**Ad Astra**

**Safer Recruitment Policy**

## 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to define the provisions strategic approach to recruitment and selection activity and to establish a consistent framework for the application of these activities.

1.2 Ad Astra recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor in recruitment and selection and is an essential part of creating safe environments for children and young people. Ad Astra is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection activities are undertaken in a fair and transparent way and that appointments are based on the candidate judged to be most suitable. The aims, therefore, of this policy are to:

* attract and appoint the highest calibre of applicants;
* ensure safe and equitable recruitment and selection is conducted at all times;
* deter, identify and reject prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people.

1.3 This document is available to all members of provision staff and to any prospective applicant. Ad Astra welcomes any comments or contributions to this policy.

## 2. Legal context

2.1 Ad Astra recognises that recruitment and selection is governed by many statutory provisions, too numerous to list separately, and is committed to ensuring that all legislative requirements are met in the application of this policy.

2.2 This policy does not form part of any employee’s contractual terms and conditions and any links within this document to other documents are for ease of use and do not form part of this policy.

## 3. Delegation of authority

3.1 In respect of the position of the Head of Provision, the responsibility and authority to appoint lies with the Directors. Where such recruitment activity is required the Directors will convene a recruitment and selection panel in accordance with the Provision Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. Where a panel of governors is convened, the Ad Astra will ensure members of the panel have knowledge and understanding of Ad Astra’s needs, the appropriate experience and training in recruitment and selection, including safer recruitment training, as well as the confidence in carrying out the process effectively.

3.2 In respect of all other posts the Directors have delegated responsibility and authority to appoint to the Head of Provision.

## 4. Equal opportunities

4.1Ad Astra is committed to providing equality of opportunity at all stages of the recruitment and selection process and ensuring that candidates are treated fairly and lawfully throughout the process. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation or trade union membership.

4.2 All disabled applicants who indicate that they consider themselves to have a disability on their application and who meet the minimum criteria for the role will be guaranteed an interview.

4.3 Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability.

4.4 Recruitment and selection activities will be undertaken in line with the principles of Ad Astra’s equalities policy.

## 5. Vacancy determination and initiating recruitment activity

5.1 Ad Astra will review such a leadership vacancy in accordance with the current needs of the provision, including the Head of Provision’s pay range, job description/person specification and the key tasks the new Head of Provision will need to address, having regard to provision improvement.

5.3 Subject to the delegation of authority detailed in section 3.2 (where authority to appoint has been delegated to the Head of Provision), where a vacancy relates to any other position within the provision’s existing staffing structure, it is the Head of Provision’s responsibility to determine that a vacancy exists and to review whether any such vacancy is to be filled or reviewed before initiating any recruitment activity.

5.4 Where the Head of Provision wishes to create a new position which is in addition to the agreed staffing structure of the provision, they will present a case for such a position to the Full Ad Astra for approval. Once approved, the HoP can initiate recruitment activity.

5.5 Where it is decided that the provision requires the engagement of a casual worker, the Casual Worker Policy will be followed.

## 6. Planning for recruitment

6.2 Prior to undertaking recruitment activity for vacancies other than the Head of Provision, the Head of Provision will, working with a senior manager as appropriate, ensure that there is a review of the job description and person specification and ensure that this document is an accurate reflection of the role to be filled.

6.3 The Ad Astra and/or Head of Provision will decide as to whether a role is to be filled on a permanent, fixed-term, temporary or any other basis, taking into account any advice received from Education Personnel Services.

## 7. Advertising vacancies

7.1 It will be normal practice for all vacancies to be advertised unless there is a good reason not to do so. Advertisement may be either internally (for example on provision noticeboards or on the provision intranet site) or externally (such as via the Education Jobs website), depending on the type of vacancy, the nature of the contract which exists and the current nature of the recruitment market. When advertising externally, the provision will ensure that provision staff are aware, to allow current members of staff to apply, should they wish to do so.

7.2 Head of Provision and Deputy Head of Provision vacancies will be advertised unless the Ad Astra has good reason not to do so. Where the Ad Astra makes a determination not to advertise, it will minute the reason for this decision. The vacancy will be advertised in such a manner as the Ad Astra considers appropriate taking into consideration the best way of reaching the target audience and the level of exposure the advertisement will receive. Advice will normally be sought from the Local Authority, and where applicable the Diocesan Authority, before deciding not to advertise.

7.3 Advertisements will include a safeguarding statement, highlighting the provision’s commitment to child safeguarding in an effort to deter any unsuitable candidates, an equal opportunities statement and a statement regarding the declaration of convictions, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended), along with the necessary information needed to attract suitable candidates to the post and to the provision.

## 8. Shortlisting and selection processes

8.1 Ad Astra recognises that it is a legislative requirement that at least one member of a selection panel must have completed safer recruitment training. A selection panel will not be convened without at least one panel member having been appropriately trained in safer recruitment.

8.2 The shortlisting and interview panels will normally be made up of the same members of staff to ensure consistency and fairness.

8.3 During the shortlisting process all applications will be assessed equally against the same criteria, without exception or variation. All applications will be carefully scrutinised, with particular care paid to any gaps in employment; repeated and/or regular/frequent changes in employment; and anomalies or discrepancies in information contained within the form. Any such concerns will be taken up with the candidate at interview and will be satisfactorily resolved before any firm offer of employment is made.

8.4 References will be requested prior to interview, to enable the panel to compare the information received against the candidate’s application form and their answers at interview, as well as allowing for any discrepancies to be explored at interview. References requested at this stage of the process will exclude requests for health information.

8.5 The selection process for shortlisted candidates will, as a minimum, consist of a face to face selection interview with an interview panel, with other selection activities (such as trial days) determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post.

## 9. Outcome of selection processes

9.1 A selection decision will be made based on a fair and thorough assessment of the skills and abilities demonstrated by all the candidates against the requirements of the person specification/job description during the selection process.

9.2 Any offer of employment made to the preferred candidate will be made conditionally, in writing, subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks (in line with 10.0).

9.3 In Head of Provision and Deputy Head of Provision recruitment, the selection panel will make a recommendation to the Ad Astra for the appointment of one of the applicants, with the determination of whether to appoint sitting with the Ad Astra and not the selection panel.

9.4 For all other appointments, the power to appoint is in accordance with the delegation of authority detailed in section 3.1 and 3.2. The chair of the selection panel will report any appointments made under such delegation to the Ad Astra.

## 10. Pre-employment checks

10.1 The Ad Astra recognises its statutory responsibility to carry out pre-employment checks for all new staff as well as to update the Single Central Record prior to new staff commencing employment.

10.2 These processes will be undertaken in accordance with the provision’s Fitness and Suitability for Work Policy and Overseas Criminal Records Policy with further advice sought from Education Personnel Services as necessary.

10.3 The selection panel will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of prospective employees based on checks and evidence, which may include the following where appropriate: DBS checks, barred list checks, prohibition checks, right to work and identity checks, together with health declaration, references, application forms, interview information and checks of relevant academic and professional qualifications.

10.4 The selection panel will assess all information gathered from pre-employment checks as the information is received, in accordance with the Fitness and Suitability for Work Policy. Any unsatisfactory pre-employment checks may lead to the consideration of withdrawal of a conditional offer of employment. Where consideration is being given to withdrawing an offer on the basis of pre-employment checks, advice will be sought from Education Personnel Services.

10.5 The candidate willnot normally commence employment until all relevant pre-employment checks have been completed and must not start until at least the candidate’s identity and right to work in the UK have been established. In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Provision may determine to allow an individual to commence employment in regulated activity prior to the receipt of a DBS check. In these circumstances, all other checks, including a separate barred list check where appropriate, must have been completed and he or she will not be left to work unsupervised. A risk assessment will also be carried out to determine whether other safeguarding measures may need to be put in place.

10.6 For volunteers the provision will undertake the appropriate checks in line with the guidance provided.

10.7 Individuals who have lived or worked outside of the UK will be subject to the same pre-employment checks as all other staff. In addition, further appropriate checks, such as an overseas police check, will be made as necessary in accordance with the provision’s Overseas Criminal Records Policy, in order to sufficiently establish the individual’s suitability to be appointed.

10.8 For individuals who work at the provision via an employment agency, the provision will obtain written notification from the agency that the necessary checks that the provision would normally otherwise perform have been carried out, prior to engaging the individual. The provision will also check that the individual arriving at the provision for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

10.9 For trainee/student teachers who are salaried by the provision, the provision will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out. For other trainee/student teachers, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks and for the provision to ensure that such checks have been undertaken prior to deployment within the provision.

## 11. Offers of employment

11.1 Offers made prior to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks must be made on a conditional basis. Conditional offers of employment must only be confirmed once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

11.2 Contracts of employment will be received by the individual no later than the first day of their employment.

## 12. Retention of recruitment records

12.1 For unsuccessful applicants, all paperwork gathered as part of a recruitment exercise will be kept confidentially and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, for a period of 12 months after the interview date to ensure that if there are any claims raised, the provision is able to rely on its records to justify its judgment and decision. After this period these records will be confidentially disposed of.

12.2 For staff appointed to work at the provision, information gathered during the recruitment process will be used to form part of the employee’s personnel file and, where applicable, will be mandatorily recorded on the provision’s Single Central Record.

Dated: 09-10-2023

To be reviewed: 01-09-24

Signed:

