

Recruitment Policy 2026

EKC Schools Trust

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1. Policy Statement

EKC Schools Trust is committed to serving our communities. Equality, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of our culture, both as educators and as an employer.

This policy sets out our recruitment framework. It has been adopted by the Trustees and will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with statutory guidance and legislation, including the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

EKC Schools Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff, volunteers, governors and trustees are expected to share and demonstrate this commitment.

All recruitment will be conducted in accordance with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including the Equality Act 2010, UK GDPR, 'Prevent' duty and employment law; as well as DfE guidance including Disqualification under the Childcare Act (DUCA) 2006.

Recruitment practices will reflect the Trust's responsibilities under KCSIE and other statutory guidance, including:

- Preventing unsuitable individuals from working with children.
- Promoting safer recruitment practices across all settings.
- Ensuring appropriate vetting and safeguarding checks are in place.

All individuals involved in recruitment and selection decisions must adhere to this policy.

The Trust will ensure that training is provided for those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and that it is appropriate to their role. At least one member of every appointment panel will have successfully completed appropriate Safer Recruitment Training.

The Trust will ensure training is regularly refreshed and that all individuals involved in recruitment understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are able to identify and challenge concerns arising at any stage of the recruitment process.

EKC Schools Trust recognises that safer recruitment forms part of a wider safeguarding culture in which all adults working with children act in the best interests of children. Recruitment decisions will always take account of a candidate's suitability to work with children alongside professional competence, qualifications and experience. Safeguarding considerations will be embedded throughout every stage of the recruitment process.

2. Equal Opportunities Statement

EKC Schools Trust is committed to ensuring that every stage of the recruitment and selection process is inclusive, fair, and accessible to all. We regularly review our recruitment policy and procedures to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and to prevent discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We actively promote equality of opportunity and welcome applications from all backgrounds. Reasonable adjustments will be made to support candidates throughout the recruitment process where needed.

3. 'Prevent'

EKC Schools Trust recognises its statutory duty under Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 to have “*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.*” This is known as the Prevent Duty.

In line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 guidance, the Trust and its academies will:

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including exposure to extremist ideologies.
- Ensure staff are trained to identify and respond to concerns related to radicalisation.
- Promote a safe and inclusive environment that actively challenges extremist views.
- Work in partnership with local safeguarding boards, Prevent coordinators, and other relevant agencies.

This duty applies to all staff and volunteers, who must remain vigilant and report any concerns in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding procedures.

4. Prior to Advertising

When a vacancy occurs the recruiting manager and senior leader will review the need for the post and consider all options (internal and external) before deciding that there is a need to recruit. If there is a need to recruit the job description and person specification will be reviewed in line with the school workforce plan.

Approval to proceed with recruitment must be obtained from the Headteacher for academy-based roles or the CEO for Trust-wide appointments.

Recruitment Panels will be made up of the following:

CEO	Panel of Trustees - not less than 5
Trust Senior Positions	CEO and Panel of at least 2 Trustees
Headteachers	CEO and Panel of at least 2 Governors
Academy Leadership Positions	Headteacher and Governor plus at least 1 other Governor or Senior Staff Member
Central Trust Staff	Panel of at least 2 at the discretion of CEO
Other Academy Roles	Panel of at least 2 at the discretion of Headteacher

The Trust is committed to promoting flexible working. Consideration will be given to working hours and contractual arrangements to ensure roles are open to candidates seeking part-time or job-share opportunities, where possible and practical.

5. Job Description

The job description defines the purpose, scope, and expectations of the role. It will:

- Summarise the job's purpose and impact.
- Outline key responsibilities and accountabilities.
- Clarify reporting lines and line management arrangements.

An up-to-date job description and person specification will be prepared for each vacancy prior to advertisement.

Managers will refer to the Professional Standards for Teachers and to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (which sets out the expected attributes of Main Scale, Post Threshold, Advanced Skills and Excellent Teachers) when creating job descriptions for teaching posts.

All job descriptions, person specifications and adverts will clearly state the extent of contact with children, whether the post is engaged in regulated activity (as defined in KCSIE), and the post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

6. Person Specification

The person specification is a description of the qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills, competencies, and other attributes of the ideal person to fill the role; and indicates how each attribute will be assessed, e.g. application form, interview, practical test/assessment. It serves as a benchmark for objectively and fairly assessing candidates. All candidates will be assessed objectively against the criteria set out in the person specification, ensuring consistency, fairness, and transparency throughout the recruitment process.

7. Advertising

All vacant posts will be advertised in a fair, open, and transparent manner. In most cases, roles will be advertised externally to attract a broad and diverse pool of candidates.

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- The Trust and School's values and culture, and our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people; and
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, as described in the job description and person specification.
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken.
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account.
- Online searches may be carried out on shortlisted candidates as part of the Trust's safeguarding due diligence process.
- Candidates will be informed these checks are being undertaken.

“EKC Schools Trust is unwavering in its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All roles within the Trust are subject to robust safer recruitment procedures, including an Enhanced Disclosure application to the Disclosure and Barring Service”.

8. Applications

All candidates must complete the Trust application form in full to enable fair and objective shortlisting. Applications submitted by CV or letter alone will not be considered.

The application form clearly states that it is an offence to apply for a role involving regulated activity if the applicant is barred from engaging in such activity. A link to the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is provided to ensure transparency and reinforce our safeguarding culture.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025, candidates will no longer be asked to complete a separate Criminal Convictions Self-Disclosure form at the point of application. Instead, shortlisted candidates will be asked to disclose relevant criminal history at the appropriate stage of the process. This ensures that the processing of criminal data is targeted, proportionate, and compliant with data protection legislation.

Applications must be:

- Fully completed, with clear and unambiguous information.
- E-signed and dated by the applicant.
- Submitted by the stated deadline.

The Trust reserves the right to reject applications that are incomplete or contain ambiguous information.

9. Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be carried out by at least two individuals, one of whom should be the line manager (or as per the agreed panel arrangements for the role). The process will be fair, consistent, and based on the fair and objective assessment of each application against the criteria set out in the person specification.

Once candidates are shortlisted, they will be asked to complete a Shortlisted Candidates Self-Disclosure Form, allowing them to share relevant information and discuss it during the interview. Candidates will be signposted to relevant guidance, including the Ministry of Justice website, for advice on criminal conviction disclosure.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to declare:

- Any criminal history, including unspent convictions and conditional cautions.
- Whether they are included on the DBS Children's Barred List.
- Whether they are prohibited from teaching and/or taking part in the management of an Independent school
- Any criminal offences committed overseas, in line with UK law.
- Whether they are known to the police or children's social care as a risk or

potential risk to children.

- Whether they have been disqualified from providing childcare.

Candidates must sign and date the declaration to confirm the accuracy of the information provided. Where an electronic signature is used, candidates will be asked to physically sign a hard copy at the point of interview, alongside their application form.

As part of our due diligence, the Trust will undertake an online search of all shortlisted candidates. The purpose of the search is to identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online which may affect a candidate's suitability to work with children. Searches will be conducted in a consistent, proportionate and lawful manner and any relevant concerns will be explored with the candidate and recorded as part of the recruitment process. Candidates will be informed that these checks will be undertaken.

Where online searches identify content that may have been generated or manipulated using artificial intelligence (AI), including deepfake images, videos or other synthetic media, the Trust will take reasonable steps to assess the reliability, context and relevance of the information before making any recruitment decision.

Failure to disclose relevant information may result in disqualification from the appointment process. If appointed, it may lead to immediate dismissal without notice.

10. References

To comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education, EKC Schools Trust has a policy that all references will be obtained and concerns resolved before confirming an appointment. This will be done by a standard reference form.

It is the Trust's practice, with the applicant's consent, to conduct reference checks prior to the interview. Referees will be provided with the job description and person specification to support their response.

If candidates have indicated that they do not consent to references being sought prior to interview, further information should be sought, and agreement to proceed with the reference should be obtained from the applicant where possible.

On receipt, references will be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. Any discrepancies or anomalies (between references and the application form) will be noted and addressed during the applicant's interview. The reference will include specific questions to assess the applicant's suitability for working with children. Where the referee has concerns, they will be asked to give their reason for this.

Reference Requirements

- Candidates must provide two referees, one of whom must be the current or most recent employer with sufficient seniority/appropriate authority
- References must be obtained directly from the referee; testimonials or open references will not be accepted.
- For candidates currently working in education, references will be sought from the Headteacher or, in other settings, the Principal or Registered Manager as appropriate.

- If the candidate previously worked with children but is not currently doing so, one reference must be from their most recent children's workforce employer.
- The Trust may request alternative referees if the initial ones are deemed inappropriate.

The Trust will seek to confirm whether the candidate has been subject to any formal disciplinary procedures within the last two years and to establish any details, outcomes or 'live' sanctions which are in place.

In cases where there have been substantiated disciplinary concerns or safeguarding issues involving children, the referee will be required to confirm the details.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, cases in which an allegation is proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious should not be included in employer references.

When recruiting teaching posts the Trust will seek to confirm whether candidates have been subject to formal capability proceedings in the past 2 years as part of the appointment process.

In the case of recruitment to all other posts the Trust will ask referees to confirm whether candidates are currently subject to any live capability warnings as part of the appointment process.

Where reference information raises safeguarding concerns or lacks sufficient detail to assess suitability to work with children, the Trust may seek further clarification from the referee, previous employers or other relevant organisations before any appointment is confirmed. No appointment will be confirmed until all concerns are resolved.

11. Interview and Selection

EKC Schools Trust is committed to ensuring that all candidates are assessed fairly and consistently against the criteria set out in the job description and person specification, with safeguarding as a central consideration.

Accessibility and Fairness: Candidates who have indicated a disability on their application will be invited to request any reasonable adjustments to support their attendance at the interview, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Candidates will be asked to:

- Bring original evidence of relevant qualifications, which will be checked and copied, signed, and dated.
- Bring certain documentation to the interview, which shows their eligibility to work in the UK in order to comply with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 – Prevention of Illegal Working.
- Sign a printed copy of their application form and self-declaration form in the presence of the person conducting identity and document checks.

Panels will include at least one member who has completed Safer Recruitment Training, in accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. No panel member may participate in an interview where a candidate is a relative, partner, or close friend.

The panel will take structured notes, record all information considered, and document

the decisions made. The panel will consider each candidate against the criteria for the post before reaching its decision. Any concerns or anomalies identified during shortlisting or from references will be explored during the interview.

Interview processes will include assessment of a candidate's attitude towards safeguarding, child welfare and professional boundaries. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of safeguarding responsibilities relevant to the post and their commitment to maintaining public trust in education.

Documents relating to unsuccessful candidates will be retained with the interview papers and destroyed six months from the date on which the position was offered and accepted by the successful candidate.

12. Pre-Employment Checks

All offers of employment will be conditional on the successful completion of the pre-employment checks listed below and will include confirmation of salary, start date and any information that the successful applicant needs to provide before commencing employment e.g. DBS form and pre-employment questionnaire.

All offers of employment will be subject to and conditional upon satisfactory:

- Online search to identify if there are any concerns which would lead the school to question the candidate's suitability to work with children, which will have been discussed with the candidate either before or at the interview.
- Enhanced DBS check.
- DBS Barred list check where working in regulated activity.
- Verification of identity including Date of Birth.
- Verification that the individual presenting themselves for employment is the same person to whom all safeguarding checks relate.
- Verification of entitlement to work in the UK.
- Verification of relevant qualifications, including Qualified Teacher Status.
- Receipt of 2 satisfactory references.
- Satisfactory pre-employment health clearance.
- Prohibition checks for those in teaching work and those with previous teaching experience (including unqualified teachers, HLTA's etc.)
- A section 128 Prohibition from Management check for those taking up a management position (Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers and deputy/assistant headteachers)
- Disqualification checks under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations for individuals employed to work in reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8 in schools providing childcare. Further information can be found in the Guidance Notes which accompany this policy and in the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance on Gov.UK
- Overseas checks as appropriate on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK.

If these are not satisfactory an offer of employment will be withdrawn or, where an individual has commenced work, employment will be terminated.

Existing staff: In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when: there are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or there has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.

Agency and third-party staff: We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Trainee/student teachers: Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

Volunteers: We will never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity. We will obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity; and carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.

Contractors: Appropriate checks and safeguarding arrangements will be in place for contractors working on Trust premises. The level of checking required will be determined through a risk assessment based upon the nature of the work, opportunities for contact with children and whether the work is supervised. Written assurances may be obtained from employers where appropriate.

Governors, Trustees and Members: EKC Schools Trust will ensure that Trustees, Members and Local Governors are subject to appropriate safeguarding and suitability checks in accordance with KCSIE, company law requirements and the Academy Trust Handbook.

These checks may include:

- Identity verification.
- Enhanced DBS checks.
- Section 128 checks where applicable.
- Right to work checks where appropriate.
- Prohibition and management checks where required.

All required checks will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

12.1. Right to Work

The interview candidate's original documents must be checked, and a signed and dated copy retained for at least six months or in line with the school retention policy if longer.

The Home Office Right to Work Checklist shows the acceptable identity documentation as currently defined by the Home Office and further information on

establishing an individual's right to work can be found at:

[Right to work checks: an employer's guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/right-to-work-checks);

Candidates from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens should be aware of the revised requirements for obtaining right to work following the UK's departure from the EU. Further information can be found at:

[Right to work checks: an employer's guide - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/right-to-work-checks)

12.2.DBS and Barred List Checks

It is the Trust's practice that individuals obtain a satisfactory enhanced DBS check before commencing work. In exceptional circumstances where the applicant is required to commence work before the full disclosure certificate is received, where working in regulated activity, a barred list check must be carried out before employment commences and supervision must be in place until a satisfactory DBS check is obtained.

In cases where the Trust is notified that a DBS check reveals positive results for criminal convictions, cautions, or warnings, the certificate's contents will be reviewed, and a determination on suitability will be made.

More information about posts which require an Enhanced DBS and how to check the Barred List can be found at:

[Check someone's criminal record as an employer: Checks you can make on someone's record - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-someone-s-criminal-record)

12.3.Overseas Checks

The Trust will ensure that individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK will undergo the same checks as all other staff in schools or colleges. This includes obtaining (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) even if the individual has never been to the UK.

In addition, the Trust will make any further appropriate checks so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. EKC Schools Trust will apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world. This will include:

- Obtaining a criminal record check for time spent abroad. Further information on how to obtain such a check can be found at: [Guidance on the application process for criminal records checks overseas - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-the-application-process-for-criminal-records-checks-overseas)
- For teaching positions obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and /or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Candidates can find contact details of regulatory bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professions database. Candidates can also contact the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications who will signpost them to the appropriate EEA regulatory body.

The overseas checks will be carried out in addition to obtaining an enhanced DBS check as the DBS check alone is not sufficient to establish the candidate's suitability

to work with children.

12.4.Proof of Qualifications

Proof of qualifications will be checked to ensure that they match with the candidate's application form. The name of the qualification, awarding institution, date of qualification and candidate name will be checked. A signed and dated copy of the certificate will be retained as evidence of when the check was carried out, and by whom.

In the case of teachers, Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) will be checked via the Teacher Regulation Agency's Self-Service Portal at: [Teaching Regulation Agency](#)

In the event of any concerns regarding the validity of the qualification, a candidate may be required to obtain confirmation or clarification in writing from the exam board or awarding institution.

12.5.Follow Up References

Following a written conditional offer of employment to the successful candidate, a supplementary reference request will be sent to their original referees. This is an opportunity to request information about sickness absence and attendance records which cannot be requested prior to an offer of employment in order to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

The offer of employment is conditional on both parts of the reference being satisfactory.

12.6.Pre-Employment Medical History Questionnaire

In accordance with the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003, EKC Schools Trust requires all successful candidates to complete a medical history questionnaire to confirm their physical and mental fitness to carry out the role.

Completed questionnaires will be reviewed alongside reference information, particularly regarding sickness absence and attendance. Where appropriate, further advice may be sought from Occupational Health to assess fitness for the role.

The Trust is committed to making reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 to support candidates with medical conditions or disabilities in taking up their role. In cases where a candidate is assessed as medically unfit to perform the role and reasonable adjustments cannot be made, the Trust reserves the right to withdraw the offer of employment.

13. Withdrawal of Offers

All offers of employment made by EKC Schools Trust are conditional, subject to the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks, including references, DBS clearance, medical fitness, and verification of qualifications and identity.

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw a conditional offer if:

- Pre-employment checks are unsatisfactory.
- The candidate is found to be barred from working with children or otherwise prohibited from taking up the role.
- The candidate provides false or misleading information during the recruitment process.

If a candidate has already commenced employment and information subsequently comes to light that would have led to the withdrawal of the offer, the Trust may take appropriate action, which may include termination of employment without notice, in line with safeguarding and employment procedures.

14. Single Central Record

In accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), EKC Schools Trust maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) for:

- Employees.
- Agency and supply staff.
- Governors.
- Trustees.
- Members where required.
- Volunteers as appropriate.

The SCR will record:

- Identity checks.
- Enhanced DBS checks.
- Children's barred list checks.
- Prohibition from teaching checks.
- Section 128 checks.
- Right to work checks.
- Qualification checks where required.
- Overseas criminal record checks where applicable.
- Date each check was completed.
- Person completing the check.

The SCR will be reviewed and audited regularly to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and safeguarding expectations. Data will be processed in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy.

15. Complaints

EKC Schools Trust is committed to ensuring that all recruitment and selection processes are fair, transparent, and professionally conducted.

If an individual believes they have been treated unfairly during the recruitment process, they may raise a formal complaint in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Procedure. Existing employees of the Trust should raise concerns through the Grievance Procedure.

Where pupils attend Alternative Provision or other external education providers, the Trust will satisfy itself that appropriate safeguarding arrangements and recruitment checks are in place in accordance with statutory guidance.

16. Induction

Induction is essential in ensuring that new employees are properly equipped for work, their role in the life of the school and the Trust and feeling part of our community.

The Trust or school will put in place an induction programme for all staff joining the school. This will vary, taking into account previous experience and the nature of the role, but will ensure that all staff and volunteers receive guidance on safe working practices and the safeguarding policies of the school.

Ongoing Safeguarding Responsibilities

The Trust expects all employees, volunteers, governors and trustees to maintain the highest standards of conduct and suitability throughout their engagement.

Individuals must immediately disclose:

- Criminal investigations.
- Criminal charges.
- Criminal convictions.
- Police cautions.
- Inclusion on a barred list.
- Prohibition orders.
- Childcare disqualification matters.
- Any safeguarding concern that may affect their suitability to work with children.

Failure to disclose relevant information may result in disciplinary action, referral to relevant authorities or dismissal.

17. Record Keeping

EKC Schools Trust is committed to maintaining accurate and secure records throughout the recruitment process. Records including application forms, shortlisting and interview notes, scoring matrices, and references will be retained for a minimum of 6 months from the date the post is offered and accepted (or from the date of interview for unsuccessful candidates) in line with the Trust's Document Retention Schedule.

At the end of the recruitment process, all identity documentation (e.g. passport, birth certificate) relating to unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed. All personal data will be stored and destroyed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Trust's Data Protection Policy. Original or copy DBS certificates will not be retained on personal files. Instead, relevant details will be recorded on the Single Central Record (SCR).

18. Confidentiality and Data Protection

EKC Schools Trust recognises its responsibilities under the UK GDPR and associated legislation, and the rights of individuals regarding the personal data held about them. All records relating to the recruitment process will be collected, processed, stored, and shared securely and lawfully and managed within the Trust's Data Protection Policy.