

Safer Recruitment Policy



This policy includes definitions or and the guidelines related to safer recruitment of staff.

It is not intended that parent volunteers helping with library, reading, costumes for school productions or other enrichment support are checked. This is because Parent / Volunteer helpers are never alone with children.

September 2024

References to Hartland children should be read as Pupils in the Primary phase and Students in the Secondary phase of the school and are interchangeable.

Purpose

This policy sets out the minimum criteria for checking background of all school employees.

The school's policy for the screening of new employees and volunteers complies with the following pieces of legislation and guidelines:

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (KCSIE), DfE, September 2023
- Protection of Children Act, 1999
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act, 2000
- The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012

This policy is an essential element in creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all students, staff and others within the school community and aims to ensure both safe and fair recruitment and selection of all staff and volunteers by:

- attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to vacancies
- deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable from applying for vacancies
- identifying and rejecting those candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable to work with children and young people

Policy in Practice

- Every employee must have a signed Criminal Background Declaration form.
- Suitable background checks and references are conducted for every employee at the school.
- Where employees will be working with children, a record of disclosure of criminal history will be required.
- Employees that are recruited directly from countries where there is a standardised process for obtaining criminal clearance must do so prior to joining Hartland. This includes the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.
- Advertising of post will include the following statement:
Policies for safer recruitment are aligned with the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection. At Hartland International School we hold ourselves to a high standard of effective practices in relation to child protection and we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Successful applicants will be subject to various background checks including, receipt of satisfactory references, proof of relevant qualifications, identification and police checks, including overseas checks.
- At least one member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for making offers of employment will have successfully completed training in Safer Recruitment within the last 5 years.

Recruitment Process, Selection and Procedures

The following procedures will be used in the recruitment and selection process of any staff member:

- All prospective employees are required to submit a completed Hartland application form, a copy of their full curriculum vitae and a covering letter.
- These will be checked initially by the HR Manager, when any gaps or discrepancies will be followed up
- Following this initial check, a member of the SLT will review the application
- The application form and accompanying submissions will be kept on file along with the required original copies of relevant attested qualifications in order to meet the requirements of Dubai's Knowledge and Human Development Agency (KHDA). This can be done once an offer of appointment has been made.
- All prospective employees are required to have a reference check and must have three references, one being from their current Principal for those in employment or their last Principal in the case of those not in school. In the case of non-educational staff, the person's current or most recent employer.
- The school does not accept open references. Formal, written references will be sought directly from the referees.
- Once received, at least one reference will be authenticated by the HR Manager, the Principal or their appointed deputy, by a phone call to the supplier of the reference, who may also be asked to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies though the school will endeavor to do this for all three references. Where this is the case, detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Where this is the case, detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- Among other things, referees will be asked specific questions about the following:
 - (i) the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people;
 - (ii) any substantiated allegations;
 - (iii) any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the Safeguarding of children and young people;
 - (iv) the candidate's suitability for the post.
- Wherever possible, references will be requested in advance of interview. All references will be kept on file.
- Whilst, the School asks all new employees to endeavor to provide evidence of police checks from every country in which they have worked and completed their teacher training, it is recognised that the international nature of the U.A.E. means that the School attracts applications from a range of countries around the world, many of whom do not have developed safeguarding and vetting procedures. Thus, it is not always possible to document a full career of police checks.
- Candidates working outside the UK at the time of application are required to get a local police check from the country in which they are working at that time (e.g. A Dubai Police Check) These are valid for 3 months only. Police checks are requested in English

- All initial contracts are subject to a satisfactory outcome of the Disclosure and Barring Service checks where possible (only possibly if UK work history). For employees coming from the UK or with a previous UK address, the school will also insist on the production of the ICPC.
- The DBS must be less than 4 months old. If more than 4 months old, the school will conduct the COBIS Prohibition Check with the permission of the staff member which will be dated one month before employment start date.
- The ICPC must be no older than one month from date of starting.
- In light of BREXIT, as of 1 January 2021, the EEA section of the Prohibition Order check will no longer be available to access on the Teachers Regulation Agency website.
- For employees who have never worked in the UK, they will require a specific country Police report less than 4 months old from country they are coming from.
- Where there is a break in employment of more than three months for a member of staff, a new Enhanced DBS or other Police check will be sought.
- The Department for Education maintains the database of all teachers eligible to teach in England. The database is called The Teacher Services system (formerly known as Employer Access Online). Schools overseas cannot access the online database to carry out the Prohibition checks. The school uses the service of the COBIS Prohibition Check to check the details of teachers who are still subject to disciplinary sanctions from the GTCE ensuring that all prospective appointments will be checked against the 'Barred List' before the appointment is confirmed.
- As an additional check of identity, production of Birth Certificates are now required for all members of staff so that checks can be made against name at birth. This process is added to the policy from August 2022 and will be completed over the course of the academic year.

The procedures set out above will not normally be necessary for:

- (i) visitors to the school, who have no unsupervised contact with pupils;
- (ii) building or other contractors provided they have no unsupervised contact with students;
- (iii) volunteers or parents who only accompany staff at specific events or one-off trips (excluding overnight stays);
- (iv) those on the school site only when students are not present.

All visitors and contractors sign in and are given an ID badge and are fully supervised at all times as appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Advisory Board of the school will:

- ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with guidance and legal requirements
- monitor the school's compliance with them

The Principal will:

- ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures
- ensure that these are regularly reviewed and up-dated to reflect any changes to legislation, international best practice and statutory guidance

- ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in the school
- monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this document
- promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at every stage of this process
- ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguard training
- line manage the HR Manager to ensure compliance with this policy

The HR Manager will:

- ensure the diligent implementation of this policy and follow best practice
- ensure strong networking links with other Dubai schools to keep abreast of the latest guidance and training

Who was consulted?

In drafting this policy, the Principal has drawn on guidance and procedure as defined as part of her work as a member of the International Task Force and CIS pilot work on Child Protection and Safer Recruitment. In addition, the school has drawn on best practice and Advisory Board training as provided by the DfE guidance documents.

Review of Policy

Date for review

September 2025

Signed.....Date.....

School Principal