



Safer Recruitment Statement

Introduction

The Avon Valley School and Performing Arts College is committed to our responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by following the guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)*, together with WSCB and the school's safeguarding policies. We are committed to recruiting candidates who share this commitment to safeguarding.

We therefore apply robust recruitment and selection procedures for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to appoint people with the right skills and experience for the job, and to help deter, reject and/or identify people who are unsuitable for work with children and young people. Safe recruitment processes are followed and all staff recruited to the school will be subject to appropriate identity, qualification and health checks.

Inviting Applications

All recruitment advertisements will include the statement:

'The Avon Valley School is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The above post is subject to a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure Certificate with Barred List check (child) via the Disclosure and Barring Service.'

Prospective applicants will be provided with the following attachments when applying for a position:

- Job description and personal specification
- Safer recruitment statement
- Privacy notice for applicants
- Application form

All prospective applicants must complete, in full, an application form accounting for any gaps in their education or employment history. Candidates submitting an online application form will be asked to sign the form if called for an interview.

A CV will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

The Recruitment Panel

The Selection and Recruitment Panel will consist of a minimum of two interviewers. At least one member of the Selection and Recruitment Panel will have successfully completed Safer Recruitment training.

Short Listing and References

Candidates will be short-listed against the Job Description and Personal Specification for the post.

Social Media/Online Search

As part of our due diligence, Avon Valley School will carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates. Any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, might be explored with the applicant at interview. Any information given will be treated as confidential and will only be used in relation to the post which has been applied for.

References

Where possible, two references, one of which must be from the applicant's current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage is completed so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the selection procedure.

If the candidate is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, a reference will be sought from the most recent employer where the role involved working with children.

References will be requested directly from the referee, and where necessary, the referee will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will never be accepted.

Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people
- The candidate's suitability for the post

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

Criminal Records Self-Declaration Form

An integral part of our selection process is the assessment and testing of an applicant's suitability to work with children.

As part of our duty to safeguard pupils, we need to check whether you are barred from working with children, or whether you have convictions that would make you unsuitable to work with children or in the role you've applied for.

All shortlisted candidates will therefore be asked to complete and sign a criminal records self-declaration form before the interview.

We comply with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) code of practice. Shortlisted candidates are required to declare any relevant convictions, adult cautions or other matters which may affect their suitability to work with children. As a result of amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) in 2013 and 2020, some minor offences are now protected (filtered) and should not be disclosed to potential employers, and employers cannot take these offences into account.

Guidance on whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice website and on the websites of charities NACRO and UNLOCK.

Invitation to Interview

Candidates called to interview will receive:

- A letter or email confirming the interview
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview
- A criminal records self-declaration form for completion
- Details of original id and qualifications documentation to bring with them on the day

The Selection Process

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the post but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.

Interviews will always be face-to-face.

Candidates will always be required to:

- Explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel
- Declare any non-protected cautions or convictions
- Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people

Avon Valley School will always:

- Confirm the outcome of the interview to the applicant within one week
- Give detailed feedback on the interview, if requested by the applicant

Employment Checks

An offer of employment will be conditional, and all successful candidates will be required to, but not limited to:

- Provide proof of identity
- Complete an enhanced DBS and barred list application and receive satisfactory clearance
- Provide proof of professional status
- Provide actual certificates of qualifications
- Provide a copy of a birth certificate
- Provide proof of eligibility to work in the UK
- Complete a confidential health questionnaire

In addition, if any candidates have lived or worked outside the UK in the last five years, and/or have lived in a country other than the UK for one or more continuous periods of 3 months or more within the last 5 years prior to their commencement of employment with AVS, the school must make any overseas checks it considers appropriate in line with KCSIE 2024 Section 232.

Further guidance on overseas criminal checks can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-for-overseas-applicants>

For teaching staff, a prohibition from teaching check will also be carried out.

All employment checks will be:

- Documented and retained on the personnel file
- Recorded on the school's Single Central Record
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received

Employment will commence subject to all checks and procedures being satisfactorily completed.

Induction and Probation

All staff and volunteers who are new to the school will receive information on the school's safeguarding policy, and procedures and guidance on safe working practices as part of their induction training.

All new staff (except ECT's) will be subject to a 6-month probation period, which will provide a formal framework for ensuring that the standards of performance set by AVS are fully communicated. Checks will also be put in place during the probationary period to ensure safeguarding has been covered.