



## ZEST EDUCATION - SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

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This policy will be reviewed every 12 months (as a minimum).

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### Designated Safeguarding Lead contact details:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Beth Blythe

Designated Safeguarding Lead Contact details: [beth@zesteducation.co.uk](mailto:beth@zesteducation.co.uk) / 01543 756796

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer: Grace Szamek

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer Contact details: [grace@zesteducation.co.uk](mailto:grace@zesteducation.co.uk) / 01543 756796

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## 1. Safer Recruitment Policy Statement

Zest Education is committed to creating a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. In order to achieve this culture, we adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment.

## 2. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to anyone engaged by Zest Education including our directors, staff, contractors and any work placement/volunteers.

All prospective applicants will be supplied with copies of the Safeguarding Policy, Allegation Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

Zest Education will:

- Prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by having effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of staff and volunteers in accordance with the DfE guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE 2025\)](#) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS);
- Prevent people who are subject to a Section 128 direction (which prohibits or restricts a person who has previously been prohibited from teaching) from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools, in accordance with the DfE guidance, [\(Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE 2025\)\)](#) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS);
- Ensure that it meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

## 4. Recruitment and Selection Process

All those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children will be trained to a recognised standard in safer recruitment.

Zest Education ensures at least one person who conducts an interview has completed training in safer recruitment.

## 5. Advertisements

When defining the role (whether through the job, role description and person specification) Zest Education will have regard to Section 215 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE 2025\)](#) and include:

- *the skills, abilities, experience, attitude, and behaviours required for the post; and*

- *the safeguarding requirements, i.e., to what extent will the role involve contact with children and will they be engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.*

All adverts will also include:

- *Zest Education's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken;*
- *the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification; and*
- *whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020.*

## 6. Registration forms

All roles advertised by Zest Education will include (in the application form or elsewhere) the following statement:

"Zest Education is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. It is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children."

Zest Education will also ensure that all prospective applicants provide the following:

- personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number;
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment;
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- details of referees/references; and
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

Zest Education does not accept curriculum vitae in place of application forms.

## 7. Shortlisting

In order to ensure that candidates have the opportunity to share relevant information and allow for this to be discussed at interview stage before the DBS certificate is received, all shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children.

Zest Education will ensure the following:

- that at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise.

- that reasons are given for any inconsistencies and for gaps in employment and reasons given for them; and
- all potential concerns are explored.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting Zest Education will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be conducted as part of due diligence checks. Any incidents identified or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, will be explored with the candidate at interview.

## 8. Employment history and references

All offers of employment made by Zest Education will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two written professional references, this will include from the most recent assignments.

Zest Education follows strict standards and therefore will:

- not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern;
- not rely on applicants to obtain their references;
- ensure any references from the candidate's current employer have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority (if the referee is school or college based, the reference should be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations);
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed;
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then secure a reference from their current employer;
- always verify any information with the person who provided the reference;
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source;
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided; and
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate.
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post, and,
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

## 9. Employment selection

Zest Education uses a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for posts. All interview questions will include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children;
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role; and
- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

All information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.

## 10. Pre-appointment vetting checks

Zest Education completes all the following legal pre-employment checks when appointing an individual to engage in regulated activity in relation to children:

- Identity check (including being aware of any name changes);
- An overseas police check (if relevant);
- Enhanced DBS check via the applicant (including children's barred list information);
- Verification of medical fitness;
- Verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK; and
- Verification of professional qualifications via the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) Employer Access Service.

## 11. Summary

Zest Education will make clients and candidates aware of the Safer Recruitment Policy through a link on our website.

All staff, temporary workers, candidates and contractors understand that the above checks must be conducted and must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other recruitment firms in order to safeguard children/adults at risk. The public interest in safeguarding children/adults at risk may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only, as judged by Zest Education.

## Appendix

### List of relevant legislation and guidance governing this policy

Legislation/ Regulation/ guidance	Web Address
Keeping Children Safe in Education	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2</a>
Children Act 1989	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents</a>
Care Act 2014	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents</a>
The Children Act 2004	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents</a>
Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006</a>
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/53</a>
Children and Social Work Act 2017	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents</a>
Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (including the 'Prevent Duty')	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents</a>
Modern Slavery Act 2015	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents</a>
Human Rights Act 1998	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents</a>

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/31/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/31/contents</a>
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents</a>
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989 (Ratified by the UK in 1992)	<a href="https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/unicef-convention-rights-child-uncrc.pdf">https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/unicef-convention-rights-child-uncrc.pdf</a>
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (HM Government)	<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf</a>
The Prevent Duty - Departmental advice for Schools and Child Care Providers 2015 (Department for Education).	<a href="https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Children-and-families-services/Early-Years/The_Prevent_duty_advice_for_schools_and_childcare_providers_June_2015.pdf">https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Children-and-families-services/Early-Years/The_Prevent_duty_advice_for_schools_and_childcare_providers_June_2015.pdf</a>
Care and Support Statutory guidance 2024	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance</a>
Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People (2009)	<a href="https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practice-for-Adults-working-with-Children-and-Young-People.pdf">https://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practice-for-Adults-working-with-Children-and-Young-People.pdf</a>
Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers providing safeguarding services 2024 (HM Government).	<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66320b06c084007696fca731/Info_sharing_advice_content_May_2024.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66320b06c084007696fca731/Info_sharing_advice_content_May_2024.pdf</a>
Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (Safer Recruitment Consortium)	<a href="https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/_files/ugd/f576a8_0d079cbe69ea458e9e99fe462e447084.pdf">https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/_files/ugd/f576a8_0d079cbe69ea458e9e99fe462e447084.pdf</a>
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Guidance (HM Government)	<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80597640f0b62302692fa1/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a80597640f0b62302692fa1/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf</a>
Local Safeguarding Partners/Arrangements	<a href="https://consult.education.gov.uk/child-protection-safeguarding-and-family-law/working-together-to-safeguard-children-revisions-t/supporting_documents/Transitional.pdf">https://consult.education.gov.uk/child-protection-safeguarding-and-family-law/working-together-to-safeguard-children-revisions-t/supporting_documents/Transitional.pdf</a>