Twickenham Preparatory School
Nurturing, Inspiring, Successful

Recruitment and Selection Policy

'We will enable each child to thrive personally, socially and academically, preparing them for the future by creating an environment that promotes wellbeing, encourages curiosity and celebrates individual success.'

Date Revised:	January 2026
Approval Body:	Board of Governors
Date Approved:	February 2026
Review Schedule:	Annually
Circulation:	Staff, governors and volunteers

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 2
2. Data Protection 2
3. Recruitment and Selection Procedure 3
4. Artificial Intelligence 5
5. Pre-Employment Checks 5
6. Governors 15
7. Contractors 17
8. Supply Staff from an Agency 17
9. Volunteers 17
10. Visiting Speakers and the Prevent Duty 18
11. Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders 19
12. Whistleblowing and Exit Interviews 19
13. Referrals to the DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency 19
14. Queries 19

Appendix 1: Self Declaration Form 20

Appendix 2: Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders 21

1. Introduction

Twickenham Preparatory School (TPS) is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. TPS is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its members of staff. The School recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment to child protection and safeguarding.

TPS is passionate about creating an inclusive school that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion within the School and eliminates unlawful discrimination. We aim to create an environment where staff and pupils can flourish and be supported to work at their best. We understand the value that diversity and inclusion can bring and we aim to be truly representative of all sections of society and the communities that we support. TPS is committed to ensuring the recruitment and selection of its staff is conducted in a manner that is fair, transparent, compliant and promotes equality of opportunity.

The aims of the School's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs), the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025) (KCSIE), Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DUCA), The Equality Act 2010, the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2023 and updated in March 2024) (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by identifying and rejecting individuals who are unsuitable to work with children and carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

2. Data Protection

The School is legally required to carry out the pre-appointment checks detailed in this procedure. Staff and prospective staff will be required to provide certain information to the School to enable the School to carry out the checks that are applicable to their role. The School will also be required to provide certain information to third parties, such as the Disclosure and Barring Service and the Teaching Regulation Agency. Failure to provide requested information may result in the School not being able to meet its employment, safeguarding or legal obligations.

The School will process personal information in accordance with its Staff Privacy Notice. Data relating to applicants will be treated confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

3. Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Job Descriptions

Every position will have a job description, which clearly defines the responsibilities of the role. The person specification is included within the job description and clarifies the required skills, experience, knowledge, qualifications, and other attributes for the role. The job description will also refer to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The job descriptions are reviewed or created each time a vacancy occurs to ensure the contents are relevant and accurate.

Application Form and Equal Opportunities Form

Vacancies will be posted on our website and other external job websites. All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form for safer recruitment and compliance purposes. Applicants will be asked to provide personal information about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. Applicants will also be asked to provide details of their online profile, including account names and social media handles so that online searches can be carried out on shortlisted candidates (see section 5.1 for more information). This information must be provided by the applicant in order for the application to be accepted.

Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the application deadline has not passed. Should there be any gaps in academic or employment history; a satisfactory explanation must be provided. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

All applicants are requested to complete and submit an equal opportunities monitoring form. This is not a mandatory requirement and the applicant's job application is not dependent on the completion of this form. The form assists the School in monitoring who is applying for employment and our adherence to equal opportunities best practice and progress towards identifying any barriers to diversity among our workforce. The information is held securely by HR and is not shared with the interview panel. When the recruitment process is complete the anonymised data is processed and used to review compliance with the School's policies on equal opportunity in relation to recruitment.

Application forms, job descriptions, person specifications, this policy, equal opportunities forms and the School's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy are available to download from the School's website and can be printed and forwarded to applicants on request.

Screening and Shortlisting

The School will then conduct a shortlisting exercise by reviewing all application forms received in order to determine which applicants will be invited for interview. The shortlisting exercise will usually be conducted by a minimum of two members of staff who will ideally also be involved in the interview process.

Applications will be assessed against an agreed selection criteria outlined in the job description and person specification. If a member of staff who is part of the shortlisting process has a close family or personal connection with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware and remove themselves from the process.

All shortlisted applicants will be required to complete a self-declaration form prior to interview in which they will be asked to provide information about their criminal records history and other

factors relevant to their suitability to work with children. This information will be considered and discussed with applicants at interview.

Interview

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. At least one member of the recruitment panel will have completed accredited safer recruitment training.

All shortlisted applicants will be tested at interview about their suitability to work with children and the same questions will be asked to all applicants. Applicants may also be required to undertake another assessment in addition to the interview (for example, presentation or classroom observation). During the interview any gaps in employment or discrepancies in employment history must be investigated and reasons for any absences documented.

Applicants will be asked to bring certain documents with them to the interview (for example, qualifications and proof of ID and right to work). References will be sought from at least two referees prior to the interview if the applicant gives their permission, one of which must be the most recent employer. Where required, every effort will be made to make reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities or chronic health conditions.

Unsuccessful candidates will be informed either by email, telephone, letter or face to face. Interview notes and feedback collated on any unsuccessful candidate will be confidentially destroyed after six months from the date of interview.

Offers of Employment

If the School decides to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, the successful applicant will be informed of their offer of employment verbally and then in writing outlining the details of the appointment conditional on all required compliance checks. Any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's standard terms and conditions of employment
- verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified)
- verification of qualifications, whether professional or otherwise, which the School takes into account in making the appointment decision, or which are referred to in the application form, whether a requirement for the role or not
- verification of the applicant's employment history
- the School being satisfied that any information generated through online searches does not make the applicant unsuitable to work at the School
- the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers to be satisfactory
- for positions which involve "teaching work", information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to, or is the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School. This check may be extended to other positions within the School following a risk assessment.
- for applicants who have carried out teaching work outside the UK, information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to, or is the subject of a

sanction issued by a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School

- where the position amounts to "regulated activity (see section 5.4.2 below) the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the School considers to be satisfactory
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" (see section 5.4.2 below) confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List*
- information about whether the applicant has ever been subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School
- for management positions, information about whether the applicant has ever been referred to the Department for Education, or is the subject of a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which renders them unable or unsuitable to work at the School
- confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from acting as a trustee / governor or senior manager of a charity under the Charities Act 2022 (if applicable, see section 5.7 below)
- confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified from working in connection with early or later years provision (if applicable, see section 5.8 below)
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role (see section 5.9 below)
- verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK; and
- any further checks which the School decides are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK which may include an overseas criminal records check, certificate of good conduct or professional references.

*The School is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The School is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff, supply staff and governors who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, the School can also carry out an enhanced DBS check on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e. roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

Whether a position amounts to "regulated activity" must therefore be considered by the School in order to decide which checks are appropriate. It is however likely that in nearly all cases the School will be able to carry out an enhanced DBS check and a Children's Barred List check.

4. Artificial Intelligence

The School does not use artificial intelligence software as a decision-making tool at any stage of the recruitment process, including in respect of external and internal applications and promotion proposals.

5. Pre-Employment Checks

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSIE, DUCA and the requirements of the ISSRs the School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective staff.

In fulfilling its obligations to carry out pre-employment checks the School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age.

All pre-employment checks will be recorded on the School's Single Central Record in accordance with KCSIE.

5.1 Online Searches

In addition to the checks set out below, the School reserves the right to obtain such formal or informal background information about an applicant as is reasonable in the circumstances to determine whether they are suitable to work at the School. In accordance with KCSIE this will include online searches on shortlisted candidates (**online searches**). The online searches the School carries out may include searches of internet search engines, websites and social media and professional networking site handles and the details of websites on which the applicant is featured or named. Applicants are asked in the application form to provide details of their online profile, including account names and social media handles. This information will be used to carry out online searches. Applicants are not required to provide account passwords or to grant the School access to social media or professional networking account content that is not publicly available. However, if information (such as profile pictures and/or account bios) is publicly available when a social media or professional networking site account is locked and can therefore be viewed by the School it may be taken into account as part of the online search.

Online searches may be carried out at the shortlisting stage or after an offer of employment has been made (but prior to work commencing). The School will not carry out online searches as part of its initial sift of applications.

The School will determine how it approaches online searches on a case by case basis. However, all applicants for a role at the School will be treated consistently with regard to online searches.

Wherever possible online searches will be undertaken by a person who will play no other part in the recruitment process (including the shortlisting exercise) or the appointment decision. In carrying out online searches the School is looking for any publicly available information about an applicant that:

- may be relevant to their suitability to carry out the role for which they have applied
- may be relevant to their suitability to work at the School or in an education setting
- is of a safeguarding nature; and / or
- may have an impact on the School's reputation (whether positive or negative).

Any information generated from online searches will be entered in an 'Online search results record'. Where online searches are undertaken on shortlisted applicants any relevant information generated will be provided to the interview panel for discussion with shortlisted applicants at interview. Where online searches are undertaken on the successful applicant only any relevant information generated will be discussed prior to employment commencing. All offers of employment will be conditional upon the School being satisfied that the successful applicant is suitable to work at the School in light of any information generated from online searches.

In evaluating any online information for relevance, the School will use the following criteria:

- whether the information is relevant to the position applied for
- whether the information is relevant to the applicant's suitability to work at the School or in an education setting
- whether the information could have an impact on the School's reputation (whether positive or negative)
- whether the information calls into doubt the applicant's willingness or ability to uphold the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- the length of time since the information became publicly available and whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the information was published
- whether the information reveals a pattern of concerning behaviour
- the relevant circumstances and the explanation(s) offered by the applicant.

For successful candidates, the School will retain information generated through online searches for the duration of the individual's employment and in accordance with its Retention of Records Policy after employment ends.

For unsuccessful candidates, the School retains the information generated from online searches for six months from the date on which they are informed their application was unsuccessful, after which it will be securely destroyed.

5.2 Verification of Identity, Address, Right to Work in the UK and Qualifications

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring with them evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, address and qualifications.

The School asks for this information at interview to ensure that the person attending interview is who they claim to be, that they are permitted to work for the School if appointed and that they hold appropriate qualifications.

5.2.1. Identity and Address

All applicants must bring with them to interview, original documents which evidence their identity and address. For a list of valid identity documents that comply with DBS identity checking guidelines, see **here**.

Applicants must always provide their birth certificate as one form of identity unless there is good reason why this cannot be provided.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

The School asks for the date of birth of all applicants in order to verify identity and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

5.2.2. Right to Work in the UK

All applicants must also bring to interview a valid form of evidence which confirms their right to work in the UK. Valid forms of evidence can be found in the Home Office 'Right to Work Checklist', see **here** and in some cases the evidence of your right to work in the UK can also be used as evidence of your identity and address for DBS identity checking purposes.

The School will check this evidence of your right to work in the UK in accordance with the Home Office 'Code of Practice on preventing illegal working: Right to Work Scheme for employers' (February 2024), see **here**.

5.2.3. Qualifications

All applicants must also bring to interview original documents which evidence any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form and/or which the School requests.

5.2.4. Retention of Records

The School will retain copies of the documents used to verify candidates' identity, right to work, and qualifications in accordance with the Retention of Records Policy.

5.3 References

References will be taken up on shortlisted applicants prior to interview where possible.

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the School. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current / most recent employment does / did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role for which the applicant has applied. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness* and disciplinary record
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired), except where the issues were deemed to have resulted from allegations which were found to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people, except where the allegation or concerns were found to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious

- whether the applicant could be considered to be involved in "extremism" (see the definition of "extremism" at section 10 below).

(*questions about health or sickness records will only be included in reference requests sent out after the offer of employment has been made.)

The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

The School will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

If it has not been possible to obtain a reference prior to interview it will be reviewed upon receipt. Any discrepancies identified between the reference and the application form and/or the interview assessment form will be considered by the School. The applicant may be asked to provide further information or clarification before an appointment can be confirmed.

If factual references are received i.e. those which contain limited information such as job title and dates of employment, this will not necessarily disadvantage an applicant although additional references may be sought before an appointment can be confirmed.

The School may at its discretion make telephone contact with any referee to verify the details of the written reference provided.

The School treats all references given or received as confidential which means that the applicant will not usually be provided with a copy.

All references received from a school must be countersigned by the Head of that school.

All internal candidates who apply for a new role at the School will have their application assessed in accordance with this procedure. References may be taken up on internal candidates as part of the application process and can be provided by colleagues as the School will be the most recent employer and will previously have taken up references from past employers.

5.4 Criminal Records Checks

Prior to 29 May 2013, an enhanced disclosure contained details of all convictions on record (including those which are defined as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. It could also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer considered relevant to the role applied for at the School.

5.4.1 DBS Filtering Rules

With effect from 29 May 2013, the DBS commenced the filtering and removal of certain specified information relating to old and minor criminal offences from all criminal records disclosures. The filtering rules developed by the DBS and the Home Office designate certain spent convictions and cautions as "protected". "Protected" convictions and cautions are not included in a DBS

certificate and job applicants are not required to disclose them during the recruitment process. It is unlawful for an employer to take into account a conviction or caution that should not have been disclosed. If a protected conviction or caution is inadvertently disclosed to the School during the recruitment process it must be disregarded when making a recruitment decision.

A conviction will always be disclosable if it was imposed for a "specified offence" committed at any age. A caution issued for a "specified offence" committed over the age of 18 will always be disclosable. However, a caution issued for a "specified offence" committed under the age of 18 is never disclosable. "Specified offences" are usually of a serious violent or sexual nature, or are relevant for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

The filtering rules have recently been updated, further details can be found here.

5.4.2 Regulated Activity

The School applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) in respect of all positions at the School which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended). The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information. Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of the School will amount to "regulated activity" if it is carried out:

- frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- overnight, meaning between 2.00 am and 6.00 am; or
- satisfies the "period condition", meaning four times or more in a 30-day period; and
- provides the opportunity for contact with children.

Roles which are carried out on an unpaid / voluntary basis will only amount to regulated activity if, in addition to the above, they are carried out on an unsupervised basis.

It is for the School to decide whether a role amounts to "regulated activity" taking into account all the relevant circumstances. However, nearly all posts at the School amount to regulated activity. Limited exceptions could include an administrative post undertaken on a temporary basis in the School office outside of term time or voluntary posts which are supervised.

5.4.3 The DBS Disclosure Certificate

The DBS issues the DBS disclosure certificate to the subject of the check only, rather than to the School. It is a condition of employment with the School that the original disclosure certificate is provided to the School within two weeks of it being received by the applicant. Original certificates should not be sent by post. A convenient time and date for bringing the certificate into the School should be arranged with HR as soon as it has been received. Applicants who are unable to attend at the School to provide the certificate are required to send in a certified copy by post or email within two weeks of the original disclosure certificate being received. Certified copies must be

sent to HR. Where a certified copy is sent, the original disclosure certificate must still be provided prior to the first day of work or on the first working day.

Employment will remain conditional upon the original certificate being provided and it being considered satisfactory by the School.

5.4.4 Starting Work Pending Receipt of the DBS Disclosure

If there is a delay in receiving a DBS disclosure the Headmaster has discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the disclosure certificate. This will only be allowed if all other checks, including a clear check of the Children's Barred List (where the position amounts to regulated activity), have been completed and once appropriate supervision has been put in place.

5.4.5 Applicants with Periods of Overseas Residence

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. The School takes into account the "DBS unusual addresses guide" in such circumstances.

For applicants who are living overseas, or who have lived overseas previously, obtaining a DBS certificate may be insufficient to establish their suitability to work at the School. In such cases the applicant will be required to provide additional information about their suitability from the country (or countries) in which they have lived. The School's policy is to request such information from each overseas country in which the applicant has lived for a period of three months or more in the previous five years.

When requesting such information, the School has regard to relevant government guidance and will therefore always require the applicant to apply for a formal check from the country in question i.e. a criminal records check (or equivalent) or a certificate of good conduct.

The School recognises that formal checks are not available from some countries, that they can be significantly delayed or that a response may not be provided. In such circumstances the School will seek to obtain further information from the country in question, such as a reference from any employment undertaken in that country.

In addition, where an applicant for a teaching position has worked as a teacher outside of the UK, the School will ask the applicant to obtain from the professional regulating authority of the teaching profession in each country in which they have worked as a teacher, evidence which confirms that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on the applicant and that they are not aware of any reason why the applicant may be unsuitable to work as a teacher. The School will also ask shortlisted applicants (and their referees) to disclose whether they have ever been referred to, or are the subject of a sanction issued by, the regulator of the teaching profession in the countries in which they have carried out teaching work.

Sanctions and restrictions issued by the regulating authority of another country will not prevent a person from working as a teacher at the School. However, the School will take all relevant information into account in determining whether an applicant is suitable to work at the School.

The School may allow an applicant to commence work pending receipt of a formal check from a particular country if it has received a reference and/or letter of professional standing from that country and considers the applicant suitable to start work. Decisions on suitability will be based on all of the information that has been obtained during the recruitment process. Unless expressly waived by the School, continued employment will remain conditional upon the School being provided with the outcome of the formal check and it being considered satisfactory.

If no information is available from a particular country the School may allow an applicant to commence work if they are considered suitable based on all of the information that has been obtained during the recruitment process.

The School will take proportionate risk-based decisions on a person's suitability in these circumstances. All suitability assessments must be documented and retained on file

If the formal check is delayed and the School is not satisfied about the applicant's suitability in the absence of that information, the applicant's proposed start date may be delayed until the formal check is received.

5.5 Prohibition from Teaching Check

The School is required to check whether staff who carry out "teaching work" are prohibited from doing so. The School uses the Department for Education's 'Check a teacher's record' service (via DfE Sign-in) to verify whether successful applicants are the subject of a prohibition, or interim prohibition order issued by a professional conduct panel on behalf of the Teaching Regulation Agency.

In addition, the School asks all applicants to declare in the application form whether they have ever been referred to, or are the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by, the Teaching Regulation Agency or other equivalent body in the UK.

Where an applicant is not currently prohibited from teaching but has been the subject of a referral to, or hearing before, the Teaching Regulation Agency (or other equivalent body) whether or not that resulted in the imposition of a sanction, or where a sanction has lapsed or been lifted, the School will consider whether the facts of the case render the applicant unsuitable to work at the School.

The School carries out this check, and requires associated information, for roles which involve "teaching work". In doing so the School applies the definition of "teaching work" set out in the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 which states that the following activities amount to "teaching work":

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils
- delivering lessons to pupils
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
- reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

The above activities do not amount to "teaching work" if they are supervised by a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the Head. If in any doubt or if the applicant has taught previously, or may teach in future, the check will be undertaken, including for sports coaches.

Following a risk assessment, the School may take the decision to extend the Prohibition from Teaching check to other non-teaching roles.

5.6 Prohibition from Management Check

The School is required to check whether any applicant for a management position is subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school (a section 128 direction).

The School will carry out checks for section 128 directions when appointing applicants into management positions from both outside the School and by internal promotion.

This check applies to appointments to the following positions made on or after 12 August 2015:

- Head
- teaching posts on the senior leadership team
- teaching posts which carry a departmental head role
- support staff posts on the senior leadership team

The School will assess on a case by case basis whether the check should be carried out when appointments are made to teaching and support staff roles which carry additional responsibilities.

All individuals who are appointed to the governing body will be subject to a section 128 direction check.

The relevant information is contained in the enhanced DBS disclosure certificate (which the School obtains for all posts at the School that amount to regulated activity). It can also be checked by reviewing the DfE list via the Teacher Regulation Agency. The School will use either, or both, methods to obtain this information.

In addition, the School asks all applicants for management roles to declare in the application form whether they have ever been the subject of a referral to the Department for Education, or are subject to a section 128 direction or any other sanction which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school.

Where an applicant is not currently prohibited from management but has been the subject of a referral to, or hearing before, the Department for Education or other appropriate body whether that resulted in the imposition of a section 128 direction or other sanction, or where a section 128 direction or other sanction has lapsed or been lifted, the School will consider whether the facts of the case render the applicant unsuitable to work at the School.

5.7 Disqualification from Acting as a Charity Trustee or Senior Manager

5.7.1 Background

Under the Charities Act 2022 it is a criminal offence for a person to act as a trustee or senior manager of a charity when disqualified from doing so. The Charities Act 2022 sets out the grounds on which a person can be disqualified from acting as a trustee or senior manager. These include various spent and unspent criminal offences and other sanctions.

5.7.2 Who is Covered?

A person is considered to be a charity trustee if they are one of the people who have general control and management of the administration of the charity. In an independent school the trustees will typically be the governors of the school.

Senior managers include those employees who report directly to the charity trustees or have responsibility for the overall management and control of the charity's finances. At the School the disqualification rules will be applicable to all governors, the Headmaster and potentially other senior staff who report directly to the governors.

There is no single list or register that covers all of the disqualification criteria and the School therefore adopts a pragmatic approach to checking whether a person is disqualified. This is achieved by the use of a self-declaration form and the checking of relevant publicly accessible registers.

5.7.3 Self-Declaration

All those who are covered by the disqualification rules are required to complete a self-declaration form to confirm whether, to the best of their knowledge, they are subject to any of the disqualification criteria.

A failure to disclose relevant information, or the provision of false information, which subsequently comes to the School's attention may result in the termination of an appointment as a governor or senior manager or the withdrawal of an offer of employment and may also amount to a criminal offence.

All those who are required to complete a self-declaration form are also under an ongoing duty to inform the School if there is a change in their circumstances that results or may result in them becoming disqualified from acting as a governor or senior manager.

5.7.4 Checks by the School

To ensure that it has accurate and up to date information the School will also check the following registers in respect of each governor and senior manager who is already in post or is appointed in future:

- the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Register
- the register of disqualified directors maintained by Companies House
- and the register of persons who have been removed as a charity trustee.

5.7.5 Waiver

A person who discloses that one or more of the disqualification criteria is applicable to them may apply to the Charity Commission for a waiver of the disqualification.

The School may at its absolute discretion withdraw an offer of employment for a senior manager or cease or terminate an appointment to the governing body if a waiver application becomes necessary or is rejected by the Charity Commission. The School is under no obligation to await the outcome of a Charity Commission waiver application before taking such action.

5.8 Childcare Disqualification

The Childcare Act 2006 (Act) and the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (Regulations) state that it is an offence for the School to employ anyone in connection with our early years provision (EYP) or later years provision (LYP) who is disqualified, or for a disqualified person to be directly involved in the management of EYP or LYP. For further information please see **here.**

5.8.1 Self-Declaration Form

All applicants to whom an offer of employment is made to carry out a relevant role in EYP or LYP will be required to complete a self-declaration form confirming whether they meet any of the criteria for disqualification under the Regulations. **See Appendix 1 for further information.**

5.9 Medical Fitness

The School is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

It is the School's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete a Health Questionnaire. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed timetable, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School etc. If there is any doubt about an applicant's fitness the School will consider reasonable adjustments in consultation with the applicant. The School may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.

Successful applicants will be required to sign a declaration of medical fitness confirming that there are no reasons, on grounds of mental or physical health, why they should not be able to discharge the responsibilities required by the role. If an applicant prefers to discuss this with the School instead, or to attend an occupational health assessment to consider their fitness for the role, they should contact HR so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence, considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

6. Governors

As Trustees of a registered charity, the Governors of the School are responsible for the selection and appointment of new Governors. This is a legal responsibility that cannot be delegated. Although suggestions are encouraged from the Headmaster, staff and parents.

As Charity Trustees, the Governors are aware of the importance of identifying the appropriate mixture of skills and experience that the School needs to manage the multi-faceted affairs of the School. The School will avoid appointing or retaining trustees who are disqualified from being a trustee, unless the Charity Commission has given a waiver. All potential trustees should complete a Charity Trustee Positions: Automatic Disqualification Declaration before beginning the selection process.

Following return of the completed disqualification declaration, all Governors complete a selection process, which requires;

- the submission of a CV
- completion of an interview with two or three senior Governors
- a meeting with the Head.

Every Governor has an enhanced DBS check unless they will be undertaking regulated activity, in which case they will they will undertake an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check. Each appointment is ratified by the full Board for a period of 5 years. The School arranges for all new Governors to receive a thorough induction in child protection and in the compliance and fiduciary duties of governance. New Governors spend a day at the School in order to meet the key personalities and to gain an insight into the curriculum and to meet groups of pupils.

6.1 Governor's Selection Process

6.1.1 The Initial Stage

When a potential Governor has been identified, who has expressed an interest; he or she will be invited to visit the School and to meet the Headmaster informally, and to have a tour of the school. If the Chair of Governors is not present at that stage, s/he will probably arrange a separate informal meeting, perhaps in the company of another, experienced Governor. At that meeting, the School's strategic vision for the next five years and the direction in which the Governors see the school moving will be discussed. The aim of the informal meeting is to ensure that every prospective Governor has a clear understanding of the commitment expected of him or her, in terms of time and attendance and is given sufficient material about the School that is in the public domain (prospectus, latest ISI Inspection Report, Statutory Accounts and Annual Return for the previous year) to allow a well-informed judgement to be made before committing themselves to the appointment process.

At the informal meeting, candidates will be briefed about the range of statutory checks that are required as part of the appointment process.

6.1.2 The Appointment Process

The second step is to invite the prospective Governor to submit a copy of his/her CV under a covering letter to the Chair of Governors. Prospective Governors are interviewed by two or three senior Governors, who recommend all appointments to the full Governing Body. Care is taken to select Governors who are prepared to serve for a minimum of three, and preferably, five years (which is the normal length of a term of appointment), and to be prepared to commit the time necessary to get to know the school.

All new appointments are formally recorded in the minutes of the Board, and a formal letter of appointment is sent by the Chair, which specifies the term of the appointment, the total tenure for a Governor, and, if appropriate, the sub-Committee(s) to which the new Governor has been appointed.

6.1.3 Safer Recruitment Checks

HR will obtain the following from the new potential governor before their appointment is confirmed:

- an enhanced DBS certificate
- if the Governor will be undertaking a regulated activity, a barred list check
- evidence of their entitlement to work in the UK, where relevant

- confirmation that they are not disqualified from acting as a Charity Trustee or Company Director, for example by virtue of an undischarged bankruptcy
- evidence that the Governor has not been prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools
- If the new Governor is also to be appointed as a Company Director, a completed Form AP01 (downloadable from www.completeformations.co.uk) will be sent to Companies House to register the appointment.

All paperwork is handled by the Head of Operations and HR.

6.1.4 Checks Regarding the Chair of Governors

If the Chair of Governors is to change, the School will ensure that the DfE obtains an enhanced criminal records check, and checks both the individual's identity and right to work in the UK before he or she takes up the appointment. Further overseas checks are required if the person lives or has lived outside the UK.

The Chair's disclosure application has to be made by the DfE; the School cannot handle it as they would for all other Governors. So, even if a Governor, whom the School has already checked, becomes Chair, the DfE has to make yet another check.

The appointment will also be updated online with the Charity Commission.

7. Contractors

Employees of contractors who work at the School on a long-term basis will be subject to the same checks as school staff, with written confirmation supplied by the employing organisation, before any such individual can commence work at the School.

The School will independently verify the identity of employees of contractors in accordance with section 5.2 above.

8. Supply Staff from an Agency

Agencies who supply staff to the School must complete the pre-employment checks which the School would otherwise complete for its staff. The School requires confirmation that these checks have been completed including sight of the DBS disclosure certificate, before an individual can commence work at the School.

The School will independently verify the identity of individuals supplied by an agency in accordance with section 5.2 above.

9. Volunteers

The School will request an enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List information on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with pupils at or on behalf of the School (the definition of regulated activity set out in section 5.4.2 above will be applied to all volunteers).

The School will request an enhanced DBS disclosure without Children's Barred List information on all regular volunteers who do not undertake regulated activity. This is likely to be because their volunteering duties are subject to regular, day to day supervision by a fully checked member of staff or by a volunteer who the School has deemed appropriate to supervise and ensure the safety of those pupils in their care.

Under no circumstances will the School permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with pupils.

It is the School's policy that a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with the School for three consecutive months or more. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with the School on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits the School to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

The School will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to the following):

- formal or informal information provided by staff, parents and other volunteers
- character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source
- an informal safer recruitment interview.

10. Visiting Speakers and the Prevent Duty

The Prevent Duty Guidance requires the School to have clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers, whether invited by staff or by pupils, are suitable and appropriately supervised.

The School is not permitted to obtain a DBS disclosure or Children's Barred List information on any visiting speaker who does not engage in regulated activity at the School or perform any other regular duties for or on behalf of the School.

All visiting speakers will be subject to the School's usual visitors' protocol. This will include signing in and out using the School's InVentry System, the wearing of a visitors' badge at all times and being escorted by a fully vetted member of staff between appointments. See the School's Visitors Policy for further information.

The School will also obtain such formal or informal background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and / or permit a speaker to attend the School. In doing so the School will always have regard to the Prevent Duty Guidance and the government's definition of "extremism" in 2024 which states:

"*Extremism is the promotion of advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:*

1. *negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or*
2. *undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or*
3. *intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2)"*

In fulfilling its Prevent Duty obligations the School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age.

11. Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

For further information on the School's policy of recruitment of ex-offenders, see;

Appendix 2: Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders.

12. Whistleblowing and Exit Interviews

All staff are trained so that they understand they are expected and encouraged to raise concerns they have, whether related to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils, the conduct of staff or other matters, during the course of their employment in accordance with the School's polices (including the Whistleblowing Policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct). All staff receive training so that they understand the School's expectations. Safeguarding children is at the centre of the School's culture and is accordingly considered formally during staff performance development reviews and appraisal and finally at an exit interview which may be held with leavers.

13. Referrals to the DBS and Teaching Regulation Agency

This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion and practice of safer recruitment. However, applicants should also be aware that the School has legal responsibilities to fulfil when employment comes to an end, in particular, the School has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS where:

- an individual has applied for a position at the School despite being barred from working with children; and/or
- an individual has been removed by the School from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to a child.

The DBS will consider whether to impose sanctions on that individual which may restrict or prevent them from working with children in future.

In addition, if a teacher is dismissed because they are found to have committed serious misconduct, or they have breached the Teachers' Standards, or they resign prior to dismissal on such grounds, the School will make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

The Teaching Regulation Agency will consider whether to impose a prohibition from teaching order.

14. Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to apply for a post at the School, they should contact HR.

Appendix 1: Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 Self Declaration Form

The School will decide whether a role is relevant and within the scope of EYP or LYP by having regard to the guidance in DUCA. Employment with the School in any relevant role will be conditional upon completion of the self-declaration form and upon the applicant not being disqualified.

The School cannot permit any person who is currently disqualified to start work in a relevant role. The School also reserves the right at its absolute discretion to withdraw an offer of employment if, in the opinion of the School, any information disclosed in the self-declaration form renders that person unsuitable to work at the School.

Applicants who have any criminal records information to disclose about themselves must also provide the following information:

- details of the order, restriction, conviction or caution and the date that this was made;
- the relevant court or body and the sentence, if any, which was imposed; and
- a copy of the relevant order or conviction.

Applicants are not required to disclose a caution or conviction for an offence committed in the United Kingdom if it has been filtered in accordance with the DBS filtering rules (see section 5.4.1 above).

For the avoidance of doubt the School does not require applicants to request any criminal records information directly from the DBS. The School only requires applicants to provide relevant information about themselves "to the best of their knowledge". The completion of a self-declaration form is an annual on-going requirement for those staff performing a relevant role.

Appendix 2: Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

1. Policy Statement

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Twickenham Preparatory School (TPS) complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

The School:

- undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed
- can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that TPS are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)
- can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected
- is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background
- has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process
- actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records
- selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- ensures an application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position
- ensures that all those in TPS who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. Also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- ensures that at interview or in a separate meeting an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment
- makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and makes a copy available on request

- undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

2. Background

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details disclosed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record, this will not automatically bar them from employment with the School. Each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

All positions within the School are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants must therefore declare all previous convictions and cautions, including those which would normally be considered "spent" except those received for an offence committed in the United Kingdom if it has been filtered in accordance with the DBS filtering rules.

A failure to disclose a previous conviction (which should be declared) may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure to disclose is discovered after employment has started, 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.

It is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the School. The School will make a report to the police and / or the DBS if:

- it receives an application from a barred person
- it is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- it has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

3. Assessment Criteria

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 School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the applicant.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:

- murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence; or

- serious class A drug related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School'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.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last ten years.

4. Assessment Procedure

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 School will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the Headmaster of the School before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the School may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

5. Retention and Security of Disclosure Information

The School's policy is to observe the guidance issued or supported by the DBS on the use of disclosure information.