



Employment Policy

Policy title:	Employment Policy
Function:	For information and guidance about the recruitment and retention of staff at The Blue Coat School. This document forms part of a portfolio of policies that are designed to inform staff.
Status:	Approved
Statutory guidance:	<p>Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022</p> <p>Burgundy Book: Statutory regulations affecting the employment and conduct of teaching staff.</p> <p>The School Teacher’s Pay and Conditions Document</p> <p>Green Book: National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement for pay and conditions of service.</p> <p>Department for Education: Statutory Induction for Early Careers Teachers</p> <p>Equality Act 2010</p> <p>General Data Protection Regulations</p> <p>Department for Education: Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools (2021)</p> <p>Department for Education: guidance for recruiting Headteachers</p>
Audience:	Staff, Leaders, Trustees, General public
Ownership:	Board of Trustees, Headteacher, Director of Resources
Last Reviewed:	March 2023
Reviewed by:	Finance and Resource Committee
Next Review:	March 2025

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Aims and objectives

At the Blue Coat School our vision is simple. All that we do is focused on developing exceptionally well-rounded individuals with the skills to thrive and positively contribute in a rapidly changing society.

This is underpinned by our unrelenting focus on:

Inspiring excellence

Excellence is not something that is simply achieved. It something that we always strive for so that we can continually create opportunity and enhance the life chances of talented young people from broad and diverse backgrounds. The best is not, however, always the easiest. Our staff and learners will be resilient, and able to overcome barriers and challenges to ensure that potential is unlocked.

Shaping character

Our learners leave us not just knowing how to do things, but how to do things in the right way for the right reasons. That is why humility and integrity are the key pillars of our community, and the basis for how we treat one another. They ensure we have a culture where individuals are treated with care and compassionate respectfulness.

Forging futures

Every member of our community will leave us embracing their strengths and with ambition and aspiration as to how they can contribute positively to the modern world they are entering. Our students will become the leaders of tomorrow.

By extension, our values, approach and ethos are embodied in, and implemented through, our policies and procedures. They are the framework to support all that we do and achieve.

1 The purpose of the policy is to:

- Provide a framework for the safe recruitment, selection and employment of employees based upon an agreed set of principles that support the school's vision.
- Enable the Board of Trustees to attract and retain employees of the highest calibre through a strategic, professional approach that is fair, transparent and compliant with relevant employment legislation and school policy on the fair and equal treatment of employees.
- Maintain and improve the quality of education provided for students in the school by having sustainable workforce structures that reflect the agreed aims of the school and support school improvement.
- Work with reference to national framework documents including:
 - For teachers and school leaders: The School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document for statutory regulations affecting the employment and conduct of teaching staff (Burgundy Book).
 - For support staff: National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement for Pay and Conditions of Service (Green Book)

Roles and responsibilities

- 2 The Board of Trustees will ensure this policy:
 - Conforms with statutory guidance for the safer recruitment and selection of employees
 - Is applied fairly and consistently
 - Is reviewed regularly
 - Identify a Finance and Resource Committee to provide independent and dispassionate challenge to senior leaders responsible for staffing and provide feedback to trustees about the school's work to maintain, evaluate and improve provision.
- 3 The Headteacher will ensure this policy is communicated to all employees and applied consistently.
- 4 The Director of Resources will ensure systems are in place for the safe and efficient recruitment and selection of employees and will liaise with the relevant trustee committee.
- 5 Senior and middle leaders will ensure employees are given opportunities to positively engage with the effective induction of new staff.
- 6 Management Support officer will ensure all stages of the process are efficiently processed and documented and ensure the single central register is promptly updated and accurately maintained in accordance with statutory guidance.
- 7 The early career teacher co-ordinator will ensure that the statutory induction procedures are followed.
- 8 Employees of the school will ensure that they have read and understand all aspects of this policy.

Procedures and practices

General principles

- 9 The Blue Coat School recognises that its workforce is fundamental to its success and is committed to creating a culture of safe recruitment and selection to help deter, reject or identify people who may not be suitable to work with children and young people.

The Blue Coat School is committed to:

- safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety, and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people;
- promoting equality of opportunity and community cohesion where the diversity of different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

and expects all staff, volunteers and other workers to share this commitment. It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated employees who are suited to the roles they undertake.

- 10 The Blue Coat School will carry out its recruitment process and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the role.
- 11 The school will conduct fair and open processes to ensure employees are recruited on merits, abilities and suitability for the position.
- 12 The school will always seek to work positively with professional associations.

Review of need

- 13 As part of its performance, monitoring, review and evaluation process, the school will undertake a full evaluation of its curriculum and the resources needed to deliver and support it on at least an annual basis.
- 14 The outcome of evaluations will be considered against the school's vision and school improvement plan and any subsequent recommendations for action will be made to the Board of Trustees.
- 15 Where there is a potential impact on employment, the Board of Trustees's decisions will be communicated to relevant members of the workforce as soon as reasonably possible.
- 16 Where vacancies arise, the recruitment and selection process should not commence until a full evaluation of the need for the role against area and school improvement plans and budget have been completed.
- 17 Full consideration of the relevant ACAS advisory information will be given in where staff reduction through redundancy is unavoidable.

Recruitment and selection

- 18 The Headteacher will give formal authorisation to recruit for posts that are within the current agreed workforce structure and will seek trustee approval for any additional posts or changes to the workforce structure where there is an impact on approved budgets.
- 19 A recruitment process checklist (Annex A) will be used throughout all stages of the recruitment process to ensure compliance with school policy and ensure all necessary recruitment stages are carried out efficiently.
- 20 The school will ensure that any recruitment and selection process is cost effective and must always be done within the context of applicable legislations and laws.
- 21 All new or changed posts will be formally reviewed and graded before they are advertised
- 22 Recruitment and selection is a key public relations exercise and should enhance the reputation of the School. All candidates will be treated fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- 23 The school wishes to encourage the recruitment of employees with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to all stages of the recruitment and selection process and as required for a successful candidate with a disability to undertake the post.
- 24 A job description, person specification, candidate information pack, shortlisting criteria and assessment or interview questions will be produced or updated for any new vacant post.
- 25 Applicants will be provided with sufficient information to help make informed decisions regarding their suitability for the role. Information will normally be made available to applicants through the school's website or upon direct enquiry to the school.
- 26 To ensure the school meets the diverse needs of its student community, it may take account of the need for any 'positive action' recruitment initiatives lawful under the Equality Act 2010 to encourage applications from people who share a protected characteristic (eg. certain gender or race). For example, including statements in advertisements that encourage individuals from certain groups to apply for the advertised position.
- 27 As a minimum all positions will normally be advertised internally to maximise equality of opportunity and provide employees with opportunities for career development and maintaining the skills and expertise of existing staff.

- 28 Employees who have been in an 'Acting' position that subsequently becomes vacant may be asked to apply for the position when it is advertised.
- 29 Where external adverts are to be placed, local and national advertising opportunities will be considered as well as making use of the school's routes to its community through social media.
- 30 All adverts will contain the following statement:
- The Blue Coat School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- This post is subject to satisfactory references, health standard checks, proof of eligibility to work in the UK and satisfactory enhanced disclosure being obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 31 In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher and Director of Resources may waive the need to advertise. This may include, but not limited to, the following circumstances:
- There is a pressing need to appoint quickly on occasions when appropriate notice period is not, or cannot be observed.
 - Positions requiring specialised expertise where it can be demonstrated that a search has been conducted and the nominated individual is the most suitable person for the position.
 - Where it can be verified that the work is required for a specific purpose of no greater than twelve months duration.
 - Where employees who are vulnerable to redundancy and/or subject to redeployment will be given access to vacancies before they are advertised more generally within the school or externally.
- 32 Where a vacancy for a Headteacher position exists, at all stages it will be dealt with in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Articles of Association and most recent government guidance.
- 33 All applicants will be required to complete a school application form. CVs will not be accepted for shortlisting.
- 34 All applicants will be asked to provide equal opportunities details when making their application to enable a robust means of monitoring the success of recruitment in relation to the diversity of the school's workforce.
- This information is separate to the vacancy application and not assessed against criteria. Applicants are free to indicate that they do not want to provide these details.
- 35 A selection panel will be identified to select candidates for interview and, if the interviews are successful, recommend a candidate for appointment.
- 36 Wherever possible, selection panels will comprise of 3 identified people or in exceptional circumstances, at least two.
- Membership of the panel should be diverse and inclusive to help ensure an equal and fair recruitment process. In choosing members of the panel factors such as conflict of interest will be considered.
- 37 The school will provide appropriate training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities and will ensure that at least one member of the recruitment panel has received safer recruitment training.
- 38 The school will, prior to appointment, take up two references including one from the applicant's current or most recent employer.

- 39 Reference requests will ask previous employers for details that includes, but not limited to:
- Whether the individual has been subject to capability procedures in the previous 2 years.
 - Relevant information about performance.
 - Suitability to work with children.
 - Disciplinary record.
- 40 References will be followed up with the author of the reference if there is anything that requires clarification and/or appears to be contradictory or incomplete.
- 41 The Blue Coat School does not reimburse candidates for travel or accommodation expenses for attending selection activities or interviews.
- 42 If the appointment is urgent, there may be a need to seek to obtain a verbal/telephone reference for the successful candidate providing that this is followed up with written confirmation.
- 43 The school will keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, in line with current government requirements.
- 44 All information relating to applicants will be treated in accordance with the school's policy on General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Appointment

- 45 In reaching a decision, the selection panel will consider the evidence they have from application forms and all aspects of interview and selection activities.
- 46 Where appropriate, the selection panel may also consider structured feedback from staff, students or Trustees involved in elements of the process which relate directly to the criteria being tested.
- 47 Candidates will be scored at each stage of the process in order to reach a consensus on the best candidate based on the evidence available.
- 48 If the recruitment process is unsuccessful and none of the candidates are suitable, an appointment will not be made and the Headteacher and Director of Resources will consider the most appropriate next steps.
- 49 The selection panel's decision to appoint will be approved by the Headteacher where he/she is not a member of the panel.
- 50 Pre-appointment checks will be carried out as required by the Department for Education. Checks include, but may not be limited to:
- Identity
 - Right to work in UK
 - Prohibition checks
 - Disclosure and Barring Service
 - Health Standards
- 51 Following Headteacher approval, a conditional appointment will be made, subject to required checks and unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application.
- 52 The Blue Coat School recognises contracts as the general form of employment relationship between employers and employees and will appoint new and existing staff to standard established Blue Coat School contracts unless necessary and objective reasons justify use of a fixed-term contract or casual worker agreement.

Pensions

- 53 All eligible staff will be given access to an appropriate pension scheme:
- Eligible teachers will be given access to: Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)
 - Eligible staff who are not teachers will be given access to: Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
- 54 Staff can choose to opt out of the TPS or LGPS and in these circumstances the school will ensure the necessary opt-out arrangements are followed.

Induction

- 55 All new employees are subject to a structured period of induction.
- 56 A structured induction period aims to welcome new employees to The Blue Coat School, introduces them to their main duties and responsibilities, provide initial training, explain the required standards and set objectives.
- 57 Early Career teachers (ECTs) are required undertake a statutory induction period to develop skills and enable them to teach confidently. In this respect the school's ECT co-ordinator will ensure relevant procedures are followed.

Retirement

- 58 The Blue Coat School is proud to employ people of all ages and considers that age diversity is beneficial to the school. The school is committed to not discriminating against employees because of age and adheres to the principles set out in its policies.
- 59 The Blue Coat School does not have a fixed retirement age. The School acknowledges that retirement should be a matter of choice for individuals and will not pressurise employees into resigning because they have reached or are approaching a certain age.
- 60 To enable The Blue Coat School to plan, it may necessary to indicate to employees from time to time that it would be helpful to know what their plans are. There is no obligation for the school or an employee to hold workplace discussions about future plans, but it may be mutually beneficial to do so on an informal basis.
- 61 During any workplace discussion the school will not assume that an employee wants to retire just because they are approaching a certain age, such as state pension age.
- 62 Employment or promotion opportunities will not be prejudiced because an employee has expressed an interest in retiring or changing work patterns.
- 63 Employees are asked to give as much notice as possible of their intention to retire. As a minimum, employees should give at least as much notice required under their contract of employment.

Post-employment arrangements

- 64 The Blue Coat School will normally respond to requests for references however recognises that there is no legal obligation to provide written or verbal references about employees, irrespective of whether the request for the reference comes from the employee, a prospective employer or any third party such as a bank or landlord.
- 65 Employment references for individuals who are seeking employment outside of The Blue Coat School will only be given by the Headteacher or an identified representative.

- 66 No other employee has permission to give employer references or refer to aspects of job performance, work experience or other employment related matters in character references.
- 67 References will only be given with the employee's permission:
- Current employees are required to inform the Headteacher of the intention to identify him/her as a referee and consent to a reference at the earliest opportunity to avoid delays.
 - Previous employees will be required to complete a consent form on leaving their employment at The Blue Coat School (See Annex C).
- 68 Contractual periods of notice apply and, in this respect, reference will be made to the relevant terms and conditions of employment outlined in national framework documents.
- 69 On leaving The Blue Coat School, employees must return items of school property, including identification badges, resources and school data.
- 70 Employee access to online resources will normally cease on the last working day of employment.
- 71 Before leaving The Blue Coat School, employees may be invited to participate in an exit interview (See Annex C) to share views about aspects of employment, motivations for seeking alternative employment and to identify areas the school may use to inform future improvements. The exit interview will also provide an opportunity to agree the content of future post-employment references.

Monitoring, review and evaluation

- 72 The Board of Trustees will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through scheduled agenda items at governor meetings and Finance and Resource Committee reports.
- 72 The Headteacher and senior leaders will ensure that procedures and practices of this policy are monitored, reviewed and rigorously evaluated.

Annex A: Recruitment process checklist

This checklist has been designed to help guide the school leaders through the agreed recruitment process to ensure key aspects have been addressed.

Note: some temporary or emergency posts may not require all steps to be completed.

Post:		
Category:	<input type="checkbox"/> New post	<input type="checkbox"/> Replacement

Identify vacancy and evaluate need (Headteacher)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has the school improvement plan been considered? <input type="checkbox"/> Have the core skills of current staff been reviewed to determine any competency gaps? <input type="checkbox"/> Has an analysis of the job been undertaken to ensure proper assessment of need? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the need to replace/recruit justified or should a proposal be made to remove it from the school's agreed staffing structure? <input type="checkbox"/> Has approval been obtained to replace or recruit? <input type="checkbox"/> What start date is required? <input type="checkbox"/> Have opportunities for flexible working been considered/identified? 	<p>Notes ...</p> <p>Verified: _____ Date: _____</p>

Develop a job description and person specification (Director of Resources)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has a job description been drafted which conforms to the standard Blue Coat School format to include position core purpose and other essential functions? <input type="checkbox"/> Has a person specification been agreed to identify the minimum qualifications needed? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the job description/person specification broad enough to cover contingencies, to avoid the need to re-advertise? <input type="checkbox"/> Has salary/grade been assessed and agreed? 	<p>Notes ...</p> <p>Verified: _____ Date: _____</p>

Agree and share a recruitment plan (Management support)

- Has an advert been drafted and approved?
- Where and when will the post be adequately advertised (including school website)?
Consider local, national, local unis etc
- Have orders been raised to commit expenditure for advertising?
- Have opening and closing dates for applications been agreed?
- When will shortlisting take place?
- When will candidates be notified if they have been shortlisted?
- What date will interviewing/recruitment activities take place?
- What are the arrangements (if any) for candidate visits?
- Has recruitment paperwork (application forms etc) been prepared?
- How will candidates return application form?
- How will receipt of application be acknowledged?

Notes ...

Verified ...

Date:

Shortlisting (Chair of shortlisting panel)

- Has a recruitment panel been identified with members from relevant and appropriate areas, including safer recruitment trained?
- Does panel understand the nature of their role, particularly in relation to job description, person specification, equal opportunities, safer recruitment?
- Has the panel waited to review applications until the end of the advertised recruitment period?
- Has a means for consistently evaluating and ranking applications according to the job description and person specification been developed?

Notes ...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has the panel reviewed and provided comments on all applications by systematically applying agreed criteria? <input type="checkbox"/> Has documentation been maintained of the review process and results? <input type="checkbox"/> Have panel members reviewed all applications and relevant material? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the short list been reviewed and determined to be fair and sufficiently diverse? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the panel determined whether or not any shortlisted candidate has gaps in their employment record? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the panel determined whether or not declared convictions need to be investigated further? 	<p style="text-align: right;">Verified: _____ Date: _____</p>
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Interview preparation (Management support)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have shortlisted candidates been invited to interview and informed of the requirement to bring ID and certificates? <input type="checkbox"/> Have any special preparation notes or information been sent to candidates? <input type="checkbox"/> Notify unsuccessful candidates? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the interview and activity (if applicable) timetable been approved and communicated to panel members? <input type="checkbox"/> Does any panel member need cover? <input type="checkbox"/> Have refreshments, accommodation etc been arranged? <input type="checkbox"/> Have references been requested? <input type="checkbox"/> Have required identifications and certifications been requested and produced? 	<p>Notes ...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Verified: _____ Date: _____</p>

Interview and Selection (Chair of interview panel)

- Has the interview been used as an opportunity to "sell" The Blue Coat School by conveying positive and accurate information about the job, the department, the school, students and wider community?
- Has a set of acceptable job-related questions been developed and consistently used?
- Have tests provided to interviewees been validated and approved?
- Have all of the candidate's questions been addressed?
- Have notes for the file concerning the scoring of questions and answers received been made?
- Was any additional process used to enhance the formal interview such as a tour, lesson observation etc run fairly and were the evaluations validated and approved?
- Has the panel developed a system of weighing job criteria and the information obtained?
- Are the panel's deliberations based on the applicant's ability to perform the job as evidenced from the application forms, references, interviews, and other job related criteria?
- Has a non-discriminatory check of candidates' been made?
- Has the panel chair made notes for the file of each reference check and the answers received?
- If negative information is obtained and would otherwise be a contributing factor in rejecting the applicant, has the applicant been given an opportunity to respond to the information?
- Has the successful candidate been verbally notified, in advance of a written offer?

Notes ...

Verified:

Date:

Finalise Recruitment (Management support)

- Has a formal offer of employment been approved and sent to the successful candidate?
- Has a written contract of employment been sent to the successful candidate?
- Has the candidate accepted the post?
- Has a successful DBS check been received?
- Have copies of the necessary valid identification been retained on file?
- Has an entry been made on the staff central register?
- Has a payroll new starter notification form been completed?
- Has new staff starter paperwork (including pension) been completed by the candidate and returned to the school?
- Are starting salaries known?
- Has a HR file been opened?
- Has the recruitment database been updated?
- Have details been uploaded to SIMS?
- Have probationary period review dates been logged in the calendar?
- Has vacancy been removed from school website?

Notes ...

Verified:

Date:

Reviewed: _____

Date:

(Director of Resources)

Once complete, this record must be placed in the HR file for future reference

Annex B: Post-employment reference consent

	Tick to indicate your agreement
I understand that only the Headteacher or his nominated representative may provide a reference on behalf of The Blue Coat School.	
I consent to the provision of a reference after I leave my employment at The Blue Coat School.	
Many employment references ask for details that may be considered sensitive. For example, attendance records. I consent to the inclusion of sensitive information in any reference provided by The Blue Coat School?	
<p>References generally include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment dates • Job role(s) • Suitability for the post applied for • Suitability to work with children and young people • A general statement about performance and contribution to the work of the school 	
Optional notes	
I give my consent for references to be issued:	
Signed (Employee):	Date:
Signed (Employer):	Date:

Annex C: Exit interview

Employee:	Interviewer:
Position:	Date:

The exit interview will normally be completed on the employees last working day. Exit interview notes are confidential and are taken to enable The Blue Coat School to monitor issues in the workplace. Exit interview notes are not retained on individual's HR file.

What is your main reason for leaving?		
Have you completed a post-employment reference consent form?		
Were you satisfied with the basic content of your post-employment reference?		
	Most positive aspects	Least positive aspects
Working at The Blue Coat School		
Your job role at The Blue Coat School		
Line management support		
Senior leadership		
Training and development opportunities		
Salary and other benefits		
Working conditions		
School policies		