Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

1 Purpose and Scope

Having the right people in the right place at the right time is crucial to Ambitious about Autism (AaA) and Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST) success in meeting its objectives. AaA and AaAST is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection for all positions, whether permanent, temporary, part time or fixed term, is undertaken in a professional and systematic manner with the aim to promote fairness, equality and diversity, good practice and in line with legislation at all stages of the process. AaA and AaAST is committed to consistently and constantly utilise and review safer recruitment processes to ensure the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Other policies to be referred to:

Adult at Risk Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Procedure
Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Procedure
Complaints Procedure
Equality and Diversity Policy
Induction Policy
Staff code of conduct / safe working practice
Whistleblowing
References Policy
Probation Policy
Pay Policy
Volunteers Policy and Procedure
Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy

2 Who is involved in the process

Who is Involved	Responsibility
Trustees	Responsibility for the recruitment and selection of ELT members, in line with the Recruitment Policy and Guidelines. Regularly review Single Central Record
ELT	Overall responsibility for approving the business need and budget for proposed recruitment. Budgeting and planning for new positions within the team

	Identification of the Hiring Manager
Principal of Ambitious College and Head teachers	Discussion with potential candidates where criminal records disclosed or positive DBS checks obtained and results of those discussions recorded Sign agreement to supervise working of staff pending satisfactory recruitment checks Regularly review Single Central Record
Hiring Manager	Carrying out the recruitment process in line with the Recruitment Policy and Guidelines. Subject to agreement with ELT offer employment subject to recruitment checks and within budget, and in line with the AaA and AAaAST Pay Policy.
Recruitment panel	One member of the panel **must** have completed safer recruitment training and all must be appropriately trained and familiar with procedures
HR AaA and AaAST are responsible for issuing own Statement of Particulars and setting up the personnel record both manually and electronically	Offering advice and guidance on manpower planning, recruitment and selection matters Issuing the Statement of Particulars (often referred to as the Contract of employment) once a verbal offer of employment has been made and accepted. Setting up personnel record on HR data base
Admin team at both AaA and AaAST	Carry out all recruitment administration for and request references as part of the process
The Recruitment Team	Sign off references as acceptable / suitable Follow up any reference that does not address suitability questions or is vague Verify all electronic references as from a legitimate source.
The Recruitment Team	Populates the SCR.
The Recruitment Team	Undertake all suitability checks via the Teachers' Services portal & print / retain results

	Undertake stand-alone DBS barred list checks where necessary
The Recruitment Team and Hiring Managers	Undertake written risk assessment for all volunteers not in regulated activity, to determine whether any criminal disclosure certificate is appropriate / lawful

Vacancies

All vacancies will be advertised on the AaA and AaAST website. Existing employees are to be encouraged to apply for vacant roles if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

Where appropriate adverts will also be placed via other sources, e.g. job boards, publications, appropriate networks and in exceptional circumstances recruitment agencies to ensure an adequate pool of potential candidates. Whenever we advertise externally AaA and AaAST will include reference to our commitment to ensure children and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and our recruitment process aims to attract suitable candidates who share this aim.

Applications from staff re-applying for a vacancy (same role with the same pay and grade), within 6 months of an unsuccessful application, where the panel considered them un-appointable, will not be usually be considered. However, where there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. there is a clear business need, or the candidate's personal circumstances have changed, then an application within 6 months may be considered.

Selection

Selection methods will be reliable, objective and guard against bias. Essential and desirable requirements for the role will be published in the role profile and person specification, as will the requirements for an enhanced DBS check. All candidates will be vetted throughout the process for their suitability to work in an environment where they will have contact with vulnerable children or young adults. For all senior management, school, college and hybrid roles the selection process will always involve completed application forms. CVs will only be accepted for specific office based roles; however, successful candidates will be required to complete the application form. Application forms/CVs will be assessed by a relevant member of staff who understands the role against the person specification and role profile to enable a shortlist to be drawn up. Applications will be scrutinised carefully to highlight gaps, areas not completed, altered or other inconsistencies. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to interview.

Interviewing

At least one member of the recruitment panel will be safer recruitment trained.

All candidates interviewed for posts will be asked a mandatory question "*Have you at any time been subject to an interview, inquiry, children's services or social services investigation, suspension from work, disciplinary, police investigation, caution or conviction as a result of concerns about child abuse or neglect or the abuse or neglect of an adult*?"

The panel should also ask questions to assess the candidates' personal competencies in relation to their:

- Motivation for working with children or adults who may be vulnerable
- Emotional resilience
- Values and ethics

Questions on the above should have direct links to the person specification for the role and be structured in such a way that examples of what would constitute a positive indicator in a response is set alongside what a negative indicator would be to assist the panel in measuring the responses.

As part of the interview process any gaps in employment and short periods of time in a post should be explored with the candidates, remembering that most of the time these are for legitimate reasons.

It is good practice to ask follow up and probing questions. Responses to questions should always be written down in legible handwriting by a panel member on the interview template form.

As well as the mandatory question there should also be a safeguarding question that relates to the post / role and tests safeguarding knowledge and understanding.

For some roles telephone screening may be undertaken and the panel will always meet face to face with the candidate for at least one stage of the selection process.

Successful candidates will be required to attend an ID Appointment with a member of the People Team or another trained member of staff as soon as possible and prior to their start date, following the acceptance of an offer to verify their identity, address, right to work status and if relevant their qualifications.

Some roles may require additional assessments (task test, presentation or trial day). If this is the case, details will normally be included in the application pack. Any test used will have been validated in relation to the job and be free of bias.

Temporary staff who are appointed on a fixed term contract will only be appointed to a permanent position if the full recruitment, selection and vetting processes have been followed.

References

References are taken up for every AaA and AaAST appointment, whether permanent, temporary, part time or fixed term. Upon application AaA and AaAST requires the names of three referees that can be contacted during the selection process. Additional referee details may be required dependent on the role and employment history. One reference must be obtained from the current or most recent employer. Where the individual is not currently working with children or vulnerable adults but has done so in the past, a reference will always be sought from the last place where the person was employed with those groups. In the case of staff who have lived or worked abroad,we will take up at least one reference from the employer in the relevant country and the referee will be verified by phone. Open references will never be accepted.

For specific roles at least one reference should be taken up prior to interview. This includes but is not limited to all senior roles, teaching posts and AHP professionals. This will be agreed prior to advertising and confirmed in the advert for the role. For all posts in AaAST, at least two satisfactory references must be obtained prior to an individual starting work and any additional references soon after the commencement of employment. Please refer to the Reference Policy.

For permanent internal employees (who have already gone through proper recruitment checks including two written references) who are applying for other vacancies/promotion opportunities, a reference may be taken up from the current line manager, as part of the recruitment process. For agency staff applying for a permanent role internal references will be accepted but must also include external references in line with our safer recruitment practices.

Safer Recruitment

AaA and AaAST is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff, volunteers and contractors to share this commitment. The list below details a checklist of our safer recruitment processes that are part of all recruitment within AaA and AaAST. The checklist is not exhaustive and should be added to and adapted to improve the process where appropriate:

1. All advertised vacancies will include a line that highlights our commitment to safer recruitment.

2. Staff involved in recruitment will be briefed on safer recruitment by staff who have received safer recruitment training as part of their pre interview discussions

3. Selection process requires an appropriate member of staff to shortlist which involves scrutinising application forms and highlighting any gaps in employment history or other issues to be addressed at interview.

4. Questions are planned to fit with the person specification / role and cross correlate with the areas detailed in the section on interviews above

5. The mandatory safeguarding interview question must be asked at interview and the response noted and checked against the written answer on the application form

6. For successful candidates, original qualifications and professional registration documents should be inspected by an appropriate member of the panel or trained People Team staff and colour photocopied, signed, and dated as true and fair copies by the administrator.

7. References must cover **at least** the last three years of employment unless a candidate has been in education in which case an academic reference may be requested. References that are not sufficient in response should be followed up with a phone call to the referee and the gaps addressed and details of the responses noted. Candidates from abroad should have their references followed up with a phone call to the referee as this provides an additional measure as DBS checks do not cover most offences committed outside of the United Kingdom.

8. All electronic references should be verified to ensure they are from a legitimate source.

9. Applicants will be provided with information about the changes to criminal history disclosure, and particularly filtered or protected offences, before being asked any questions about their criminal record, Recruiting managers, Headteachers etc will ensure that they have a sound understanding of which offences may be filtered / protected and therefore should not be disclosed and cannot be taken into account. Recruiters / prospective employers must not discuss protected offences with the candidate.

10. NB Even if a caution, conviction or bind-over is disclosed on an enhanced DBS certificate, it cannot be taken into account if it would be filtered under the new rules.

11. The candidate must present their original DBS certificate to the People Team within 28 days of the date of issue. The date that the original certificate is seen will be recorded on the SCR. AaA / AaAST reserves the right to

withdraw the offer of employment if the certificate is not presented within 28 days and no satisfactory explanation is provided by the candidate.

12. Any relevant criminal records disclosed by a candidate or positive DBS checks must be discussed with the Principal or Headteachers.of the Services and the Director of Education for all other AaA charity staff.. If a candidate with a disclosed criminal record or a positive DBS is to be offered a post, the offences must be discussed with them and the result of those discussions recorded using the risk assessment form. An offer of employment cannot be redacted on the basis of information disclosed on an enhanced DBS without the applicant being given an opportunity to provide further information.

13. All offers of employment will be conditional on satisfactory enhanced DBS check, a relevant barred list check (if the individual is in regulated activity) two or where appropriate more references to cover at least three years and relevant roles, proof of right to work in the UK, and health checks.

14. For relevant posts, the statutory checks will be taken up via Teachers' Services website:

    a. Teaching work (QTS / unqualified teachers / HLTAs) – a check that they are not included on the prohibited list or subject to GTCE sanctions

    b. Anyone that has taught in an EEA nation – check that they are not included on the EEA list

    c. Teachers with QTS will be 'claimed' (and 'disowned' when they leave AaA / AaAST)

15. Health professionals (including nurses, physiotherapists, speech & language therapists) will be checked to ensure they are registered with the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and that no restrictions are placed on their practice.

16. If an individual has been employed or resides abroad and is taking up a position with AaA and AaAST, the individual is required to process a police check or Certificate of Good Conduct from their country of residence (where this exists) before they leave for the UK. These can usually be processed through the local police authority or Embassy. AaA and AaAST must be provided with proof that the police check or Certificate of Good Conduct has been requested before the individual commences employment. The original certificate should be provided to AaA and AaAST as soon as it is received by

the individual, which can take up to six weeks. The individual will remain supervised with a red lanyard until this check has been satisfactorily processed. It should be noted that for individuals who are being sponsored for employment by AaA or AaAST, if a certificate or a satisfactory explanation about why this has not been provided is not put forward, the visa application will be refused.

17. In the first two weeks of employment, the induction must include reading and understanding the Child and Adult at Risk Safeguarding and Protection Policy and Procedure, the names and contact details of the DSL and any deputies, Channel General Awareness (Prevent) training, and completion of the Child and Adult at Risk Safeguarding and Protection Training. These are all mandatory and form part of core induction, as does Safe Working Practice / staff conduct, whistleblowing and the pupil behaviour policy.

Equal Opportunities and Diversity

AaA and AaAST is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting will always be carried out in line with Equality and Diversity legislation and AaA and AaAST's Equality and Diversity Policy.

AaA and AaAST is signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme and will guarantee any candidate with a disability who meets the minimum requirements of the role as set out in the job description and person specification a first stage interview, reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of his/her disability.

AaA and AaAST aims at all times to recruit the person who is most suited to the vacant role. Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job.

Offers of Employment

AaA and AaAST are regulated activity providers in a child and adult workforce. This means that all employees will be subject to an Enhanced DBS disclosure. Employees in regulated activity with children or adults will also be checked against the relevant barred list(s).

AaA and AaAST also requires all new leadership roles (band 6 and above) employees to subscribe to and maintain annual membership of the DBS Update Service from the commencement of employment and for the duration of employment service.

All offers of employment will be subject to eligibility to work in the UK, satisfactory references, qualification checks, medical and fitness assessment, a suitable DBS

clearance, including barred list checks if the individual will be in regulated activity. In addition, all teaching posts will be checked for prohibition orders or GTCE sanctions. Health professionals will be checked to ensure they have the appropriate registration (e.g. HCPC)

The relevant DBS barred list checks **must** be completed before the person commences employment in all cases where the individual will be in regulated activity. This is a legal duty. The date that the barred list check was completed will be recorded on the SCR. If employment commences prior to the receipt of an enhanced DBS certificate, a written risk assessment will be completed, the individual will be closely supervised at all times and will wear a red lanyard to indicate that checks are not complete.

Teaching posts

Legislation requires AaA and AaAST to ensure that successful applicants for teaching posts (QTS) are not prohibited from teaching by the NCTL and that there is no interim prohibition order in place. This check must be completed before the person commences in post and the check recorded on the Single Central Record.

Early years and later years childcare

Posts that provide early year's education or childcare to children up to 5 years old or to provide later years childcare (breakfast club, wraparound care, holiday scheme) to children under the age of 8 – or manage that provision - are covered by the Childcare Act 2006 and are disqualified from providing that care in certain circumstances. These include being found to have committed serious offences, having certain orders made against them relating to a child in their care, being included on the DBS barred list or having their registration cancelled in the past.. When recruiting to posts to which we believe the Childcare Regulations apply, we will notify the applicant of their duty to disclose any relevant information to the Headteacher before they commence in post.

Candidate Reserve List

Candidates who are deemed to be suitable for appointment by the selection panel, but for whom there are not enough vacancies, can if they wish, be placed on to a reserve list. If another vacancy for the same role on the same terms becomes vacant, then the vacancy may be filled directly from the reserve list without the need to re-advertise and re-interview. Candidates will be placed in order on the reserve list in selection result order. Appointment will be subject to the candidate being able to fulfil any specific requirements of the vacancy at the time. The reserve list will be valid for 6 months from the interview date.

Fraudulent Applications

Providing false information could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected. If an application turns out to be fraudulent this may need to be referred to the police as a criminal act may have been committed ie Obtaining Pecuniary Advantage by Deception. A referral may also be made to the local authority Designated Officer (LADO) if it is believed the fraudulent application may indicate that the individual is unsuitable to work with children

Candidate Feedback

As part of our commitment to good practice, we offer feedback to all unsuccessful interviewed candidates, where possible, within three weeks from the date of interview. We are able to offer feedback on unsuccessful applications (those who are unsuccessful in being shortlisted for interview) to internal applicants only.

Complaints Procedure

Any candidate who considers that they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against should contact AaA Director of External Affairs within two weeks of a selection decision being made. Complaints received will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and sensitively, and an outcome given.

Governors and trustees

All governors and trustees / board members are required to have an enhanced DBS certificate without a barred list check.

Agency and Contractors

All agencies supplying agency staff will provide AaA and AaAST with a written agreement that they have carried out reference and DBS checks at the appropriate level on all staff before they supply staff. The agency must confirm the issue date and number of the DBS certificate prior to the person's arrival. All agency staff will on their first day at AaA and AaAST bring with them their right to work documents and visa if appropriate. Recruitment and vetting checks, including DBS details, carried out by the agency must be confirmed on a standard form provided by AaA and AaAST and deemed satisfactory by HR. Where relevant, this will include confirmation that the person is not prohibited from teaching (teaching posts) and/or that the person has been advised of their duty to disclose relevant information in relation to the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (Early years / later years childcare) to the agency. Agency staff will remain on a red lanyard unless they are on the update service and checks undertaken by AaA and AaAST are satisfactory.

Contractors on site will not be left alone in areas where they can be with children or vulnerable adults or have access to data about children or adults at the school or

other services. If employed to work with children or vulnerable adults then they will be subject to the same checks as an employee.

.4 Guidelines for managers / individuals

Please see the tool kit for Managers for step by step breakdown of the process with all templates and proformas.

5. Safeguarding and fob/lanyards system for new staff

AaA and AaAST'S safeguarding procedures require that all staff must wear a lanyard and their ID 'fob' at all times. Staff who have had full recruitment checks satisfactorily completed are issued with a black or grey lanyard to carry their ID/fob. The process for gaining the black lanyard is that the People Team (HR) notify reception when all recruitment checks have been completed and reception issue the individual with a black or grey lanyard. If all checks are not in place by the time a member of staff starts they will have a red lanyard and be supervised at all times until all the checks are complete

Staff and volunteers for whom all recruitment checks have not been completed are required to wear a red lanyard to indicate that these checks have not been completed. This has been intended to safeguard our pupils by minimising the risk of any unauthorised person coming into contact with our pupils.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that staff whose recruitment checks are not yet completed and who are wearing a red lanyard are supervised at all times with pupils.