



THE PRIORY
LEARNING TRUST

Recruitment & Selection Policy & Procedure

Policies approved by the Board of Trustees

Signed:

Name:

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1.9.19

Chair of Board of Trustees

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Date:

1/9/19

Executive Principal

History of Policy Changes

Date	Version	Author	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, change in legislation	Changed by
September 2017	1	FRL	Creation of policy	
May 2018	2		Review of policy	DL
February 2019	3		Following consultation with Somerset unions	DL
June 2019	4		Annual review	DL

This policy applies to The Priory Learning Trust and all its academies.

Date policy adopted	September 2018
Review cycle	Annual
Review date	May 2020

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Introduction

- 1.1 Recruiting the best people to The Priory Learning Trust (the Trust), is vital for our continued success in providing the highest standards of education to our students.
- 1.2 Not appointing the right people to our roles can have a negative impact on the performance of the Trust.
- 1.3 The Principal or Headteacher at each academy is responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit to Teaching and Learning posts and The Chief Operations Officer to Business Support posts, with the exception of the role of Principal. The Executive Principal will be responsible where there is a need to recruit a Principal or Headteacher.
- 1.4 The Executive Principal and Chief Operations Officer will be responsible for deciding on the arrangements to recruit members of the Central Team.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 We are also 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.
- 1.7 In the very exceptional cases where we are required to discriminate due to an occupational requirement this must be approved by the Executive Principal who will provide reasons for this requirement.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 If an applicant makes the 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.

Scope and Purpose

- 1.10 The purpose of this policy is to set out our processes for recruiting, selecting and appointing any employee to work within the Trust.
- 1.11 Section 12 on Disclosure and Barring Service checks also applies to any applications from volunteers to work at the School.

Safer Recruitment

- 1.12 All recruitment activities 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 students.
- 1.13 The recruitment of all employees and staff for the 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.
- 1.14 Any person involved in recruiting to the Trust must read the Keeping Children Safe in Education: information for all school and college staff 2018 guidance

(or updated statutory guidance) produced by the DfE and the Trust's Safeguarding policies and procedures. These can be obtained from the HR Team.

- 1.15 At least one person on the interview panel will have completed the Safer Recruitment in Education course, which is provided by the NSPCC or appropriate organisation.
- 1.16 All recruitment must be planned to ensure that there is adequate time available to recruit safely.
- 1.17 Any person who becomes aware that this policy is not being followed during recruitment must inform the Principal/Headteacher, the Executive Principal or the Safeguarding Officers immediately.
- 1.18 All of the checks described in Sections 10, 11 and 12 must be carried out and have been determined as satisfactory before an applicant can start their employment with the Trust.

Advertising

- 1.19 Any vacant position will be advertised via the appropriate channels which can be internal or/and external to ensure the most appropriate field of applicants is obtained.
- 1.20 All letters to applicants will have the following statement about safeguarding children and young people and the requirement to have a DBS check:
"The Priory Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment"

Job Description

- 1.21 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, experience, qualifications and knowledge requirements for the post.
- 1.22 All job descriptions and person specifications must make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Application form

- 1.23 All external applicants are required to fill out our standard application form. CVs will not be accepted. Internal applicants need to complete an expression of interest letter, no more than 2 sides of A4, which includes details of 2 references.

References

- 1.24 All offers of employment will be conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references.
- 1.25 Two written references will be requested to obtain information to support appointment decisions. References will;
 - (a) be requested for all shortlisted applicants, prior to interview
 - (b) include the applicant's current or most recent employer
 - (c) be directly from the referee

- (d) not be accepted if they are 'to whom it may concern' letters
 - (e) request information on the applicants suitability to work with children and young people
 - (f) include the most recent employer for whom the applicant worked with children or young people
 - (g) be explored further with the referee and with the applicant during the interview if necessary.
- 1.26 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.
- 1.27 In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, information in a reference relating to sickness absence will only be considered after an offer of employment has been made.

Short-listing

- 1.28 Applicants will be short-listed against the requirements of the person specification. The same people should carry out the short-listing and the interviews, where possible. The outcome of the short-listing process will be recorded and retained.
- The equal opportunities monitoring form must be removed from the application and not provided to the short-listing panel.
- 1.29 The short listing 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 must be obtained from the applicant during the interview process.

Interviews

- 1.30 A face to face interview must take place for all applicants to all posts. The use of video conferencing, Skype, Facetime or other similar technologies is acceptable for this purpose.
- 1.31 All those involved in interviewing must be properly trained. At least one person on the interview panel must have passed the appropriate safer recruitment training.
- 1.32 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.
- 1.33 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.
- 1.34 Before the interview commences the interview panel should have;
- (a) prepared appropriate questions for the role
 - (b) prepared appropriate questions to test the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people
 - (c) identified any areas for further probing, e.g. if a criminal record has been declared or if there are gaps in employment etc

- (d) agreed assessment criteria which reflects the person specification
 - (e) decided a structure to the interview and established which member of the panel will ask which questions.
- 1.35 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.
- 1.36 Any gaps in employment history or declaration of a criminal record or caution must be explored further during the interview process.

Pre- employment checks

- 1.37 An offer of appointment to the successful applicant will be conditional upon the following;
- (a) receipt of at least two satisfactory references (one of which must be their current or most recent employer)
 - (b) verification of the applicant's identity
 - (c) verification of the applicant's mental and physical fitness
 - (d) verification of relevant qualifications
 - (e) verification of professional status, where required
 - (f) verification that the individual is not prohibited from teaching (where relevant)
 - (g) verification that the individual is not prohibited from engaging in a management role (where relevant)
 - (h) satisfactory enhanced DBS check (see Section 12)
 - (i) a clear children's barred list check (except supervised volunteers)
 - (j) verification of right to work in the United Kingdom
 - (k) confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified or disqualified by association from providing childcare under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009, where relevant; and
 - (l) where the applicant has lived or worked overseas for a period of 3 months or more in the past 10 years, they MUST provide an overseas check or certificate of good conduct.
- 1.38 All checks must be confirmed in writing, retained on the personnel file and recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR) of the academy at which they will be primarily based. In the case of appointments to the Central Team, these will be recorded on the SCR at the Trust's Head Office.
- 1.39 The expectation is that individuals will personally fund an overseas check or certificate of good conduct.

Prohibition from Teaching and Management

- 1.40 Teacher prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in school. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to teach within the Trust. The Trust will undertake a prohibition check to ensure that the applicant is permitted to teach.

- 1.41 A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school including academies. A person who is prohibited is unable to participate in any management of an independent school. The Trust will undertake a section 128 check to ensure that the applicant is permitted to hold a management position within the Trust.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

- 1.42 The Trust will carry out the following checks before an employee or volunteer starts work:
- (a) Employees - enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check (formerly List 99)
 - (b) Unsupervised volunteers - enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check
 - (c) Supervised volunteers – no check or enhanced DBS check
- 1.43 In exceptional circumstances which must be authorised by the Principal of the relevant academy, or Executive Principal for the Central Team 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 Principal or Executive Principal must ensure that appropriate supervision is in place until the DBS check has been received.
- 1.44 DBS certificates will only be issued to the applicant. All applicants must produce the disclosure when requested to do so. Any applicant who refuses to produce their DBS disclosure will not be able to start work. Any volunteer who refuses to produce their disclosure will not be able to volunteer.
- 1.45 The disclosure will be scrutinised to ensure it is authentic and to detect any fraud.
- 1.46 The DBS disclosure number and date of the check must be recorded in the relevant Single Central Record (SCR).
- 1.47 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. 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.
- 1.48 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. It will be held for no longer than is necessary and will be processed in line with the Data Protection Policy.

Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders

- 1.49 The Trust will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of their criminal record or other information revealed. The Trust makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar him/her from employment with the Trust. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in paragraph 14 below.

- 1.50 All posts within the Trust are, (by reason of the The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended)) exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that all applicants for employment with the Trust must disclose all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974).
- 1.51 A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. A failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence.

Assessment Criteria

- 1.52 In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Trust will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:
- (a) whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
 - (b) the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
 - (c) the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
 - (d) whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
 - (e) whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
 - (f) the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.
- 1.53 If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the Trust's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any of the following offences: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence, drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.
- 1.54 If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the Trust's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.
- 1.55 If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the Trust's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of dangerous driving or of an offence of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, within the last 10 years.

Assessment Procedure

- 1.56 In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process, a disclosure and barring service check must be obtained prior to the academy or Trust carrying out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the HR Manager and the Principal/Headteacher at the academy or Head of HR and the Executive Principal for the Central Team before a position is confirmed.

- 1.57 If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a Disclosure, he/she can do so by contacting the DBS direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the Trust will, where practicable, defer a final decision about confirming the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the Disclosure information.

Agency staff

- 1.58 In the case of agency staff, the Trust must ensure that the arrangement with the agency imposes an obligation on the agency to carry out all recruitment checks including DBS and children's barred list checks. The agency must confirm that these checks have been carried out and this must be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR) at the relevant academy or at the Trust head office, if centrally engaged.

Contractors

- 1.59 Any individual or business engaged by the Trust to provide services to the Trust will be regarded as a Contractor and, where the nature of the services provided affords the Contractor unsupervised or regular supervised access to the student, the Contractor will be required to verify their suitability and/or the suitability of their staff to work within a school setting. Details of the checks undertaken and the results of those checks will be recorded in the Single Central Record (SCR) of the relevant academy or at the Trust Head Office, if centrally engaged.

Breaches of the policy

- 1.60 Any instances of this policy not being adhered to will be taken very seriously and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.
- 1.61 Any complaint in relation to this policy, including its application will be managed through the Trust's complaints policy or grievance policy (for existing employees).

Record keeping and data protection

- 1.62 All written records of interviews, application forms and reasons for appointment or non-appointment will be kept by the appointing school for six months, unless a longer period can be justified by the Principal/Headteacher of the academy or the Executive Principal for the Central Team. Records will be treated as confidential and kept for no longer than necessary in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

Review of policy

This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust and where materially amended is consulted on, where necessary. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively

Appendix 1

Additional Information

Additional information on criminal records and DBS checks and disqualification declarations for existing staff.

1. An enhanced DBS check and a children's barred list check will be carried out for all existing staff where their contact with children or young people has increased from that at their time of appointment.
2. An enhanced DBS and barred person check may be carried out on any employee where the Trust has concerns about an employee's suitability to work with children and young people.
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 will be managed through the disciplinary procedure.
4. A disqualification declaration needs to be completed for all staff and volunteers involved with the provision of early years childcare, later years childcare and the direct management of that early years or later years childcare including the Principal, Executive Principal and managers. The Trust requires all the affected employees including volunteers to sign a declaration on an annual basis that there has been no change in their criminal record or those in their household.
4. All existing employees, volunteers and governors are required to inform the Trust of any change in their criminal record. This includes convictions, cautions, arrests and police investigations. The Trust requires all employees including volunteers, trustees and governors to sign a declaration on an annual basis that there has been no change in their criminal record. Action may be taken as a result of any change or any failure to inform the Trust of any change.
5. Employees (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. The expectation is that individuals personally fund this if required.

