

PORTFIELD SCHOOL & SATELLITE CENTRES



POLICY DOCUMENT FOR FOR SAFER RECRUITMENT



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Welsh Heritage
Schools Initiative



Menter Ysgolion y
Dref/adaeth Gymreig



Reviewing the Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis in consultation with staff, parents and governors.

This policy was adopted by:

Headteacher

Date

Chair of Governors

Date

Portfield SCHOOL

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

"For those agencies whose job it is to protect children and vulnerable people, the harsh reality is that if a sufficiently devious person is determined to seek out opportunities to work their evil, no one can guarantee that they will be stopped. Our task is to make it as difficult as possible for them to succeed..."

Sir Michael Bichard Inquiry Report 2005

Mission Statement

Working together Learning together Achieving together

At Portfield School we strive to

- Create a happy, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment
- Value everyone
- Develop everyone's personal, social, emotional health and wellbeing
- Promote relevant academic and vocational skills
- Meet individual needs through an imaginative and flexible approach
- Enable all learners to achieve their full potential

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Portfield School places the values and principles of the UNCRC at the heart all policies and practices
- Portfield School is a Rights Respecting School

1. Introduction

1.1 The *Governing Body* of Portfield School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

1.2 The governing body will ensure that all staff recognise that safeguarding against radicalisation and extremism is no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability in today's society. All staff appointed should have an understanding of what radicalisation and extremism are and why we need to be vigilant in school.

1.3 The *Governing Body* regards its staff as its most important asset. It is the policy of the *Governing Body* to ensure an adequate supply of suitably qualified and experienced staff is always available to meet the school's human resource requirements and to deliver the school development plan.

1.4 The appointment of all employees at Portfield School will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, the relevant Education Act, any School Staffing Regulations, any statutory guidance, and the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

1.5 The *Governing Body* will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.

2. Delegation of Appointments

2.1 The *Governing Body* has established an Appointments committee and governors on these committees will be expected to undertake recruitment selection training, including "Safer Recruitment" training, at the earliest opportunity.

2.2 No governor is to be excluded from being involved in staff appointments unless there is a conflict between the interests of the governor and the interests of the governing body.

2.3 The Head teacher may appoint alone but only for the following categories of staff: *supply teachers, Lunchtime supervisors, supply Support staff*

Features of Portfield School that Promote Safer Recruitment

- An open culture, no secrets
- A belief that it could happen here
- Clear procedures for reporting concerns about the behaviour of staff and volunteers towards children
- Support for children and adults who do raise concerns and commitment to take action on any concerns raised
- a code of conduct that makes clear what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Policies, procedures and code of conduct that are not just documents but are used, with people made being accountable for following them
- Training
- Good induction and use of probationary periods
- A commitment from all who work there to safeguard and protect children and to maintain an ongoing culture of vigilance

A SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Stage 1 - Define the Role

- Produce a job description and person specification
- Include in these skills, abilities, experience, behaviours, attitude and motivation towards children and young people
- Make clear the boundaries and expectations in terms of relationships with Children

Sample wording for job description:

- ⇒ To promote the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people
- ⇒ To ensure that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures are promoted within the school and adhered to by all members of staff

Sample wording for person specification:

- ⇒ Evidence of working within a child protection culture
- ⇒ Evidence of promoting child welfare and safety
- ⇒ Understanding and commitment to child welfare and safety
- ⇒ Knowledge of child protection procedures

Stage 2 - Advertising

- Include a clear statement regarding the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and the need for an enhanced child and adult Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) check.
- Include statements about the safeguarding responsibilities of the post in both the job description and the person specification
- Send information about the school's Child Protection or Safeguarding Policy to candidates as part of the application pack or at Induction.

Sample statement on advert:

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Stage 3 - Application Forms

- Do not accept CVs as part of the application process, only fully completed application forms should be considered
- If you receive an e-mailed application form then ask the candidate to sign this if they are invited to interview

Stage 4 - Disclosure of Criminal Convictions

- All applicants need to disclose any previous criminal convictions as part of the application form
- If the candidate discloses any conviction or caution you can then explore these at interview with them
- You will need a full Enhanced child and adult DBS check for the successful candidate

Stage 5 - Agree Shortlisting Criteria and Process

- Shortlisting criteria must be based on the person specification and any relevant elements of the job description
- These criteria must be applied consistently to all candidates' applications
- Ensure these include the specific criteria relating to working with children
- Make sure the criteria (i.e. job description and person specification) are reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date

Stage 6 - Scrutinise Applications and Shortlist

- Ensure appropriate time is put aside for all members of the panel to shortlist together
- Should be more than one person
- Identify any gaps in the application or inconsistencies that you need to explore further with candidates at interview
- Apply the shortlisting criteria equally
- Document the process and decisions and keep this

Stage 7 - Request References

- At least one reference must be from current or most recent employer where the individual has previously been in paid work.
- If the individual does not have a previous or current employer then you should consider whether it is possible to get a reference from a current or previous educational establishment eg school, college or university.

Where this is not possible then two personal references should be sought.

- If have previously worked in childcare organisation but these are not listed as a reference then should also consider requesting a reference from this organisation
- Use the Authority's recommended Reference Request Form for either employer or personal references if the LEA are not carrying out this function for the school
- Ensure that any employer reference is sent to a work address and not a referee's home address
- If the reference is from a school, always send to Head Teacher or Chair of Governors (c/o school address)
- If applicant asks that references are not sought until after interview then this can be agreed, provided that references are taken at that point

Stage 8 - Scrutinise References

- Scrutinise references prior to interviews
- Ensure you carefully read references and consider if there is anything you need to follow up at interview with the candidate
- Compare the information provided on the reference with what was provided on the application form and ensure that these match
- If you have any concerns or any information on the reference is missing, chase this up with the referee
- If you discuss a reference over the telephone with the referee, ensure you make a written note of the conversation and also ask the referee to confirm the discussion in writing to you.

MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS

Good Practice

- Should consider using a range of selection tools and not just rely on an interview
- Ensure that during the selection process you explore candidates' motives and attitudes as well as skills and experiences
- Ensure all those involved have been fully trained and briefed on their role during the selection process
- Use selection tools that allow you to assess candidates' interaction with other adults and with children
- If you use children in the selection process then ensure this is appropriately supervised and structured
- If you employ agency staff or use volunteers, ensure you still maintain high standards during your selection

Stage 1 - Decide what Selection Tools you are going to use

You may want to consider other methods of selection in addition to an interview, this could include:

- Role play with another adult e.g. dealing with a parental complaint, dealing with a member of staff
- Presentation, either prepared beforehand or to be produced on the day
- Group exercises to see how they work within a team
- Written exercises to test theory or technical knowledge
- Lesson observations
- Staff Council interviews or other interactions with children which can be observed

Stage 2 - Conducting Interviews

- Only those involved in shortlisting can be on the interview panel
- Should be at least two people
- Ensure you have structured questions that you have agreed beforehand and you know who is going to ask the questions and who is recording the answers
- Use supplementary questions to probe any gaps or vagueness in answers (these will be different for each candidate)

- Ensure questions ask candidates about their own experience rather than asking hypothetical questions, questioning experience is more likely to highlight any possible child safeguarding concerns
- Ask about attitudes towards children and child protection and motives for working with children
- Ensure you provide candidates with information about the school and the role as well as listening to them
- Clearly record answers and document decisions and keep these

Sample Interview Questions:

1. Have you ever felt uncomfortable about a colleague's behaviour towards children in a previous job? What were your concerns, what did you do, and how was the issue resolved?
2. Safeguarding children is an important part of our work. Can you give me some examples of how you would contribute to making the organisation a safer environment for children?
3. Tell me about a time when a child or young person behaved in a way that caused you concern. How did you deal with that? Who else did you involve?
4. Why do you want to work with children? What do you think you have to offer? Give an example of how children have benefited from contact with you.
5. Bullying is often a serious issue that has to be dealt with in all areas of work with children. In your experience what is the best way to deal with it? How did your previous organisation tackle the problem?

See Appendix 1:- Interviews; Possible lines of Questioning from the Lucy Faithwell Trust

Stage 3 - Areas of Potential Concern

During your selection activities you may hear things that would cause you concern and which you would then need to explore further with the candidate.

These may include:

- Lack or no understanding or appreciation of children's needs or expectations
- They appear to want the role in order to meet their own needs rather than the needs of children
- Using inappropriate language when talking about children
- Vagueness about experiences and/or gaps on the application form or unable to provide examples to support their answers
- A maverick - unwilling to follow rules, procedures or work with others

Stage 4 - Making Decisions

- Decisions should be based on the selection criteria within the person specification and job description
- You may want to compare answers to a 'model answer' i.e. what are the key things you would have expected the answer to include
- You may need to justify your decision at a later point so you must be able to clearly link your decision to the selection criteria

Stage 5 - Pre-Appointment Checks

The following pre-appointment checks must be carried out:

- Identity check: ID must be brought to interview and checked
- Documentation proving eligibility to work in UK brought to interview if appropriate
- Original qualification certificates brought to interview
- Confirmation of any status e.g. Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA), brought to interview
- Health Questionnaire provided to successful candidate to complete and return
- List 99 check undertaken by the Authority on successful candidate
- Storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of disclosure and barring service (DBS) undertaken for successful candidate
- All documents brought to interview must be originals and should be photocopied for all candidates

- Until all these checks have been carried out only a conditional offer of employment can be made. The offer should clearly state which satisfactory checks the appointment is subject to
- All the above checks should also be undertaken for overseas applicants, however, greater time should be given to receive any information requested from abroad

Stage 6 - Storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of disclosure and barring service (DBS)

- All positions in schools are subject to Enhanced DBS checks
- This is only carried out for the person you wish to appoint
- DBS only provides information regarding the criminal records of UK residents
- Criminal record information for overseas applicants can be sought via the DBS's overseas information service
- Candidate must complete the DBS form online
- Once the application is completed the school must then verify the identify and address information
- The form is then sent to the Council who will sign it off and forward it to DBS
- The DBS number and date of issue is forwarded to school
- If an individual changes employer, they must have a new DBS check unless they have subscribed to the update service
- If an individual changes job with the same employer but has a break in their service, then they must have a new DBS check
- If an individual changes job with the same employer but their last DBS check is over three years old, they must have a new DBS check

Stage 7 - Persons Banned from Working with Children

- The DBS will include whether the individual is on either List 99 or the Protection of Children's Act List. If they are on either of these lists, they are banned from working with children
- Any individual who is on one of these lists who applies to work with children is committing an offence and it should be reported to the Police

Stage 8 - Information on the DBS Check

When assessing applicants' criminal records you should consider the offence in terms of the following before deciding whether to continue with the employment:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence
- How long ago the offence was committed?
- Was it a one off offence or part of a history of offences?
- What were the circumstances in which the offence was committed?
- Have there been changes in the applicant's personal circumstances since the offence that make it less likely that they will re-offend?
- Which country was the offence committed in?
- Has the offence since been decriminalized?
- Has the applicant demonstrated remorse?

Offer of Appointment by the Staffing Committee

The offer of appointment by the selection panel is conditional subject to staff qualification requirements, satisfactory DBS Disclosure, medical checks and satisfactory references after which time if the offer is accepted becomes legally binding.

Appendix 1

INTERVIEWING - POSSIBLE LINES OF QUESTIONING AT INTERVIEW.

Below is a selection of possible questions that could draw out issues of concern.

Please note that in the replies you would not only be looking for the usual issues relating to appropriate knowledge and skills for the job - you would also use your knowledge of sex offenders to identify factors in combination that cause concern.

To ensure that equal opportunity needs are met, some questions may be selected for all candidates as either main questions or supplementary questions. There is always scope for follow-up questions to examine an issue with a candidate more closely. Some of these questions give you an idea as to how you may word such questions in a way that is reasonable and inoffensive, whilst still potentially giving you the answers you seek in the difficult area of sexuality and abuse.

General:

- Previous employment. (*Pay attention to unexplained gaps in employment, or a pattern of work in small organisations not in the mainstream network*)
- Reasons for leaving previous employment. (*Relate this to references e.g. were there problems - overt or implied? Or did he present as 'perfect', always available and indispensable? Was he a team player?*)
- Ask about complaints and disciplinary procedures and/or inquiries (not just disciplinary offences - several professional offenders would have been picked up earlier this way) - but ensure you ask about outcomes too. (*Remember you are looking at concerns in combination*).
- Why is the interviewee interested in work with children and with these particular children? (*Be concerned about over-enthusiasm for the job irrespective of pay and conditions!*).
- Where does their interest in child-focused work come from?
- How would they talk to / communicate with children - especially with children with problems?
- What are their attitudes to confidentiality? (*Have a 'for instance ...' scenario ready*).
- Attitudes to children. (*Note how the interviewee talks about children e.g. is it appropriate? or is it as if they were adults? or as if it's an idealised, unrealistic 'chocolate box' version of cherubic innocence that does not ring true to life?!*)

- This is difficult work - what supports does the interviewee have outside work. (*Look for: e.g. is he/she a loner? are there adult relationships*).
- Does the interviewee have other interests outside work? What are they? (*Again, look for adult social relationships - or is everything focused on children and young people?*)
- Make it clear to interviewees that you have an ethos of support, monitoring and open communication among staff and that children and young people are encouraged to raise issues or concerns.

Attitudes to children and sexuality:

- What does the interviewee know about the reasons why children may be in the care system?
- What does he/she know about child abuse generally? And about child sexual abuse? Have they any thoughts about how this might differ according to e.g. their stage of development, the nature of the relationship between the offender and the victim?
- What are their attitudes toward men or women who abuse children (refer to both genders - it shows knowledge).
- What might the issues be for a child who has been abused?
- What might the issues be for the worker, working with a child who has been sexually abused?

Have ready a range of hypothetical situations to ask about. For example:

- "If a 13 year old boy told you he thought he might be gay, how would you deal with it?"

- "A young person asks you about your sexuality. How would you deal with it?"
- "A 6 year old girl is constantly masturbating. What will you do?"
- "You discover an 8 year old sexually touching a 6 year old. What would you do?"
- You find a 10 year old boy with pornography. How do you respond?
- You find a 10 year old girl using the computer to go into 'chat rooms'. She says he doesn't have many friends at school and she finds it easier to make friends on the computer. How would you respond?

Examples of topics for group discussion (either in interview or in the staff team):

- Most sexual abuse is not an 'incident' that just happens. Discuss.
- What is the difference between 'normal' and abusive behaviour?
- What difficulties could there be for a child or young person who has been sexually abused? What would their needs be from the staff member working with them and how could they be met?

Jenny Still

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation

Competency interview questions to address suitable personal behaviours for school based staff (including safeguarding children and young people)

1. Motivations for working with children

| Positive indicators | Personal competencies | Negative indicators |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Convincing responses based on balanced understanding of self and circumstance.</p> <p>Has a realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Examples of having considered/tried other options and alternatives.</p> <p>A realistic appreciation of the challenges involved in working with children.</p> <p>Evidence of others having supported and encouraged based on observation of personal talent.</p> | <p>Self-awareness/knowledge and understanding of self, interconnection between self and professional role.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you feel are the main drivers which led you to want to work with children? • How do you motivate young people? • What has working with young people, to date, taught you about yourself? | <p>Unconvincing responses based on whimsical examples. Not self aware, don't see themselves as others do.</p> <p>Driven by personal needs not needs of others.</p> <p>Not realistic impression of what working with children is really like.</p> <p>Failure to consider other alternatives.</p> <p>Pushed by others, or forced by circumstance, to do something they don't appear to have personally thought through.</p> |

2. Emotional maturity and resilience

| Positive indicators | Personal competencies | Negative indicators |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Behaves consistently and appropriately under pressure or in a position of authority.</p> <p>Has control over emotions with adults and children.</p> <p>Understands power of position and how to seek help in difficult circumstances.</p> | <p>Consistency under pressure, ability to use authority and respond appropriately, ability to seek assistance/support where necessary.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a time when you have been working with children when your authority was seriously | <p>Inappropriate responses when under pressure or when in a position of power.</p> <p>Inconsistent responses.</p> <p>Handles conflict badly.</p> <p>Fails to control temper/emotions with children and or adults.</p> |

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| | <p>challenged. How did you react? What strategies did you employ to bring things back on course? How did you manage the situation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a person you have had particular difficulty dealing with. What made it difficult? How did you manage the situation? | <p>Doesn't seek help when needed.</p> <p>Fails to go to others for advice.</p> |
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3. Values and ethics

| Positive indicators | Personal competencies | Negative indicators |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Demonstrates a balanced understanding of rights and wrongs.</p> <p>Puts the child first.</p> <p>Alive to the realities of abuse.</p> <p>Prepared to believe.</p> <p>Shows a contemplative approach, drawing on personal experiences and lessons from others.</p> <p>Builds values and judgements based on new information.</p> <p>Shows an appreciation of safeguarding issues and an ability to contribute towards a protective environment.</p> <p>Shows respect for the</p> | <p>Ability to build and sustain professional standards and relationships, ability to understand and respect other people's opinions, ability to contribute towards creating a safe and protective environment.</p> <p>Example questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your attitudes to child protection? How have these developed over time? • What are your feelings about children who make allegations against teachers or staff? • How do you feel when someone holds an opinion which differs from your | <p>Extreme opinions which don't account for the views/feelings of others.</p> <p>Doesn't show balance in opinion.</p> <p>Doesn't build on new information or understanding.</p> <p>Opinions harden/become dogged.</p> <p>Doesn't show a full or rounded appreciation of safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Dismissive of, or underplays, the risks.</p> <p>Consistently puts the blame and responsibility for child protection elsewhere.</p> <p>Fails to believe in suspicions/reports of abuse.</p> |

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| feelings, views and circumstances of others. | <p>own? How do you behave in this situation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you ever had concerns about a colleague? How did you deal with this? | |
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4. Safeguarding knowledge and understanding

| Positive indicators | Sample questions to test for safeguarding knowledge and understanding (pick one or two – not all) | Negative indicators |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Proactive and has personally taken actions to improve safeguarding culture.</p> <p>Has personal experience of having appropriately dealt with a challenging safeguarding issue.</p> <p>Personally committed towards making improvements. Sees it as part of their job.</p> <p>Personally committed towards making improvements. Sees it as part of their job.</p> <p>Prepared to challenge others in the workplace to make tangible improvements to safeguarding.</p> <p>Prepared to tackle difficult issues and confront individuals if necessary in order to</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us about what you have done in the last 12 months to actually improve child protection in the workplace. How did this action arise? • Follow up with: who did you talk to? What were the results? • What is the safeguarding policy in your workplace? • Follow up with: how is it monitored? What steps have you taken to improve things? • Give me an example of when you have had safeguarding concerns about a child. • Follow up with: how did it arise? Who did you speak to? What actions did you take? • Tell us about a situation where you felt you fell short of safeguarding standards. • Follow up with: how did it arise? Who did you speak to? What actions did you | <p>No evidence of having taken steps in own right to make improvements.</p> <p>Passive approach to safeguarding issues.</p> <p>Reluctance to challenge people/systems/processes to make things better.</p> <p>No real experience of handling safeguarding issues. Naive approach.</p> <p>Sees it as someone else’s job and/or responsibility.</p> <p>Not well versed or clear in understanding of the issues/sensitivities.</p> <p>Intolerant of the bureaucracy around safeguarding.</p> <p>Shows a tendency to take inappropriate chances/risks in area of safeguarding.</p> |

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| <p>promote best practice.</p> <p>Shows a good understanding of the issues. Up to date with events and legislation. Knows about test cases.</p> | <p>take?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you ever had to challenge the views of someone more senior than yourself in relation to safeguarding concerns?• Follow up with: what were the circumstances? How did you go about it? What was the outcome? | |
|--|--|--|