Recruitment Policy

Unity
Trust
Courage
Curiosity
Respect
Kindness

A community for learning. Raising expectations. Fulfilling high standards.

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Headteacher: **Mrs Gemma Hillier**

Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School

Recruitment Policy

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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. Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School (WECCS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. WECCS is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment for all its members of staff. WECCS recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The school recognises the value of a diverse workforce and is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within it is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. Aims

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability of the person
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any ground including age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation as outlined in the **Equality Act 2010**
- 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** and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- To ensure that WECCS meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
- To ensure that all employment checks are recorded clearly on the school's electronic Single Central Record (SCR).

3. Single Central Record of Recruiting Vetting Checks

In line with DfE requirements, WECCS will keep and maintain a single central record. The SCR will list all staff who are employed at the school, including casual staff, supply agency staff whether employed directly or through an agency, proprietors and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not employed by the school e.g. sports coaches, after school care providers. The SCR will indicate whether the

required pre-employment checks have been completed, what documents have been checked, when and by whom. The SCR will also clearly show which members of staff are working in the Early Years setting.
Staff members have a duty through their contract to disclose immediately during their employment if they are:

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

Staff who work with Early Years will be asked on an annual basis to confirm that they have nothing to disclose, and this will be recorded on the SCR.

4. Pre-Employment Checks

WECCS 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 a formal interview, employment with the school will be conditional on the following:

- an identity check
- a barred list check
- an enhanced DBS check
- a prohibition from teaching check (Must be made for anyone undertaking 'teaching work', with or without Qualified Teaching Status)
- a check of professional qualifications and QTS where appropriate
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK which could include where applicable overseas criminal record checks and for those seeking teaching positions, obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating body in the country in which the applicant has worked.
- Receipt of at least two references which are satisfactory to the school, one of which will be from the applicant's most recent employer
- a separate satisfactory barred list check will be undertaken in the event that an enhanced disclosure is not received in advance of starting employment in the regulated activity, or where a 'portable' disclosure is used
- The signed declaration to satisfy the **Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009** where working in relevant Childcare Provision

- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness to ensure the duties of the post can be carried out satisfactorily, fully taking into account the **Equality Act 2010** where reasonable adjustments may be made to fulfil the role effectively

In addition to the checks set out above, the school reserves the right to obtain such formal or informal background information about an applicant as is reasonable in the circumstances to determine whether they are suitable to work at the school. This may include internet and social media searches.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

- Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.
- At least one member of every recruitment panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training.
- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other senior managers involved in the recruitment process to ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and carries out all appropriate checks on all staff, work experience students and volunteers who work at WECCS.
- It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies who provide services to WECCS to comply with safer recruitment practices.
- It is the responsibility of the school's Bursar, in conjunction with the Headteacher, to ensure all pre-employment checks are complete before employment begins and that they are recorded on the SCR.

6. Verification of Identity & Address

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, current address and qualifications:

- Passport or photo-card driving licence providing photographic identity
- Two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address
- Original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) where that name differs from that shown on the ID provided, they will be required to bring documentary evidence of the change.

WECCS asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with the Guidance. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the school may verify the identity, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history, of all applicants. WECCS does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

The Procedure

7. Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, WECCS will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. Normally this will entail an advertisement on the school's website and/or via a relevant recruitment website/publication. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

8. Applications

Applicants will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for. All applicants for employment will be required to complete a confidential application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. The school does not accept a *curriculum vitae* in place of an application form.
The applicant may then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experiences will be discussed in more detail.

9. Shortlisted Candidates

WECCS requires applicants to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on the application form. Where any applicant is shortlisted, any gaps will also be discussed at interview.
Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in an application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected. Where false information is provided in support of an application to work at the school, WECCS is required to report the matter to the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Police and other relevant professional bodies.

10. References

References for shortlisted applicants will be requested immediately after short-listing. The only exception to this is where applicants have indicated on the application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.
All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied.
All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification relevant to the role for which the

applicant had applied. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- The applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance and disciplinary record
- Their relationship to the applicant
- Whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired
- Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people

The school will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or open references of testimonials. WECCS 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. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

11. Medical Fitness

WECCS is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the school, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.
It is the school's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete and sign a self-declaration of medical fitness which forms part of job application procedure. WECCS will arrange for the information contained in the self-declaration to be reviewed. This information will be reviewed against the job description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed timetable, extra-curricular activities, layout of the school etc. If the school's medical advisor has any doubts about an applicant's fitness WECCS will consider reasonable adjustments in consultation with the applicant. WECCS may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.
WECCS is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

12. Disclosure & Barring Service Check

Due to the nature of the work, WECCS applies for an enhanced disclosure check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all members of staff, proprietors and volunteers on entry to the school's workforce. 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 also reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of their inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DBS. An enhanced disclosure may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

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

For any person who has applied to the DBS update service, WECCS will examine the original certificate, check it matches the individual's identity and run an online update check, which will provide information about any changes since the certificate was issued. If the check indicates that there has been a change then the individual must apply for a new certificate.

If there is a delay in receiving an enhanced DBS disclosure before a person starts work in regulated activity, the headteacher may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- after a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person is working in regulated activity and all other relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily
- provided that the DBS application has been made in advance
- with appropriate safeguards taken (for example, Risk Assessment carried out and appropriate supervision put in place)

The Risk Assessment will be reviewed every two weeks and a note added to the SCR. The staff member will be informed of all safeguards put in place.

Schools are not required to retain copies of DBS certificates.

Overseas checks, where appropriate

If a candidate is living, or has lived, outside of the UK for three months or more in the last five years before applying, a DBS check is not considered sufficient to establish suitability to work in a school (because a UK check would not cover offences committed abroad, but only those on the UK Police National Computer). The school will therefore carry out such further checks as are considered appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the DfE. Such checks will be completed before the candidate commences their employment. This applies, where relevant, both to foreign nationals and UK nationals returning from overseas.

Further checks could include, where applicable, overseas criminal record checks and – for those seeking teaching positions – obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating body in the country in

which the applicant has worked.

13. Prohibition Order Check

Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out 'teaching work' in schools, sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting.
Prohibition orders are made by the Secretary of State following consideration by a professional conduct panel convened by the TRA (Teaching Regulation Agency). Pending such consideration, the Secretary of State may issue an interim prohibition order if they consider that it is in the public interest to do so.
The prohibition from teaching check is carried out using the Teacher Services system.
Teaching work is defined in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 to encompass:

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
- delivering lessons to pupils
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
- reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils

"Delivering" includes delivering lessons through distance learning or computer-aided techniques. However, none of these is "teaching work" if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the headteacher.

14. Disqualification - Early Years & Relevant Later Years Provision

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006
The school will make sure that anyone who falls within the relevant categories of staff is made aware of the legislation.
For adults who work in, or are involved in the management of, i) EYFS or ii) out of hours care for children up to the age of 8:

- All present and new staff members who fall within the regulations of relevant childcare provision will be asked to sign a declaration form to confirm that they are not disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.
- An entry of staff working within relevant childcare provision will be made on the SCR, including the date disqualification checks were completed.
- The declaration made will be rechecked annually as part of the staff appraisal procedure and will form part of a staff member's contract, stating that they should inform the school if their circumstances change.

15. Contractors & Agency Staff

Contractors engaged by the school must complete the same checks for their employees that the school is required to complete for its staff. WECCS requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the contractor can commence work at the school.

16. Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

WECCS will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The school makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the setting. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.
All positions within the school are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must therefore declare all previous convictions, including those which would normally be considered "spent", when applying for a position at the school. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to any application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.
It is unlawful for WECCS 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 attempt to apply for a position at the school. WECCS will make a report to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service if:

- it receives an application from a barred person;
- it is provided with false information in, or in support of, an application; or
- it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

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

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence of 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; and

- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any of the following offences:

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

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.
If the post involves some driving responsibility, it is the school's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink-driving within the last ten years.

Assessment procedure

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the school will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the headteacher before a position is offered. Such convictions will also be discussed with the applicant at interview. If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/she can do so by contacting the DBS direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the school will, where practicable, defer a decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

17. Employment Offer

It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred applicant, however, the checks detailed above must all be completed before a person's appointment is confirmed. Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed and received, an offer of employment will be made.

A contract will be issued at the start of employment. All appointments will be subject to a six-month

probationary period. Successful completion of the probationary period is necessary before continuing employment is confirmed.

18. Record Retention / Data Protection

WECCS follows the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the employment practices code.
If an applicant is appointed, WECCS will retain any relevant information provided on their application form, together with any attachments and evidence of the pre-employment checks completed on their personnel file.
If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.
WECCS will store all confidential personnel files in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the school's senior management team.
Personnel files will be kept for six years after the person has left.
WECCS will also ensure that any personnel information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding.

19. Headteacher Recruitment

In maintained schools, it is the legal responsibility of the governing board to select a headteacher. The legal framework regarding the appointment of a headteacher, and the roles and responsibilities of those involved, is stipulated in the requirements of the School Staffing Regulations.

When it is necessary to appoint a Headteacher, the governors of WECCS will follow the guidance within the DfE Recruiting a Headteacher 2017 and the National Governance Association Headteacher Recruitment Toolkit.