



Safer Recruitment Policy

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At the Prince of Wales Island International School, we are committed to providing a safe environment for all children. To keep every child safe, a proactive safeguarding culture is encouraged and all members of our community are expected to share this commitment.

OVERVIEW

A rigorous approach to safer recruitment is essential. The policy ensures that appropriate checks are made on all new academic, administrative and auxiliary staff as part of a transparent and equitable recruitment process. Guidance has been taken from the DFE's **Keeping children safe in education 2023 Statutory guidance for schools and colleges** https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f0a68ea78c5f000dc6f3b2/Keeping_childr_en_safe_in_education_2023.pdf

CORE PRINCIPLES

The core principles which underpin the safer recruitment policy and applicant selection at POWIIS include:

- To deter, reject and identify people who may pose a risk to students, or are otherwise unsuited to working with children, by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff
- POWIIS will seek to recruit the best candidate for the job, and the recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job and the school.
- We adhere to best practices in terms of safer recruitment procedures.
- The recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation in Malaysia and best international practice.
- POWIIS will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently, with respect and courtesy, aiming to ensure that the candidate experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
- POWIIS will continuously review and develop its recruitment and selection practices to allow new ideas and approaches to be incorporated.
- If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and, where possible, avoid involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

Advertising

- To ensure equality of opportunity, the School will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible. Normally this entails external



advertisements in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) and Malaysian job site MyFuture job and Jobstreet.

- Any advertisement will make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially.

Application

- All applicants are required to complete a POWIIS application form (online or hard copy). The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding criminal convictions and working with children.
- All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

Job descriptions

- A Job Description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.
- Included in the Job Description are the personal attributes required for the role, with details of skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. This also includes specific reference to suitability to work with children.

Interviews

- Interviews should be conducted by 2 or more members of staff.
- The interview panel will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the role effectively (see Appendix 1) and will investigate any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.
- Any information with regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.
- At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.

References

Academic Staff:

- References from former and current employers for applicants must be provided and will be asked for immediately after shortlisting.
- Prior to any formal offer of employment being made, two professional written references must be provided. A reference from the candidate's most recent employer



(Principal/Head of School) must be followed up with a verbal confirmation.

- All offers will be subject to completion of satisfactory reference checks and other employment checks.

Administrative Staff:

- References for Business Support staff will be called for immediately after shortlisting. Where an applicant has indicated that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted, references will be sent for upon offer. In such cases where references cannot be completed prior to offer, the offer will be subject to completion of satisfactory reference checks and other employment checks.
- Two professional references must be provided. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent line manager.
- Where the applicant is not able to provide a recent professional reference, a character reference may be provided.

All references:

- All references will be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by email or phone will be undertaken with each referee of the successful applicant to verify the reference.
- If the applicant has only worked at one place of employment in their career, or for an extended period (8 years or more) at their current organisation, two references will be undertaken with two different people from that place of employment.
- All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised, and that they do not support terrorism or any form of "extremism".
- The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process

- All successful applicants will be required to provide evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Only original documents will be accepted and photocopies will be taken.
- The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of satisfactory criminal records checks, two references (where this is possible, e.g. first job), medical checks (for expatriates new to Malaysia for teaching permit/visa), copies of qualifications and proof of identity.
- A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Guidance.
- International schools are no longer able to request the UK Home Office Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for staff. Individuals who have not joined the DBS Update Service will need to apply for an International Child Protection Check (ICPC) or



equivalent criminal records check from their country of birth and for all countries in which they have resided for the past 10 years, where possible.

- Members of staff at POWIS are obliged to inform the HR Department of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

Self-Declaration Form

- All applicants will be required to sign a self-declaration form, which will include the applicant's declaration regarding criminal convictions and working with children.
- The School operates a formal procedure if a criminal records check is returned with details of convictions.

Consideration will be given to:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence
- how long ago the offence occurred
- one-off or history of offences
- changes in circumstances
- rehabilitation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place to establish the facts with the Principal and HR Manager. A decision will be made following this meeting.

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of **physical and mental fitness** before any appointment offer is confirmed. Expatriate staff newly arrived in the country will be required to complete a medical check (for teaching permit purposes) and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required. Pre-existing medical conditions which have an impact on the applicant's ability to work must be disclosed.

Criminal Record Checks

Before starting work all members of staff at POWIS must have an up to date police check from:

- Their home country (i.e. as determined by their passport)
- The country where they are registered as a teacher if different
- Their current country of residence/employment.

All members of staff should also provide criminal record checks from any other countries where they have resided by the end of their first year of employment, where the country provides criminal checks that can be secured remotely. Staff members unable to provide a criminal check as stated above, will need to provide evidence of this.

Key Service Providers

Key Service Providers engaged by the School must complete the same checks for their employees that the School is required to complete for its staff. The School requires



confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Key Service Provider can commence work at the School.

Cleaning staff/Gardeners

1. Coming directly from home country
 - Criminal record check (home country)
 - Media & Deep Internet Record check
2. Has worked in Malaysia
 - Criminal record check (home country)
 - Criminal record check (Malaysia)
 - Media & Deep Internet Record check

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

The School receives many visitors in many different capacities throughout the academic year. These include the following:

- Inspirational speakers
- Visiting authors
- Conference attendees
- Inspectors
- Senior school students
- Interns/Work experience volunteers
- Private practitioners who work with students
- Fitness practitioners e.g. yoga/pilates instructors

Depending on the length of time in the School, the level of supervision while in School and the purpose of the visit, different levels of checks will be required.

All visitors, regardless of the length of their stay, will receive a briefing on arrival which covers:

- The need to wear a Visitor Pass at all times;
- Not to discuss with others any information about the School or the students;
- Not to take photos or videos of students, unless with the express permission from the Principal;
- To report any concern about the wellbeing of any child or young person to a Designated Safeguarding Lead
- To use only bathrooms/toilets allocated for adult use
- To not be on their own with a child/children in closed or private spaces

SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD OF MEMBERS OF STAFF

- In addition to the various staff records kept in the School and on individual personnel



files, a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the UK Department for Education standards. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Human Resources Department.

- The Single Central Record contains details of the following: • All employees who are employed to work at the School • All employees who are employed as supply staff to the School whether employed directly or through an agency • All others who have been chosen by the School to work in regular contact with children.
- Th SCR will cover volunteers, governors, peripatetic staff and people brought into the School to provide additional teaching or instruction for students but who are not staff members eg. sports coaches, instrumental music teachers, etc

WHISTLEBLOWING - RAISING A CONCERN

All adults working or visiting the school site have a responsibility to keep children safe. They are trained, encouraged and expected to raise concerns as laid out in the Whistleblowing Policy should they arise in relation to safeguarding and welfare of students.

Whistleblowing: The act of reporting suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our school's practices, including the safety, well-being, and protection of children.

Whistleblower: An individual who reports, based on genuine concerns, concerns regarding the safety, wellbeing and protection of children in the school.

- Whistleblowers should be assured a genuine whistleblowing concern will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately, and that their confidentiality will be respected.
- Whistleblowers should be able to raise genuine concerns without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- If having a genuine concern the staff member should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Principal. If the concern was regarding the Principal the Governing Board's Safeguarding Representative would investigate.
- Any concerns raised by a whistleblower should be fully investigated and the outcome confirmed to the CEO of MTT Learning.
- Whistleblowers should not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern.
- If a whistleblower makes false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.
- This policy statement should not be used for complaints relating to a staff member's own personal circumstances, such as the way they have been treated at work. In those cases, the staff member should follow the Grievance Policy Statement.

VISA POLICY (Expatriate Staff)

Eligibility

It is a requirement of POWIIS that all staff and their spouse and named dependents possess a



valid and current visa at all times while employed by POWIIS.

The POWIIS HR team will undertake the visa process for staff all members and when:

- When their Employment Residence Permit is renewed
- When they change to a new passport (staff member is required to give immediate notice to POWIIS HR)

End of Employment

Once an expatriate employee's employment at a POWIIS school ceases or is terminated, the school will no longer sponsor that individual's visa whether or not they remain in Malaysia. Individuals must leave Malaysia by the employment end date stated in their employment contract, unless moving to another employer in Malaysia. At the end of contract, POWIIS will assist the staff member with the supporting documents in relation to their employment at the School.

Contract Renewal

After the initial contract of three years, contract renewals for overseas hired staff will be on a one or two-year basis. Full-time overseas hired staff in the final year of their contract will be notified on or before the end of October of the relevant school year if they are to be offered a contract renewal. A teacher offered a contract under these terms has until **15 November** to respond. If the school has not received a response by this date, the School may recruit to fill the vacancy. Locally employed teachers on one-year contracts will be notified by the last day of the second term or earlier if the contract is to be renewed.

PROBATION, RESIGNATION and TERMINATION

Staff should refer to their contract for detailed information on these subjects.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Staff should refer to their contract for detailed information on these subjects.

EXIT PROCEDURES CHECKLIST- Expatriate Staff

Guidance is provided to staff in the lead up to departure from the School through an exit procedures checklist.



APPENDIX – SAFER RECRUITMENT REQUISITE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

All academic and administrative staff applying for a position at POWIIS are asked the following questions during the interview.

1. Why are you interested in working at POWIIS and why Penang?
2. A child discloses to you that they have been assaulted (physically/sexually). Given your understanding of safeguarding and child protection, what would you do?
3. In your current role can you describe a challenge you have faced and how you have been able to overcome it.
4. A school is a complex organisation made up of many parts, teamwork is essential. Please share a time that you worked effectively as a member of a team. What was your role?
5. What is your understanding of how an International school looks/operates/what it does?
6. What procedures do you have in place at your current school for dealing with Child on Child abuse?
7. If you had a safeguarding concern about a student, what procedures do you follow in your current school? Are these effective in your opinion- why or why not? Is there anything you think would improve the procedures?