

The logo for 'Empowering Futures' features the word 'EMPOWERING' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. Below it, the word 'FUTURES' is written in a smaller, all-caps, black sans-serif font with wide letter spacing.

EMPOWERING
FUTURES

since
2015

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Date Produced: August 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Next Review Date: September 2025

Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is an integral factor of Empowering Futures Alternative Education recruitment process which plays an essential part in creating a safe and happy environment for children, parents, and staff.

This document sets out the duties and responsibilities of all staff at Empowering Futures Alternative Education, in relation to recruiting and vetting staff, contractors or volunteers and for providing a safe learning environment.

The measures described in this policy are applied in relation to everyone who works at Empowering Futures Alternative Education including those who may not have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults because of their job. This includes office staff and workers not on the payroll, e.g., Staff employed by contractors.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education Act 2002
- Equality Act 2010

This policy has due regard to guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2017) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools.'

Safer Recruitment Training

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006) requires that the Provision Manager must have completed Safer Recruitment training, delivered by accredited trainers.

Completed by Rhean White 22/08/2024

Elements of Safer Recruitment

Safer practice in recruitment means applying due diligence to child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults at every stage of the process. This starts with recruitment and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that this makes clear our safeguarding commitment including the following safeguarding statement throughout:

The provision is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all our pupils; this includes a robust recruitment, selection, and induction procedure.

Consistent and thorough procedures for obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating applicant information will be followed. Empowering Futures Alternative Education uses a standard application form for all candidates and does not accept CV's.

The process includes:

- Establishing members of the recruitment panel
- Ensuring the job description refers to the school's safeguarding commitment
- Ensuring the person specification includes specific safeguarding reference about the suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults'
- Careful consideration of applicant information including gaps in (which are investigated and documented, with reasons, in the interview file)
- Ensuring two independent references to respond to the school's safeguarding commitment about the suitability to work with children and young adults
- A face-to-face interview that probes the candidate's suitability to fulfil the essential requirements of the post
- Verifying the applicant's identity, enhanced DBS, academic and vocational qualifications, health and physical capacity, employment history and experience
- Verifying the right to work in the UK and police checks (for overseas' candidates).
- Making further checks should a person have lived or worked outside of the UK.
- Prohibition Register check (for teachers) using the identified portals – currently Teacher Regulations Authority (April 18)

Staff induction records are filed as a permanent record of this including references. These are stored in staff personnel files in accordance with Empowering Futures Alternative Education's Document Retention Policy (School Records Policy) and Data Protection 2018.

DBS Checks

All staff and tutors (including Supply, Students and Volunteers (without barred list) where applicable) are required to have an enhanced DBS certificate. For staff registered with the DBS Update Service, an update check will be performed every year. Where an update check reveals a change of information, a new enhanced DBS check will be required.

If the staff role does not include 'regulated activity', a barred list will not be requested

Regulated activity is defined as

(Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012):

Regulated activity includes:

- a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for (see (c) below) or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children,*
- b) work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers*

We expect all staff to notify the Headteacher of any cautions or convictions accrued whilst in the employment of this school. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Conditional Offer of Employment – Pre-employment Checks

A conditional offer will only be made when the process (listed above) has been followed. In addition;

- (For non-teaching posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

NB: In any case where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, the chair of the interview panel must ensure that it is received, all questions answered and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed.

All checks will be:

- Documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to relevant advice contained in the DBS Code of Practice and our own data protection policy); and
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies.

Post-Appointment – Induction

There is an induction programme for all staff (regardless of previous experience) newly appointed to our provision. This induction period will last no more than 6 months. The purpose of induction is to:

- Provide training and information about policies and procedures
- Support individuals
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff within the provision (Staff Code of Conduct)
- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities during the probation period/induction
- Support line managers and mentors to recognise and address concerns or issues about the new member of staff's ability or suitability and address them effectively

NB – all staff are expected to hold or complete on appointment Level 2 Safeguarding, prevent, behaviour and fire safety training.

See Empowering Futures Alternative Education Induction Policy for more information.

The Single Central Record

We keep a Single Central Record (SCR) as described in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022. The record is checked each term by Senior Management to make sure that all staff and volunteer information is up to date.

The SCR includes all employees, supply staff, relevant consultants those involved in regulated activity, alternative providers, and volunteers. The Single Central Record must indicate whether the following have been completed:

- Identity checks
- Barred list check (as relevant for those engaged in regulated activity)
- DBS certificate (previously an enhanced CRB disclosure)
- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job, e.g., those posts where a person must have QTS
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Checks of permission to work in the United Kingdom
- Further overseas criminal records check where appropriate (see 'Keeping Children Safe in Education March 15 for advice on staff who have lived or worked out the United Kingdom)

Supply/Student Staff

We require supply agencies comply with 'Safer Recruitment' practices and we seek written confirmation from each agency to this effect. We require the DBS certificate reference number for each agency worker in order that this can be recorded on the Single Central Record.

In addition, we seek to verify the identity of each agency worker when they arrive on site.

Volunteers

Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis teach or look after children regularly on a one-off basis in schools and colleges, will be in regulated activity. Empowering Futures Alternative Education will obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (which should include barred list information) for all volunteers and will request at least 2 references for those who are new to working in regulated activity. Existing volunteers in regulated activity will be re-checked even if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information). Empowering Futures Alternative Education may also conduct a repeat DBS check (which should include barred list information) on any such volunteer should they have concerns.

There are certain circumstances where Empowering Futures Alternative Education may obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (not including barred list information), for volunteers who are not engaging in regulated activity (ref [www.gov.uk/DBS workforce guides](http://www.gov.uk/DBS-workforce-guides)). Employers are not legally permitted to request barred list information on a supervised volunteer as they are not considered to be engaged in regulated activity.

Empowering Futures Alternative Education will undertake a risk assessment and use their professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so we will consider:

- the nature of the work with children.
- what Empowering Futures Alternative Education knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents, and other volunteers.
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on suitability.
- whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check; and Details of the risk assessment should be recorded (appendix one).

Contractors

Contractors are identified by the Local Authority through their procurement framework. As contractors are not always required to have DBS checks as part of the recruitment process, both schools ensure, where possible, that any work required is carried out after 2.30pm (end of school day for pupils) or during the school holidays. Where there is an emergency, any contractor will always be fully supervised by the Business Manager.

Where unsafe practice has been identified

Where any misconduct or unsafe practice is identified, then appropriate procedures will be followed (see Allegations against a member of staff policy and Whistleblowing Policy) in addition to the relevant internal reporting expectations.

The Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will also assess the applicant's suitability for positions of trust so that that schools comply fully with the expectations regarding safer recruitment and fair treatment of all applicants. Empowering Futures Alternative Education will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure based on a conviction or other information revealed.

Empowering Futures Alternative Education is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

As part of the recruitment process, paperwork is held with HR that requires completion should a disclosure be made.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all and believe that the right mix of talent, skills and potential ensure that Empowering Futures Alternative Education welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience (as outlined in the person specification)

A disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts, and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent in a sealed envelope marked 'confidential' and addressed to the senior manager (Rhean White). We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process if the candidate is offered the job. The sealed envelope for those not offered the job will remain unopened and will be destroyed.

Unless the nature of the position allows Empowering Futures Alternative Education to ask questions about the applicant's entire criminal record, we will only ask about unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those involved in the recruitment process at Empowering Futures Alternative Education have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.

We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders e.g., the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

Where offences are disclosed, a risk assessment may be required as part of a probationary period.