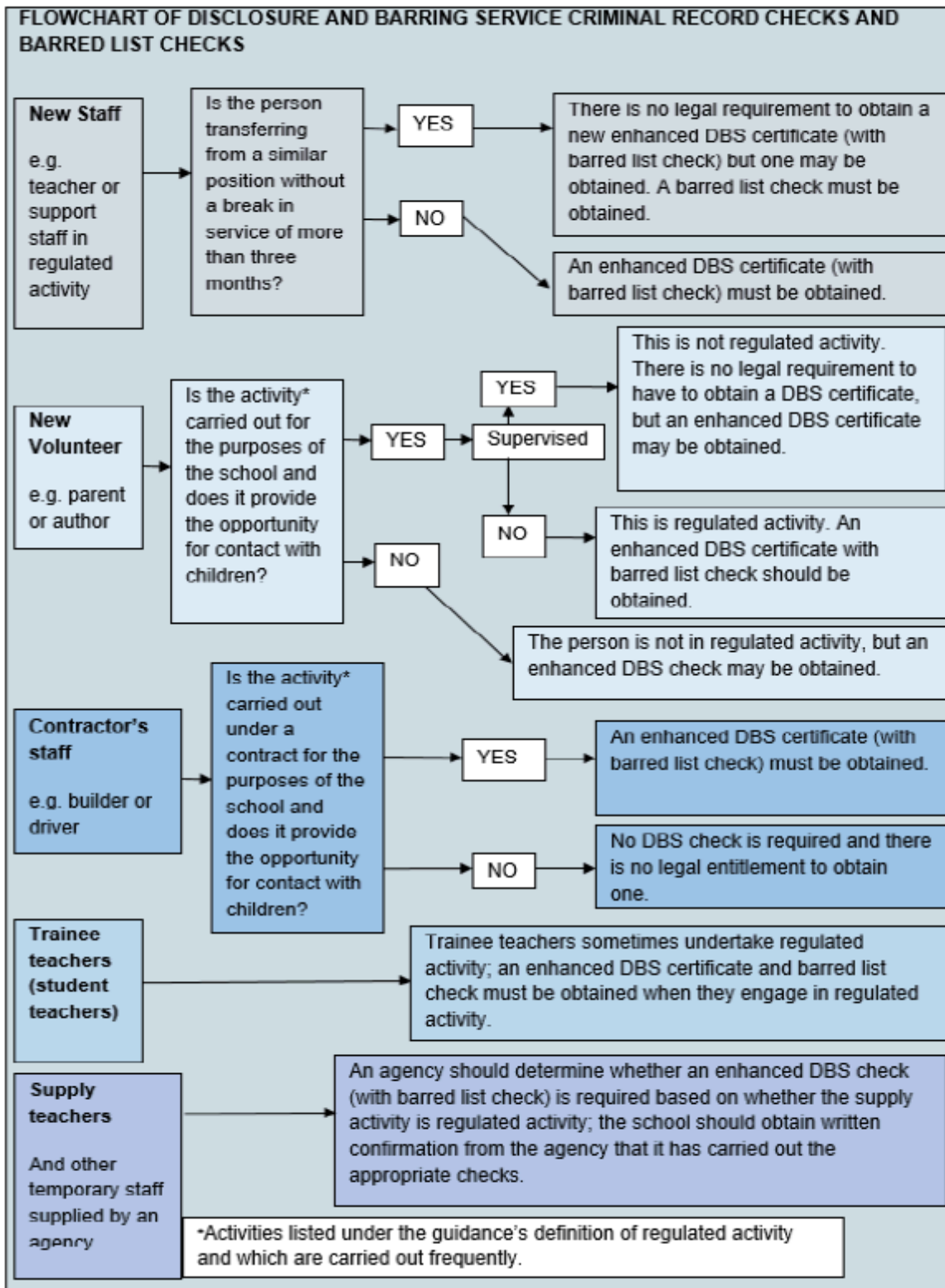
- If relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School/Trust will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:
 - Whether the conviction 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.

- A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an applicant being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, it may lead to dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.
- 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/Trust will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the headteacher/line manager before a position is offered. Such convictions will also be discussed with the applicant during an interview.
- It is unlawful for the Trust to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is also a criminal offence for an individual who is barred from working with children to attempt to apply for a position at a School. The police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service should be contacted if you;
 - Receive an application from a barred person;
 - If you are provided with false information in, or in support of an application or
 - If you have serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.
- If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/she can do so by contacting the DBS direct.

15. Decision making/offer of employment.

- 15.1. Plymouth CAST are committed to ensuring the best individuals are recruited to work across the Trust. Applicants will therefore be carefully checked against the selection criteria and all essential criteria from the person specification, ensuring these have been met.
- 15.2. In line with safeguarding obligations, appointing managers will carefully consider all of the information that has been obtained during the recruitment process, including live disciplinary actions/allegations.
- 15.3. If an offer of employment is to be made, the successful candidate should be contacted by phone to determine if they are interested in the offer of employment.
- 15.4. If the individual accepts the offer of employment, HR should be notified of this so that a contract of employment can be provided.

Appendix 1 – Flowchart for DBS checks and barred list checks





Policy for the recruitment to reserved posts

1. Introduction

As outlined in the Bishop's Memorandum at appendix 1 the preservation and development of the quality and distinctive nature of Catholic schools depends on the faith, practice and commitment of the teachers in the schools, working with their Governing Board. The Catholic Church understands the vocation of a teacher as a form of ministry within the Church.¹ All teachers in Catholic schools are employed to participate in the Church's teaching office, exercising this ministry in accordance with the Church's teachings. This requires teachers to be witnesses in word and deed to the Divine Teacher, Jesus Christ.²

To find Catholic teachers who combine personal conviction and practice of the faith with the required professional qualifications and experience, especially in specialist subjects, is always a high priority.

The recognition of the role that Catholic teachers play stands alongside the value we place on teachers of other Christian denominations, other Faiths and other teachers who contribute to and support the Catholic ethos in our schools. We recognise the great contribution they make in helping to ensure that our pupils are equipped to communicate with and participate in contemporary society.

To meet these expectations and in line with ss.60 and 124A School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ["SSFA"], the Trust is able to actively discriminate in favour of Catholics for all types of teaching posts. The Bishop's Memorandum states that as a minimum requirement the Bishops expect that the posts of Head Teacher or Principal, Deputy Head Teacher or Deputy Principal and Head or Co-ordinator of Religious Education are to be filled by practicing Catholics.³ These posts also include those with alternative titles, including for example Executive Head, Assistant Head, Head of School, or any other post that has responsibility for leading a school or acting as deputy for the school leader. The Chief Executive Officer of the Trust is also covered by these arrangements and these posts are referred to as 'reserved posts'

2. Recruitment to 'reserved posts'

The appointment to reserved posts is probably the most important corporate act the Board of Directors through their designated officers will undertake. This policy outlines the requirements which inform the detailed operational process,

¹ Gravissimum Educationis, 8

² Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith, 32

³ For the definition of "practising Catholic" please refer to appendix 2.

ensuring that the recruitment and appointment process operates in accordance with the Church and the Bishop's expectations.

The Bishop's Memorandum at Appendix 1 outlines the requirements of the Trust in respect of the appointment process and In accordance with the Bishop's expectations the Diocesan Education Service **MUST** be involved at all stages of the process and should be given **advisory rights** by the designated officers.

Directors, specifically Foundation Directors, are the stewards of the Trust and the school's Catholic character and are the Bishop's representative. They are therefore accountable to the Church and the Bishop for decisions that are made that could be deemed contrary to either's wishes or expectations. To fulfil this responsibility therefore they have a duty to ensure that they appoint those who will not only excel in their professional ability but who will also enhance the distinctive nature of the Catholic school, the standards and quality of Religious Education and the provision of Prayer and Worship. It is because of this reason that the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in their Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers (**Appendix 1**) collectively insist that the posts of Head Teacher, Deputy and Head or RE is reserved for a "Practising Catholic." (**Appendix 2**). To support the appointment process the Trust must seek a reference from a priest/deacon confirming that any candidate is a practising Catholic.

In the event of the Trust through its designated officers appointing a non-Catholic or non-practising Catholic to a reserved post without the approval of the Bishop, the Bishop may exercise his right to remove the foundation governors.



APPENDIX 1

Memorandum on Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools

The Bishops' Memorandum sets out the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales' expectations about the appointment of staff in Catholic schools.

Throughout this document the term 'Catholic school' means all Catholic schools and colleges, including schools in the trusteeship of a religious order. This includes maintained schools, academies in England, independent schools, sixth form colleges and non-maintained special schools.

Purpose of the Guidance

Its purpose is to help and guide Governing Bodies⁴ to fulfil their responsibilities, including statutory responsibilities, to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the school in relation to the appointment of staff.

The Governing Bodies are the employers of the staff, to whom they should give clear guidelines about the Catholic character of education and life in their school.

As employers the Governing Body must ensure that the appropriate contract of employment and associated documentation, as published by the Catholic Education Service ("CES"), is issued. It is because the contracts reflect the Bishops' requirements that the Catholic character of schools is preserved and developed that the Bishops expect all schools to use CES model contracts of employment for their staff. The CES model contracts ensure, in the context of the role within the school which the employee is employed to perform, the preservation, maintenance and development of the Catholic character of the school.

Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools

The preservation and development of the quality and distinctive nature of Catholic schools depends on the faith, practice and commitment of the teachers in the schools,

⁴ In Catholic voluntary aided schools, non-maintained special schools and Catholic sixth form colleges the responsibilities of the employer rest with the governing body. In Catholic voluntary academies the responsibilities of the employer rest with the board of directors of the academy trust company, and in other independent schools with the proprietor. For ease of reference the term "Governing Body" is used throughout this Memorandum to denote the entity or entities within the school or academy trust company that exercises the functions of the employer under the appropriate constitutional arrangements.

working with their Governing Body. The Catholic Church understands the vocation of a teacher as a form of ministry within the Church.⁵ All teachers in Catholic schools are employed to participate in the Church's teaching office, exercising this ministry in accordance with the Church's teachings. This requires teachers to be witnesses in word and deed to the Divine Teacher, Jesus Christ.⁶

To find Catholic teachers who combine personal conviction and practice of the faith with the required professional qualifications and experience, especially in specialist subjects, is always a high priority.

The recognition of the role that Catholic teachers play stands alongside the value we place on teachers of other Christian denominations, other Faiths and other teachers who contribute to and support the Catholic ethos in our schools. We recognise the great contribution they make in helping to ensure that our pupils are equipped to communicate with and participate in contemporary society.

Governing Bodies, as the employers of staff, have a duty to ensure that the Catholic character of the school is maintained and developed. The Bishops' expect that Governing Bodies will employ Catholic teachers who combine personal conviction and practice of the faith with the required professional qualifications and experience, in order to ensure this.

Appointment of Leaders in Catholic Schools

As a minimum requirement the Bishops expect that the posts of Head Teacher or Principal, Deputy Head Teacher or Deputy Principal and Head or Co-ordinator of Religious Education are to be filled by practicing Catholics.⁷

Whilst these posts have traditionally been used in schools, other senior leadership posts, and terminology, have come about in practice, often as a result of collaborative working arrangements between schools. Terms which are being used more frequently, and which are not defined in legislation, include: Executive Head Teacher, Associate Head Teacher and Head of School. The principle to be applied is that this minimum requirement will apply to the most senior leadership post i.e. the person with overall responsibility for the day to day management of the school, and the person who is the second most senior person in the leadership team.

The Bishops also expect that certain posts that directly affect the Catholic Mission of the school are to be filled by practising Catholics. This would include, for instance, the Chief Executive or equivalent of a Multi Academy Trust Company. Lay Chaplains also come within this description, but schools must in any case follow any specific procedures set down by their diocese before the appointment of any Chaplain.

Other Leadership posts that directly affect the Catholic Mission of the school should, wherever possible, be staffed by skilled practitioners who are committed Catholics.

⁵ Gravissimum Educationis, 8

⁶ Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith, 32

⁷ For the definition of "practising Catholic" please refer to guidance from your diocese.

All staff must respect and support the aims and objectives of a Catholic school.

Appointment of Leaders of Religious Education

Religious education is the core subject in every Catholic school and informs every aspect of the curriculum.

Primary: The Governing Body must ensure that Religious Education is properly organised, coordinated, taught and resourced. The Governing Body must ensure that the school has a Coordinator of RE and that the Co-ordinator should have at least parity in status and remuneration with those of the other core curriculum areas.

Secondary: The Religious Education department in our secondary schools is of particular importance and should have at least parity of status and resourcing with any other core subject department. Governing Bodies are urged to give the highest possible status to the department and to the person leading that department, and this should be reflected in their status and remuneration.

Representation at Short Listing and Interview

Interview procedures approved by Governing Bodies for teacher recruitment must be open to scrutiny. They must be clear, objective and transparent.

The Diocesan Bishop is entitled to be represented at all proceedings relating to the appointment of senior leaders and teachers of religious education.

Governing Bodies must facilitate the attendance of the Diocesan Schools Commissioner (or his or her nominee), either by affording them advisory rights or otherwise. These may be in relation to all appointments at the school or, more usually, to the appointment of the senior posts to which the requirement to be a practising Catholic are applied.

Governing Bodies must give sufficient advanced notification to the Diocesan Schools Commissioner of a vacancy for any senior post to which the requirement to be a practising Catholic is applied before taking any action, including appointing an acting Head Teacher or Principal, acting Deputy Head Teacher or Deputy Principal, or advertising the vacancy. It is particularly important to agree all meeting and interview dates with the Diocese in advance, to allow Diocesan Officers to be involved from the beginning of the process, including drawing up job descriptions and person specifications.

Furthermore, a Diocesan representative may be invited whenever senior posts with pastoral responsibilities are being considered.

For appointments to which the requirement to be a practising Catholic are applied, the Governing Body will meet to draw up a shortlist of candidates, conduct interviews and make an appointment.

The Governing Body may appoint a selection panel to undertake these functions. These appointments may need ratification by the full Governing Body.

In addition, the appropriate Diocesan Officer must always be invited to the interview of Heads of Religious Education and School Chaplains.

Delegation of Power of Appointment

When the Governing Body delegates its power and right of appointment of staff to a committee and/or to the Head Teacher or Principal, it is essential that the terms of reference for such delegation are made explicit.

Induction and Continuing Professional Development

The Governing Body should ensure an appropriate induction programme, emphasising the distinctive nature of Catholic education, is in place and that continuing professional development for all staff helps to sustain this understanding.

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon Chairman, Department for Catholic Education and Formation (11th September 2014)

Appendix 2

DEFINITION OF A 'PRACTISING CATHOLIC'

The Diocese of Plymouth's definition of what it means to be 'practising Catholic' for recruitment purposes

'a person is a practising Catholic if they live according to the teaching of the Catholic church, keeping the Church's precept of attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, witnessing by their lives to the reality of Christ's presence amongst us, when they can, and ensuring there is no dichotomy between what they profess and how they live. In offering this definition we recognise that we are all sinners....'