Pathway Trust

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Policy effective from	1 September 2026
Policy owner	Director of People
Policy applies to	Berrow Church Primary School Burnham-on-Sea Infant School Castle Batch Primary School Charfield Primary School Cherry Garden Primary School Downend School East Huntspill Primary School Lyde Green Primary School Mangotsfield School Marlwood School Pawlett Primary School Priory Community School Severn Beach Primary School St Andrew's Church Junior School St Anne's Church Primary School The Castle School The King Alfred School Tortworth Primary School West Huntspill Primary School Worle Community School Pathway Partnership Teams
Policy changes since last version	New policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Recruiting the best people to Pathway Trust is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our pupils.

1.2 Not appointing the right people to our roles can have a negative impact on the performance of our trust.

1.3 The Headteacher is responsible for deciding on the arrangements for recruiting to school posts. The Chief Executive is responsible for deciding on the arrangements for recruiting Headteachers, Deputy/Assistant Headteachers and trust roles. The Board of Trustees is responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit the Chief Executive.

1.4 In carrying out our recruitment processes we:

- Are committed to the creation of a safe environment for our pupils by operating safer recruitment practices in line with the statutory requirements and guidance.
- We will comply with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation (being the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018) and any implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time.
- Our Data Protection Policy sets out how we will comply with Data Protection Legislation.
- Will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and are committed to ensuring that throughout our recruitment and selection processes no applicant is disadvantaged or discriminated against because of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

1.5 In the very exceptional circumstances there may be a Genuine Operational Requirement (GOR) to discriminate where there is a need for a specific requirement within the recruitment process. The operational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. This must be approved by the Director or People who will provide reasons for the requirement.

1.6 Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, knowledge, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

1.7 If an applicant makes the school/trust aware, at any stage of the recruitment process, that they have a disability then reasonable adjustments must be considered to ensure the applicant is not disadvantaged by the process.

2. Scope and Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting and appointing any employee to work within our trust.

2.2 **Internal recruitment**

All trust recruitment is carried out in line with the principles of fair and open competition, and on that basis the vast majority of vacancies will be advertised externally. There will however be occasions when it will be appropriate for a vacancy to be filled internally, for reasons of:

- Development opportunities - school or trust wide
- Succession planning - school or trust wide
- Temporary appointments
- An urgent need or requirement for a specific/unique skill set

Justification for such appointments should be made by Headteachers or the Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of People. All internal appointments will follow a communicated, auditable process which will include safeguarding checks and appropriate suitability endorsement.

2.3 Sections 13 and 14 on Disclosure and Barring Service checks also apply to volunteers in our trust.

3. Safer Recruitment

3.1 All recruitment must be in line with this policy to ensure that we identify, deter and prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with our pupils.

3.2 The recruitment of all applicants and volunteers to our trust must, without exception, follow the processes of safer recruitment. All offers of employment will be subject to us being satisfied that the applicant or volunteer is a suitable person to work with children and young people.

3.3 Any person involved in recruiting to our trust must read the DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and the Pathway Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

3.4 All recruitment must be planned to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.

3.5 Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during recruitment must inform the Headteacher/Director immediately.

3.6 All of the checks described in Sections 12 and 13 must be carried out and have been determined as satisfactory before an applicant can start their employment in the trust except in exceptional circumstances approved by the Director of People.

4. Advertising

4.1 Any vacant position will normally be advertised via the appropriate channels to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is obtained (see Section 2.2 re Internal Recruitment).

4.2 All advertisements will have the following statement about safeguarding children and young people and the requirement to have a DBS check:

The trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All offers of employment are subject to an Enhanced DBS check, and where applicable, a prohibition from teaching check will be completed for all applicants.'

4.3 All advertisements will also include the following statement if the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020:

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020). This means that certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected' and do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the Ministry of Justice website: Guidance on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Exceptions Order 1975 - GOV.UK

4.4 Under Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016, the public sector fluency duty requires state funded schools to ensure candidates for their customer facing roles have the necessary standard of spoken English. For example, a teaching assistant required to communicate with pupils to support their learning, would be viewed as operating in a public-facing role. Adverts (and job descriptions) should make clear the necessary standard of spoken English required for the role.

4.5 All applicants will be provided with a copy of our Recruitment Privacy Notice which sets out how we will gather, process and hold personal data of individuals during and after the recruitment process.

5. Job Description

5.1 A job description will be required for all posts which describes the duties and responsibilities of the post. It must be up to date, accurate and specific to the role. The job description must also include a person specification which outlines all of the necessary skills, abilities, experience, attitude, behaviours, qualifications and knowledge requirements for the post.

5.2 All job descriptions and person specifications must make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

6. Application form

CVs will be accepted for some roles but will not replace the application form which must be completed by the applicant prior to a final interview.

7. References

7.1 All offers of employment will be conditional upon receipt of at least two satisfactory written references. References will:

- Be requested for all shortlisted applicants

- Include the applicant's current or most recent employer and where an applicant for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, will include the applicant's most recent employer as a teacher
- Ask the current employer for details of any capability history in the previous two years, and the reasons for this
- Be directly from the referee, who will be a senior person with appropriate authority and confirmed as accurate by the Headteacher in respect of any disciplinary investigations
- Not be accepted if they are 'to whom it may concern' letters
- Request information on the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people from the last employer where the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children)
- Be verified with the person who provided the reference and, where the reference is provided electronically, verify that it is from a legitimate source
- Be clarified with the referee where the information is vague or insufficient
- Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- Be compared with the information set out in the application form and any discrepancies discussed with the candidate
- Be requested before the interview
- Be explored further with the referee and with the applicant during the interview if necessary. Any concern with references received or serious delay in receipt of references received contact the Pathway HR team for advice.

7.2 Where it has not been possible to obtain references before the interview any concerns that are subsequently raised will need to be resolved before the appointment is confirmed.

8. Shortlisting

8.1 Applicants will be shortlisted against the requirements of the person specification. The same people should carry out the shortlisting and the interviews and should be completed by at least two people. The outcome of the shortlisting process will be recorded and retained.

8.2 The equal opportunities monitoring form will not form part of the shortlisting process.

8.3 As part of the shortlisting process, in line with measures identified in statutory guidance relating to safeguarding practice, the trust may conduct searches, either themselves or through a third party, of the online presence of shortlisted candidates to identify any comment, image or other content that could cause reputational damage to the trust and/or give rise to a safeguarding concern.

8.4 Management of online searches (either by carrying out the search or instructing a third party to do so), and the collation of information will be carried out independently from those managing the shortlisting process.

8.5 The shortlisting panel are responsible for scrutinising the application forms and identifying any gaps in employment or other areas that may affect an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. A satisfactory explanation for any concerns, including any concerns as a result of online searches must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process.

9. Interviews

9.1 A face-to-face interview must take place for all applicants to all posts. The use of video conferencing is acceptable for this purpose.

9.2 Anyone involved in interviewing should be properly prepared to undertake the role, which may involve appropriate interview skills training. At Pathway, at least one person on the interview panel must have passed the appropriate safer recruitment training.

9.3 The purpose of the interview is to assess the merits of each applicant against the job description and person specification to establish their suitability for the post and to work with children and young people.

9.4 Interviews should be conducted with a minimum of two interviewers on the panel to enable one interviewer to assess the applicant, observe and make notes whilst the applicant talks to the other interviewer.

9.5 Before the interview commences the interview panel should have:

- Prepared appropriate questions for the role
- Prepared appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people
- Identified any areas for further probing, e.g., if a criminal record has been declared, any information about past disciplinary action/allegations, or if there are gaps in employment etc
- Agreed assessment criteria which reflects the person specification
- Decided a structure to the interview and established which member of the panel will ask which questions

9.6 A set of common questions relating to the requirements of the post will be asked of each applicant. Their response will determine whether that is followed up through further questioning.

9.7 Any gaps in employment history and any concerns identified as part of the online checking process must be explored during the interview process.

9.8 Candidates shortlisted for interview will be asked about their suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further questions include:

- Implication that adults and children are equal
- Lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- Inappropriate idealisation of children
- Inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children;
- Indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours

9.9 Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Applicants will only be asked to disclose and discuss criminal convictions and/or cautions which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) that may deem them unsuitable. Where this is provided electronically, the shortlisted candidate will be asked to physically sign a hard copy at the point of the interview.

10. Other selection methods

10.1 In addition to a face-to-face interview with the interview panel a variety of other selection methods may be used, such as:

- Observation of teaching practice
- One or more additional panel interviews (for example, a panel made up of pupils)
- A presentation
- In-tray exercises
- Psychometric testing

10.2 Those responsible for deciding the arrangements for recruitment to a specific post will determine the selection methods. They will be relevant and appropriate to the role and will be based on the requirements for the particular post as set out in the job description and person specification.

10.3 Candidates will be informed in advance if any selection methods are to be used in addition to a face-to-face interview and what these are.

11. Level of language proficiency

11.1 Under the "fluency duty" (Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016), public authorities are required to ensure that workers in public facing roles are fluent in English. Public facing roles are those members of teaching and support staff who, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, are required to speak to members of the public (including students in schools).

11.2 The trust will accept a range of evidence of spoken English language ability as follows:

- Competently answering interview questions in English
- Possessing a relevant qualification for the role attained as part of education in the UK or fully taught in English by a recognised institution abroad
- Passing an English spoken language competency test or possessing a relevant spoken English qualification at CEFR Level B1 or above, taught in English by a recognised institution abroad

12. Pre-employment checks

12.1 Any offer of employment must be authorised by the Headteacher/Director and the offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references (one of which must be their current or most recent employer)
- Verification of the applicant's identity, preferably from current photographic ID and proof of address
- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness
- Verification of qualifications where relevant
- Verification of professional status where applicable. For teachers, this will include checking that the individual has the required teaching qualification and has successfully completed any statutory induction, if required, through the DfE's 'check a teacher' record,
- Satisfactory enhanced DBS check (see Section 13)
- Satisfactory online searches (see Section 8)
- For management positions (Applicable to Community Councillors, Trustees, Headteachers, Deputy and Assistant Headteachers, Subject and Year Group Leaders and Directors), verification that they are not subject to a section 128 direction by using the DfE's 'Check a teachers' record
- For teachers and other employees who hold QTS who are working in non-teaching roles, verification that they are not subject to a prohibition order by using the DfE's 'Check a teachers' record
- For teachers, satisfactory check to determine any restrictions/sanctions that have been imposed in other EEA member states, through the provision of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country that they qualified.
- A clear children's barred list check (except supervised volunteers).
- Verification of right to work in the United Kingdom.

- Any further checks where the applicant has lived or work outside of the UK including receipt of criminal record information from overseas.
- Confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from providing childcare (where required).

12.2 All checks must be retained on the personnel file and recorded in the single central record (SCR).

13. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - new employees and volunteers

13.1 The trust will carry out a risk assessment to determine if a DBS check is required for each volunteer in accordance with Annex E of Keeping Children Safe in Education. If a volunteer is assessed as requiring a DBS check, the following DBS checks will be undertaken for new appointments, before the employee or volunteer starts work:

Who?	Definition	Type of check
Employees who will be engaging in regulated activity	As an educational institution which is exclusively or mainly for the provision of full-time education to children, the trust is an establishment specified in the relevant legislation. Activity carried out in this establishment will therefore be regulated activity relating to children if it meets the definition in the relevant legislation, including that it is carried out: Frequently by the same person (for example once a week or more); or On more than three days in any period of 30 days. Note – personal care of a child because of age, illness or disability including physical help with eating, toileting, washing, bathing or dressing is always regulated activity regardless of how frequently it is carried out.	An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check will be obtained
Unsupervised volunteers	As above	An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check will be obtained Those applying for Chair of Trustee posts (after 01.04.17) must also have their identity verified for a stipulated professional as part of their DBS check as per the below link: Academy trust chair: apply for a suitability check - GOV.UK
Supervised volunteers	Where an individual is a volunteer (e.g. carrying out activity that is	We are unable by law to obtain a barred list check on a supervised

Who?	Definition	Type of check
	unpaid) they will not be engaging in regulated activity if: They are being supervised by someone that is in regulated activity; and The supervision is regular and day to day (e.g., it is ongoing); and The supervision is reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children (this may take into account for example, the age (including the variation in ages), number and vulnerability of children the individual is working with, the nature of the work and opportunity for contact with children, whether other individuals are helping to look after them and how many workers a supervisor is supervising).	volunteer. We will however obtain an enhanced DBS check (with no barred list check) for supervised volunteers.

13.2 In exceptional circumstances a new employee or unsupervised volunteer may be able to start before the enhanced DBS check has been received, but not before the children's barred list check has been completed. The trust will undertake a Risk Assessment which must be authorised by the Headteacher/Director and must ensure that appropriate supervision is in place until the DBS check has been received.

13.3 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. All applicants must produce the disclosure when requested to do so. The disclosure will be scrutinised to ensure it is authentic and to detect any fraud. The DBS disclosure number and date of the check must be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR). We are not required to take a copy of your DBS certificate, however we may choose to do so for decision making purposes. Any copy will be held for no longer than necessary, and up to a period of six months and be processed in line with Data Protection legislation.

13.4 Any applicant who refuses to produce their DBS disclosure will not be able to start work at the trust and the conditional offer will be withdrawn as satisfactory checks are not in place. Any volunteer who refuses to produce their disclosure will not be able to volunteer in any school within our trust.

13.5 Applicants (free for volunteers) can have their DBS certificate kept up to date and take it with them from role to role where the same type and level of check is required. Applicants or volunteers should be asked if they have subscribed to this service. The cost of this service is £13 per year. The expectation is that individuals personally fund this if required. Where the applicant or volunteer has subscribed they should provide the trust with the original disclosure document to be verified and the trust will check the online update for any changes.

13.6 Applicants will only be asked to declare convictions and cautions that are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020).

13.7 Information relating to an individual's criminal record will only be shared with the relevant people to enable the trust to make a decision about their suitability to work with children and young people.

14. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks - existing employees and volunteers

14.1 An enhanced DBS check and a children's barred list check will be carried out for volunteers (subject to risk assessment) where their contact with children or young people has increased from that at their time of appointment.

14.2 An enhanced DBS and children's barred list check may be carried out on any employee or unsupervised volunteer (subject to risk assessment) where the trust has concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children and young people. An enhanced DBS (no barred list check) may be carried out on any supervised volunteer (subject to risk assessment) where the trust has concerns about their suitability to work with children and young people.

14.3 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. The trust expects all applicants to produce the disclosure when requested to do so. Any existing employee who does not produce their DBS disclosure may be managed through the disciplinary procedure.

14.4 All existing employees are required to inform the trust of any change in their criminal record. This includes convictions, cautions, arrests and police investigations which are not protected under the amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020). Action may be taken as a result of any change or any failure to inform the Headteacher/Director of any change.

15. Agency staff

15.1 In the case of agency staff, the school/trust must ensure that the arrangement with the agency imposes an obligation on the agency to carry out all recruitment checks as set out in section 12, including DBS and children's barred list checks, that the school/trust would otherwise complete for its staff. The school/trust must obtain written confirmation from the agency that these checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. This must be recorded in the single central record (SCR).

15.2 Upon the engagement of an agency worker, the agency must be provided with the link to the Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Procedure unless they have previously been provided with the most recent version of this procedure.

16. Breaches of the policy

16.1 Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

16.2 Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application will be managed through the trust's Feedback, Concerns and Complaints Procedure or (for existing employees) Grievance Procedure.

17. Record keeping and data protection

17.1 All written records of interviews, application forms and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept in accordance with our Privacy Notice, our Retention and Destruction Policy and in line with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (in any form retained by the UK, unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018). Any breach of data protection may constitute a disciplinary offence and be dealt with under this procedure.

18. Review of this policy

18.1 This policy is reviewed and amended annually by the trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.