



Victoria Academies Trust

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY V1.0

Introduction

Victoria Academies Trust (VAT) and its academies are committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and recognises the importance of recruiting and retaining staff of the highest quality.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements for the recruitment of staff to VAT and its academies. The aim is to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people

All decisions on recruitment will be made with regard to curriculum needs and financial circumstances.

This policy takes into account the provisions of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE September 2018). VAT will abide by the existing legislation and in particular will not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act (2010), these being:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

VAT will promote equality in all aspects of academy life, including the recruitment of staff.

Recruitment Panel

VAT will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has successfully completed the safer recruitment training.

Advertising and inviting applications

Advertisements for all posts will include the following statement:

"Victoria Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects its entire staff to share this commitment. All post-holders will be required to have an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)."

The following documents will be available in the vacancy area of the website:

- Job advertisement
- Job description and person specification
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Application form

Applicants will also be made aware of the relevant policies, including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Advertisements for external vacancies will normally be placed on the academy website and in any suitable relevant media.

In cases where a member of staff is employed on a fixed term contract for a post which then becomes available as a permanent post, that member of staff may be offered the permanent post

without further advertising subject to approval by the Executive Headteacher.

Where staff are invited to take on a management or leadership responsibility which does not require an additional member of staff the post will be advertised internally.

Advertisements will specify: the main subjects to be taught and/or the nature of any leadership allowance; the start date of the appointment and whether the post is permanent or fixed term and, in the case of fixed term contracts, the end date of the contract; the remuneration for the post will be expressed in terms of the applicable pay scales and the closing date for applications will also be stated.

Applications

All applicants for externally advertised posts will be required to complete a VAT application form, which should be returned to the nominated person by the specified closing date. C.V.'s will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

Applications received after the closing date will not normally be considered unless there is proof of a postal delay, applicants are advised to submit their application via email to avoid late arrival.

For posts where it is known that recruitment is likely to be difficult, references may be requested as the applications are received in order to reduce the time from the closing date to making the appointment. VAT reserves the right to close applications early in order to meet the aims of this policy, although the expectation is that in the majority of posts, this will not be the case.

Shortlisting and references

Applications will be shortlisted against the criteria in the person specification.

Where possible, references will be taken up on shortlisted candidates prior to interview. References will be sought and obtained directly from the referee. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted.

If a candidate for a teaching post is not currently employed as a teacher, checks will be made with their most recent school to confirm details of employment and reasons for leaving.

All referees will be asked specific questions about:

- Their relationship with the candidate, how long has the referee known the candidate and in what capacity.
- The candidate's suitability for working with children and young people.
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time expired warnings that relate to the safeguarding of children.
- The candidate's suitability for the post.

Employees are entitled if requested to view their employment references.

Selection Process

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the post. All applicants for teaching posts will be required to undertake a lesson observation.

Candidates that are successful in the initial stages of the selection process will be invited to attend for interview; unsuccessful candidates will not be interviewed.

Interviews will always be face to face. In rare circumstances e.g. if the candidate is abroad, this may be conducted via a visual electronic link.

Candidates will always be required to:

- Satisfactorily explain any gaps in employment.
- Satisfactorily explain any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel.
- Declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure.
- Demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

Employment checks

All successful applicants are required to undergo the following checks:

DBS Check

Due to the nature of the work of Victoria Academies Trust, all employees and volunteers must undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. Posts within schools are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (updated guidance March 2014), therefore as a prospective employer, we encourage candidates to disclose any unspent and spent convictions during the application stage.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence may also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, if one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

As soon as the applicant receives their DBS certificate the original certificate must be shown to the HR Team.

VAT expects supply/temporary worker agencies/contractors that are used by the Academy to register with the DBS on their own account and to follow their policy or their own comparable policy. Proof of registration will be required before VAT will commission services from any such organisation.

Policies on Employment of Ex-Offenders and Retention of Security and Storage of Disclosure information are available on request.

Disqualification Declaration (Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006)

(Staff working with/volunteering/having management responsibility for provision for children aged 8 years and under).

All new staff and volunteers will be made aware of their duty with regard to Disqualification Declaration, all existing staff and volunteers will be reminded of the requirement on an annual basis.

Barred List

A separate Barred List check will be carried out if an individual will commence employment before the DBS Certificate is available.

Verification of Identity and Address

All applicants will be required to provide evidence of identity, address and qualifications (examples of which are set out below):

- Current driving licence (including photograph) or passport or full birth certificate; and
- Two utility bills or statements (from different sources) less than three months old showing their name and home address; and
- Documentation confirming their National Insurance number (P45, P60 or National Insurance card); and
- Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

In all cases original (not photocopy) documents must be provided.

Verification of Qualifications

All candidates will be required to provide actual certificates that evidence they have obtained any qualifications required legally or otherwise for the role. Qualifications legally required including QTS for teachers.

Prohibition Order Check

A Prohibition Order Check will be carried out on all candidates to be employed as teachers.

Section 128 Direction

A check against the 128 Barring List will be carried out for applicants for management positions.

EEA Check

Where applicable, a check will be carried out to establish any sanctions or restrictions an EEA professional regulating body has imposed.

Asylum and Immigration

Before anyone starts work with VAT we have a legal obligation to confirm that they are eligible to work in the United Kingdom. This check must be carried out on every potential new employee, regardless of their nationality. Failure to confirm someone's asylum and immigration status due of their nationality would be contrary to the Asylum and Nationality Act 2006.

Medical Fitness

It is a statutory requirement under the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 that anyone appointed to work with children or young people must be medically fit. It is VAT's responsibility to be satisfied that the applicant has the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before the appointment is confirmed.

All prospective employees will be required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. Information provided will remain confidential to the Occupational Health provider and will be used to match the applicant's fitness to the proposed duties. Management will only receive an opinion of the applicant's fitness for the duties outlined. In some cases, applicants will be asked to attend for a health assessment. Failure to disclose or giving false information could lead to termination of employment.

Confirmation of Appointment

The final offer of employment will be subject to:

- A satisfactory Enhanced DBS check and barred list check.
- Confirmation that the candidate does not live with a disqualified person (if the member of staff works with or has management responsibility for children under the age of 8).
- A check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order, where applicable.
- Section 128 Direction check where applicable.
- EEA Check where applicable.
- Receipt of medical clearance.
- Receipt of two satisfactory references.
- Evidence of qualifications.
- Evidence of right to work in the UK.

VAT reserves the right not to proceed with or terminate employment with immediate effect if the DBS check reveals convictions which have not been declared on the application form or if any of the documents referred to above have been falsified in any way.

Induction

All new staff will be required to:

- Read the Staff Code of Conduct and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Read and confirm that they have read Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.'
- Complete Level 1 Safeguarding in Education training, which will include training on the PREVENT duty.

Record Keeping

VAT will maintain a Single Central Record collating when and by whom checks on identity, qualifications and outcomes of Barred List and DBS checks on staff were made.

There is a requirement to request full details of DBS checks carried out on staff through an agency and the need for VAT to keep a record that checks have been verified, when and by whom.

A copy of all documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications will be retained on the personal file.

Information disclosed as part of a DBS check will be treated as confidential.