Guidance Notes for Applicants

How to apply.

Please send completed application forms and letter to our HR Team, either by email to applications@sslt.org.uk or by post to South Suffolk Learning Trust, c/o East Bergholt High School, Heath Road, East Bergholt, CO7 6RJ.

Applicants will hear whether they are invited to interview by email or telephone shortly after the closing date.

Safer Recruitment
As a Trust we are fully committed to safer recruitment practices and as such the following information explains our application and recruitment process.

1. General
South Suffolk Learning Trust (SSLT) is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority.

The School aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

All queries on the School's Application Form and recruitment process must be directed to HR Team at hr@sslt.org.uk

2. Application Form
Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms.

Candidates should be aware that all posts in all schools involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Applicants will receive a Job Description and Person Specification for the role applied for.

As the job for which you are applying involves substantial opportunity for access to children, it is important that you provide us with legally accurate answers. Upfront disclosure of a criminal record may not debar you from appointment as we shall consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age it was committed and any other relevant factors. Please submit information in confidence enclosing details in a separate sealed envelope which will be seen and then destroyed by the CEO. If you would like to discuss this beforehand, please telephone in confidence to the CEO for advice.

Please disclose any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings. Please note that the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent

convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

The successful applicant will be required to complete an online Disclosure Application from the Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") for the post. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children. This includes any staff who are disqualified from childcare or registration including 'by association' i.e. they live in the same household (or someone is employed in their household) as someone who has unspent cautions or convictions for a relevant offence (please see a list of the relevant offences set out here: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/384712/DBS_referrals_guide_-_relevant_offences_v2.4.pdf).

The 'by association' requirement also applies if you live in the same household as or someone is employed in your household who has been disqualified from working with children under the Childcare Act 2006.

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 apply to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 AND to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.

The school takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect his/her suitability to work with children must notify the school immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings he/she may receive. He/she must also notify the school immediately if he/she is living in a household where anyone lives or works who has been disqualified from working with children or from registration for the provision of Childcare.

Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration, including 'by association', may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the CEO for more details.

Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify you for appointment or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light subsequently.

The Trust has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security

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Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment.

If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure.

If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children. Where you have no previous employment history, we may request character references which may include references from your school or university.

You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

3. Invitation to Interview
Applicants will be short-listed according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Short-listed applicants will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

The interview will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children.

All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas etc.). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained by you from the awarding body.

All candidates invited to interview must also bring with them:

- A passport or full birth certificate
- A current driving licence including a photograph;
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;

- Where appropriate any documentation evidencing a change of name;
- Where the candidate is not a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area or Switzerland, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK.

Please note that originals of the above are necessary. Photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient.

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the School of any necessary reasonable adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

4. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks

- Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:
- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received);
- Verification of identity and qualifications including evidence of the right to work
- in the UK;
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;
- For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State;
- For a candidate who has lived or worked outside the UK a check using the DfE Teaching Regulation Agency that a candidate is not subject to any teacher sanction or restriction;
- Verification of professional qualifications;
- Verification of successful completion of a statutory induction period (for teaching posts - applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999) where relevant;
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas, such checks and confirmations as the School may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered;
- Satisfactory medical fitness;

If you are undertaking a leadership role, evidence that you have not been prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools.

It is the School's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the School in strictest confidence. 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 workload, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be

withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

5. References
We will seek the references referred to in section 4 above for shortlisted candidates and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. If you do not wish us to take up references in advance of the interview, please notify us at the time of submitting your application. All referees will be asked if the candidate is suitable to work with children. The School will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the application form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

6. Criminal Records Policy
The School will refer to the Department for Education ("DfE") document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and any amended version in carrying out the necessary required DBS checks. The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request or accessed here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice.

7. Retention and Security of Records
The School will comply with its obligations regarding the retention and security of records in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and its obligations under its Data Protection Policy.

8. Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders
The School will not unfairly discriminate against any candidate for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an individual has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

All candidates should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if they have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the DBS of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for the School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence.

It is also unlawful for the School to knowingly employ someone who works in the relevant

settings and is disqualified from providing childcare under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009, whether by association, or otherwise.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within the School. The School will report the matter to the Police and/or the DBS if:

- the School receives an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with
- Children, 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;
- in the case of disqualification from providing childcare, whether the applicant has or is able to obtain an Ofsted waiver from disqualification; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

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, 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.