Nottinghamshire County Council

Nottinghamshire School Recruitment and Selection Policy

FOR HEADTEACHERS AND GOVERNING BODIES

September 2026

HR Advice, Support and Training Services

Name of school:	Misterton Primary and Nursery School
Policy adopted on:	1 September 2026
Date of next review:	1 September 2027
The name of the Governing body committee that will review and monitor the impact of the Policy/Guidance/Toolkit and content annually with the head teacher	Finance and Pupil and Personnel Committee
Locations this policy can be accessed:	Website www.mistertonprimaryandnurseryschool.co.uk

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council

All rights reserved.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Nottinghamshire County Council Schools HR Universal Policy Statement, which sets out the overarching framework, governance arrangements, roles and responsibilities, and statutory context applicable to all HR policies, procedures and guidance. All provisions within this policy are underpinned by the principles of fairness, consistency and compliance with employment legislation as outlined in the Universal Policy Statement.

Nottinghamshire School Recruitment and Selection Policy – Table of Contents

Section	Heading	Page
1	Governing Body Responsibilities	3
2	Equalities and Equal Opportunities	3
3	Aims of the Policy	4
4	Underlying Principles	4
5	Roles and Responsibilities	5
6	Planning the Recruitment Process	6
7	Defining the vacancy	7
8	Job Description	8
9	Person Specification	8
10	Advertising and Application	9
11	Redeployment	10
12	Preparing the advert	10
13	Placing the advertisement	10
14	Advertising of Posts	11
15	Information packs for candidates	11
16	Application forms	12
17	Shortlisting candidates	12
18	References	13
19	Interview Process	14
20	Selection activities	14
21	Interview preparation	14
22	Interview panel	16
23	Questioning candidates	16
24	Managing the interview	18
25	Appointment procedure	19
26	Conditional offer and pre-employment checks	19
27	Formal Offer and issuing of Contracts	20
28	Candidates debrief	21
29	Recruitment appeals	22
30	Induction	22
31	Employment of Agency and Supply Staff	22

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

32	Volunteers	22
33	Maintained Governors	23
34	Visitors	23
35	Ongoing Vigilance	25

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

SCHOOL RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY – Updated September 2026

1.0 **The Governing Body recognises the legal requirements placed upon them by**

- The Education Act 2002
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- The School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2006
- Current employment legislation
- The requirements of DfE and current documents of "Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children"
- Equality Act 2010
- Immigration Act 2016, in particular the "Code of Practice on the English language requirement for public sector workers" which came into force in November 2016 under Part 7 of the Act
- ACAS advisory booklet 'Recruitment & Induction'

2.0 Equalities and Equal Opportunities

2.1 The Governing Body recognises its legal responsibilities to staff under the Equality Act 2010 and this policy will ensure equality and fairness regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, disability or age. All recruitment related decisions will be taken in accordance with relevant equalities legislation, the Employment Relations Act 1999, the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000; the Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002; and the most recent statutory guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children. In doing so the Governing Body will ensure that all recruitment and pay decisions and processes are open, transparent and fair.

2.2 The Governing Body is aware of its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000 and to make available this policy to all staff at the school.

3.0 Aims of the Policy

3.1 The aims of the Recruitment and Selection Policy are as follows:

a) to recruit the best person for each vacancy through a fair, systematic, effective recruitment and selection procedure.
b) deliver the recruitment and selection of staff in a professional, timely and responsive manner.
c) To ensure that 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

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

d) To provide a sound framework for the recruitment and selection of staff based upon relevant employment legislation and other statutory guidance, including the latest version of KCSIE.

4.0 Underlying Principles

4.1 The appointment of a new member of staff to a school is a major investment. It is important to ensure that the recruitment process is carefully managed to ensure that a successful appointment is made in line with statutory requirements. The school recognises the importance of ensuring that recruitment procedures are robust so that potential applicants understand the school's commitment to recruit suitable people which deter and prevent unsuitable people from applying for or securing employment or volunteering opportunities at this school. The school will seek to recruit individuals who demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and who uphold the values, attitudes and behaviours that contribute to a strong safeguarding culture.

4.2 The policy should be read in conjunction with the guidance and toolkit documents.

4.3 It is increasingly important for school to be aware of current and future employment trends and employee retention issues. It is therefore suggested a leaver questionnaire (appendix 19) can provide a framework to collate information which can be used to inform improvements on retention and inform and identify practical solutions. Information obtained from the leaver questionnaire is confidential, but can be used to update job descriptions, employee specifications and developing induction programmes where appropriate. Schools should also monitor information gathered through leavers questionnaires in relation to discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment and harassment related to protected characteristics. This information can help schools identify patterns, trends and workplace culture issues that may not otherwise come to light, assess the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent harassment, and inform actions to create and maintain a safe, respectful and inclusive working environment for all employees.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Governing Body has overall responsibility for staffing in their school. It is recommended that the headteacher takes the lead in making staff appointments other than for posts on the leadership spine.

5.2 Responsibility to interview and appoint staff can be delegated to the headteacher however it is recommended that wherever possible an interview panel consisting of the headteacher and 2 Governors is convened to consider the important decision of who to appoint to a vacant post in school.

5.3 The School Staffing Regulations 2009 require Governing bodies of maintained schools to ensure that the interviewer (if it is one person) or at least one member of the interview panel must be appropriately trained in safer recruitment and fully understands the

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

content of KCSIE Part Three (Safer recruitment). It is expected that whilst one member of the panel has received the training, that all panel members have an appropriate understanding of safer recruitment practices.

5.4 For recruitment to leadership posts the Governing Body are required to establish a selection panel of at least 3 Governors from the school and inform the LA in writing of any headteacher vacancy. For headteacher recruitment careful consideration should be given to the involvement of staff Governors. It is advisable that staff Governors should not be on the selection panel due to potential conflicts of interest. There is also no provision for borrowing Governors from other schools to be part of the selection panel for Headteacher. The Governing Body is required to inform the LA of the names of the shortlisted candidates for headteacher posts, and the LA has a right to make written representations to the selection panel and attend the interview. The Governing Body are strongly advised to access professional support through the Education Improvement Service (EIS) when appointing a new headteacher.

5.5 For community and voluntary controlled schools the LA remains the employer in law. For voluntary aided or foundation schools and academies the Governing Body is the employer in law.

5.6 It is the responsibility of Governors and staff involved in any recruitment and selection process to ensure they adhere to the principles of equal opportunities and the relevant equalities legislation. Schools should also take account of the document 'Equality and Diversity in Employment' available on Schools portal Equality and Diversity in Employment which for community and voluntary aided schools sets out the County Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

5.7 Governing Bodies should ensure they have an Equal Opportunities Policy or adopt the County Council's Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding policies as their own and give consideration as to how they will ensure their implementation.

5.8 The Executive Director for Children, Families and Schools or their nominated officer has the power within the Education Act 2002 to advise the Governing Body on appointments for teaching staff and for support staff and also has the right to attend the interview and other activities relating to the selection process. However, in normal circumstances, the Executive Director for Children, Families and Schools will only exercise this right in respect of the appointment of headteachers.

5.9 Throughout the school's recruitment process, the Executive Director for Children, Families and Schools or their representative will act in a strictly advisory role. However, the Authority may refuse to appoint a candidate recommended by the Governing Body where the county council is the employer, if that candidate fails to fulfil one of the requirements relating to qualifications, health and physical capacity, conduct, performance or suitability to work with children.

5.10 In the event of a complaint by an applicant that, for example, they have been discriminated against, the respondent at a tribunal will be the Governing Body of the school, not the LA. Dependent on the circumstances, the cost of defending any such action and any resultant costs may be charged to the delegated budget of the school.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

5.11 Further training and advice on all recruitment matters can be obtained from the HR Service.

5.12 The Recruitment and Advertising Team at the Business Support Centre of the LA will work collaboratively with the schools to ensure that posts are advertised at competitive prices. The school will be responsible for managing the application and interview process.

6.0 Planning the Recruitment Process

6.1 It is essential to plan the recruitment process carefully. Schools need to make appointments quickly to meet the timelines imposed by the final resignation dates for teachers. However, care should be taken to avoid making an inappropriate appointment because of the pressure to fill posts for the beginning of term. Schools are advised, therefore, to regularly review their recruitment procedures and documentation to enable them to manage the process efficiently and minimise the risk of making an unsuitable appointment even when timescales are short. For example, schools should establish clear recruitment policies and procedures to:

6.2 Identify appropriately trained Governors and staff to be involved in recruitment panels/procedures, remembering that it is mandatory for at least one member of the panel to have undergone appropriate safer recruitment training.

- establish and regularly update a file of information about the school, e.g. policy summaries and management structures for information packages;
- maintain an up-to-date file of template documents, e.g. outline job descriptions and person specifications;
- Identify the types and location of application forms to be used for different posts;
- prepare outline recruitment timescales for each term (i.e. advertising through to interview) for reference as needed;
- establish efficient record keeping systems in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.
- Where a new role has been created in school, or if a post has not been appointed to previously, school will need to submit the job description to the Job Evaluation Team to ensure the role is graded appropriately.

6.3 A summary of the recruitment and selection procedures can be found in the toolkit Appendix 3.

7.0 Defining the vacancy

Determining the job

7.1 The school should have an up-to-date structure plan for its staff, which maps out the way in which it will develop in staffing terms, and this should be referred to before confirming

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

the vacancy. The structure should be reviewed against any known changes e.g. budget, school roll and any factors which could impact on the staffing levels.

7.2 The Governing Body will determine the pay range for each vacancy prior to advertising in line with the School Pay Policy. For support staff roles the grade will be provided by the Job Evaluation Team. Furthermore, if the school has adopted the Living Wage this needs to be reflected in the advertisement for relevant support staff posts.

7.3 Prior to advertising the Governing Body may consider other options such as opportunities for job share and flexible working if this meets the organisational needs of the school.

7.4 Where Governors are considering an appointment on a fixed term or temporary basis, they will take into account the guidance from the HR Service. The Governing Body must recognise that appointments on this basis should only be made in line with the Fixed Term Contract Guidance.

Timing the appointment process

7.5 The Governing Body will plan a realistic outline timescale, which includes the main processes in filling the post, from advertising to appointment and the availability of staff and Governors.

7.6 For teachers this must also take account of their statutory resignation dates i.e. 31 May, 31 October and 28/29 February. The contractual notice periods are 3, 2 and 2 months respectively for the above dates plus 1 additional month notice for existing headteachers.

8.0 Job Description

8.1 A formal written job description for the post must be agreed before the post is advertised. It should clearly state the grade (or range), the main duties and responsibilities of the post, the working hours, job title and a breakdown of any supervisory or budgetary responsibilities. This is essential not only for recruitment purposes but also for induction, appraisal and continuing professional development (CPD).

8.2 In line with “Safer Recruitment” guidance, all school job descriptions should include a reference to the safeguarding duties and responsibilities of the post. This must state the level of responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people assigned to the post. In the case of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the job description should be explicit in broad areas of responsibility and activities related to the role

8.3 In line with Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016, all post holders, where an intrinsic part of their role is that they are required to speak to members of the public, should have a statement in the job description and person specification to explain to candidates the requirement and necessary standard of spoken English required for the role. Detailed guidance is available in the Code of Practice on the Fluency Duty Guidance or the Recruitment and Selection Guidance document.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

8.4 All standard job descriptions have been agreed with the recognised trade unions. If the school wishes to establish a new job description or amend one through a restructuring exercise, the headteacher should seek advice from the HR Service and consult with the Governors and trade unions. The Governors should be consulted on any changes to existing job descriptions in the school.

8.5 The Governing Body understands its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 in relation to equal pay legislation. The Governing Body will ensure that any appointments to support staff posts or proposed changes to support staff job descriptions, duties or responsibilities will be subject to the schools job evaluation scheme and information will be provided to the HR Service JE Team prior to the appointment process-in accordance with the guidance Guidelines for using standard Job Descriptions & Person Specifications

9.0 Person Specification

9.1 The next stage, before advertising the post, is to carefully establish a profile of the personal skills and characteristics required of the post holder. This person specification will inform the whole recruitment and selection process and forms a framework against which objective decisions can be made about each applicant's suitability for the post. Appendix 4.

9.2 The job description should be used as a basis for drawing up a person specification. The purpose of the person specification is to define the school's expectations of the post holder by detailing the essential and desirable skills and aptitudes of the post holder. The person specification should:

- include the qualifications/skills and experience needed to undertake the role and any other requirements needed to perform the role, including the necessary standard of spoken English required for the role and their suitability for working with children and young people (as an essential requirement);
- reflect the competencies and qualities the successful candidate will need to demonstrate during the selection process;

9.3 The person specification should **be precisely related to the requirements of the post** and should not contain experience, qualifications or characteristics which are not relevant to the post.

9.4 In considering the essential criteria, the selection panel may wish to consider their relative "weighting". This allows the panel to take account of the relative importance of the essential elements, with regard to the duties and responsibilities of the post.

9.5 The Governing Body will ensure that the person specification agreed for each post does not breach equal opportunities legislation.

9.6 For Headteacher recruitment within a Voluntary Aided School, the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 s.60(5) states that preference maybe given in connection

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

with the appointment of people whose religious opinions are in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denominations specified in relation to the school. For Voluntary Controlled schools for the appointment of a headteacher regard may be had to that person's ability and fitness to preserve and develop the religious character of the school. This is as per s.60(4) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Therefore, voluntary aided schools can express a religious criteria as essential, for voluntary controlled school's the criteria should be stated as desirable within the person specification.

10.0 Advertising and Application

10.1 The purpose of the advertisement is to:

a) attract responses from suitable and appropriately qualified people and
b) deter responses from unsuitable and unqualified people.

10.2 Before advertising the post, schools must consider offering the vacancy to staff identified as at risk of redundancy in order to satisfy the requirement to seek to mitigate redundancy.

11.0 Redeployment

11.1 With a fluctuating school population and a declining need for staff in some schools, the Local Authority maintains a redeployment policy. This enables appropriately qualified and experienced staff released by Nottinghamshire schools to obtain employment in other local schools.

11.2 In these circumstances, schools may be asked to interview such a candidate prior to the post being advertised by the school. It should be noted that such redeployment does not contravene equal opportunity requirements.

12.3 There may be circumstances in a school where staff employed on fixed term or temporary contracts should be considered for vacancies prior to general advertisement. Advice should be sought from the HR service where this applies.

12.0 Preparing the advert

12.1 Particular care needs to be taken with the wording of the advertisement so that it does not inadvertently contravene equality legislation, as mentioned in paragraph 10.5 above.

12.2 The advert needs to focus on the key details of the post such as grade, key duties and responsibilities, required qualifications. The school should also take account of their own policies relating to safeguarding, equal opportunities and job share. The advert should include a statement on the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

welfare of all children and clearly state that the successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check and subject to other statutory pre-employment checks.

12.3 The School Teacher's Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) no longer requires a school to appoint a teacher in accordance with their previous salary. The pay band for the post should be clearly stated on the advert and that appointment will be to the minimum point of that band, unless the Governing Body decide otherwise.

13.0 Placing the Advertisement

13.1 The County Council often uses "block advertisements" in several key publications which not only attract more attention but are more cost effective. To obtain the appropriate discount, adverts must be booked through the Business Support Centre, Recruitment and Advertising team. This team can also provide media and costing advice.

13.2 Teaching and support staff opportunities can be advertised on-line (www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/jobs.).

14.0 Advertising of posts

14.1 Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher posts

The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, Paragraph 15 states the Governing Body must advertise any headteacher or deputy headteacher post 'in such manner as it considers appropriate unless it has good reason not to'. The local authority advises that all appointments to headships should be advertised externally unless there are exceptional circumstances which LA has agreed to. As all appointments to headteacher posts are critically important, the LA will exercise its right to be represented at all appointment processes for headteachers irrespective of whether the school buys the LA appointment service or not. Em-EdSupport/Nottinghamshire Professional Services can provide an experienced Professional Adviser to support and guide Governing bodies through the recruitment process.

Any decision by the Governing Body of a maintained school not to advertise a post of headteacher or deputy head nationally should be discussed with the Education Improvement Service and HR Service, before the appointment process commences.

14.2 Other school posts

The Governing Body will advertise all vacancies externally, unless there is good reason not to do so. This will ensure that the school attracts a wide field of suitable applicants to recruit the best possible candidate and in the interests of fairness, openness and equal opportunity.

15.0 Information Pack for Applicants

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

15.1 All potential applicants should receive an introductory letter, Appendix 6, detailing the recruitment procedures for maintained schools. The letter should also include the following statement: **"Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful candidates will receive the County Council's Safeguarding Policy that outlines the duties and responsibilities of the employer and all employees".**

15.2 The letter should also refer to the equal opportunities policy statement that disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of the person specification will be guaranteed an interview.

16.3 The recruitment pack should be prepared in advance of the advert so that potential applicants can receive the necessary information promptly. It is important to bear in mind that potential staff will be forming opinions about the school from the details they receive.

15.4 The pack should provide a clear picture of the school and its expectations of the post holder. The aim is to encourage applications from those suitable for the post whilst deterring unsuitable individuals from applying.

15.5 The pack should contain the job description, person specification, application form and guidance notes, (appendix 7) school information, interview procedure, requirements for references, a copy of the safeguarding policy, which sets out the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken as part of the recruitment process. A contact name and email address should also be given for any questions about the post.

16.0 Application Forms

16.1 It is essential that <u>all</u> applicants fully complete the standard application form appropriate to the post (see Appendix 5 in the toolkit). Schools should not accept applications made solely on the basis of a letter and/or Curriculum Vitae (CV) as these allow the applicant to decide which information to supply or omit. The information pack must clearly state that applications will only be considered if they comply with this requirement.

16.2 Depending on the post, applicants should also be asked about any special areas of interest (e.g. age range, subject). All applicants should be asked to provide a statement about why they are applying for the post and what skills and attributes they would contribute as well as any other job-specific areas to be assessed.

16.3 The application form must include a signed statement that the person:

- is not on the Children's Barred List
- is not disqualified from working with children
- is not subject to sanctions imposed by any regulatory body, e.g. The Teaching Regulation Agency

16.4 Applicants must also confirm that they have no convictions, cautions or bind-overs. Applicants for teaching posts will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

service check (DBS) with barred list check, prohibition from teaching check and staff applying to work in a school in a relevant childcare setting will also be subject to a Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 check.

17.0 Shortlisting candidates

17.1 In line with the Equality Act 2010 and Nottinghamshire County Council policy, all disabled candidates who meet the essential requirements must be shortlisted and interviewed, Appendix 5 toolkit.

17.2 The equality and diversity monitoring part of the application forms must be detached from the rest of the application form before shortlisting. This can then be re-attached following completion of the appointment process. (Please see guidance for further information.)

17.3 The purpose of shortlisting is for the interview panel to take time to assess the returned application forms and references in order to identify who to call for an interview. A matrix template for shortlisting can be found at appendix 8.

17.4 All candidates must be assessed equally against the criteria shown in the agreed person specification. However, some elements of the person specification can only be verified or assessed at interview, and these should be identified at the planning stage and noted on the person specification so that the applicant is aware. There must be no exception or variation to this as this could render the whole process unfair and leave the Governing Body vulnerable to claims. Knowledge of a candidate which is not relevant to the post should not be taken into account. This is particularly important where there are internal candidates. The panel should be able to evidence, if required, that they did not make any assumptions and be able to ensure that any uncertainty should be tested at interview.

17.5 The panel should note that applicants providing false or misleading information in an application or interview process is a serious matter which could result in summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and appointed to the school. Failure to disclose information or providing false information in relation to criminal records is an offence which could lead to prosecution.

17.6 The panel must be aware of the documents that the school are required to verify such as identity, qualifications and the right to work in the UK to prevent illegal working in line with the requirements of Immigration Act 2016.

17.7 The panel should consider the Pre Interview Checklist (toolkit Appendix 12) for candidates and be clear about which documents they require the school to check and ensure an administrator checks the documents for each candidate prior to the interview time. The completed pre interview checklist should be handed to the panel prior to the start of the interview.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

17.8 Shortlisted candidates (not all applicants) will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children (toolkit Appendix 19).

17.9 In addition, as part of the school's due diligence, a search (via an online search engine) of publicly available information should be undertaken on all shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Please see the Recruitment and Selection Guidance for further information on how to undertake this search and how to inform applicants.

17.10 For Headteacher recruitment only, in relation to the Staffing Regulations 2009 (part 2) reg 15, the authority has a responsibility to make written representations to the selection panel of any applicant they have good reason to believe that if appointed would have a significant, detrimental effect on the performance, management or conduct of the school. Therefore, as part of the shortlisting stage the names of shortlisted candidates must be shared with the authority and appropriate checks will be undertaken and consideration will be given as to whether written representation is to be made to the selection panel. It is important to ensure that applicants are notified at the outset of the recruitment process that these additional checks will be undertaken. The introductory letter to applicants (appendix 6) and the application form (appendix 5) have been updated accordingly).

18.0 References

18.1 Employers should always request written information about previous employment history and carefully check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. References should be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed, including internal candidates. A template letter can be found at appendix 9.

18.2 Having completed the shortlist; our strong advice is that appropriate references should be requested for all shortlisted applicants including internal candidates. As part of the process of verifying the suitability of candidates to work with children, the references must be checked prior to the formal interviews. This means that sufficient time should be built into the recruitment programme for these to be requested, received and checked.

18.3 The purpose of obtaining references is to enable the selection panel to carefully consider objective and factual information from previous employers to inform and support their appointment decisions. They also help schools ensure that they are selecting a candidate who is competent and suitable to work with children. The Governing Body should insist that one of the references should be from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children and/or the current employer/employing local authority.

18.4 As part of the appointment process the Governing Body of a maintained school or academy trust may ask for details about whether a headteacher or teacher at a school

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

has been subject to capability procedures in the previous two years, in line with the 'School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.

18.5 One of the references requested must always be from the current or most recent employer. Schools will be in breach of their safeguarding responsibilities if they do not seek to obtain a reference from the current employer before they make an appointment. If an applicant has previously worked with children, either in paid or voluntary activities, an additional reference should be obtained from that school or organisation.

18.6 References should always be sought directly from the referee and preferably from a senior person with appointing authority and not from colleagues. The referee should be advised that they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference they supply is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission. They should also be informed that NCC policy is one of an 'open reference' where the factual content of their reference is able to be disclosed to the applicant and discussed.

18.7 Information disclosed about past disciplinary action (including misconduct for Teacher Service checks) should be considered very carefully when assessing the candidate's suitability for the post.

18.8 References which are not specific to the post applied for, which have been supplied to the applicant on a previous occasion or 'to whom it may concern', photocopies or testimonials should not be accepted unless they are current and have been verified with the referee and meet all requirements; where electronic references are received employers shall ensure that the references originate from a legitimate source. Once received, references must be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily, and the referee should be contacted to provide further clarification where appropriate. For example, where vague or incomplete information is provided. Any discrepancies or inaccuracies completed on the application form should be taken up with the candidate, if shortlisted, at interview.

18.9 Reference requests should be in the same format for all candidates and ask specific questions, ideally in a standard pro-forma (toolkit Appendix 10) so that there is a clear understanding as to why a candidate left their previous employment.

18.10 In instances where a reference provided for a candidate lacks sufficient detail, the school must undertake additional checks to ensure the individual is suitable to work with children. This may include seeking further references, conducting follow-up conversations with referees, or reviewing other relevant background information. The school has a duty to exercise due diligence in safeguarding children and must be satisfied that all staff meet the required standards of integrity and safety.

19.0 Interview Process

19.1 Having confirmed the shortlist, the panel must confirm any other activities they wish to include in the selection process. They should again refer to the person specification to

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

ensure that such activities will allow the candidates to demonstrate how they meet the criteria.

20.0 Selection Activities

20.1 It is important to remember that the selection process does not only enable the selection panel to assess the individual candidates but also allows the candidates to find out about the school and the post for which they are applying.

20.2 A number of informal preliminary activities can be used to put the candidates at their ease before the actual selection procedures begin. These could include a tour of the school, a short presentation about the school and the job and an opportunity to meet staff, pupils and Governors.

20.3 For some posts additional activities will help the panel gain information which would not easily be obtained in a formal interview. A programme should be planned to include a range of activities appropriate to the post. Since all school-based staff have access to children, the selection/interview process must provide opportunities for each candidate's suitability for such work to be assessed.

20.4 If a candidate has disclosed a disability which may affect their performance at interview, adjustments must be made to the interview arrangements to accommodate this.

21.0 Interview Preparation

21.1 All selection procedures should involve an interview to assess each candidate against the requirements of the job (person specification), even if there is only one shortlisted candidate. The interview process and selection techniques should also be used to identify the most suitable person for the post and fully explore each candidate's suitability to work with children.

21.2 The panel should meet before the interviews to:

- review the person specification and job description to determine assessment criteria and questions.
- agree who will chair the interview and who will ask each question.
- decide on a model answer and scoring system, ensuring they have an objective method of evaluating candidates against the criteria.
- decide who will take notes when a panel member is asking the interview the questions.
- prepare the interview evaluation sheets.
- confirm arrangements for the day with the school that appropriate rooms are available, cover for staff involved, who will collect and return candidates from/to a waiting room, meet candidates upon arrival, check and photocopy candidates' documents.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place for the panel to receive the completed pre interview checklists from candidates
- Ensure candidates are aware of the activities to be undertaken.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

21.3 Before the interview, each member of the panel should have received and read copies of the application forms and references for the shortlisted candidates.

21.4 Questions for candidates, model answers and a scoring system should be prepared in advance. The interview evaluation sheets should be prepared with the questions listed on them.

21.5 The letter of invitation to interview, (toolkit appendix 14) should be sent promptly to give candidates reasonable notice and time to prepare for any specific activities such as a presentation. Candidates should be asked to confirm that they are able to attend. If a candidate has disclosed a disability which may affect their performance at interview, ask the candidate to contact the school to confirm if they require any adjustments to be made to the arrangements.

21.6 The letter will also include a form requesting candidates to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children (toolkit Appendix 18). They will be asked to bring relevant documents for identity, enhanced DBS, Children's Barred List and qualification checks will be made.

The letter should explain that these personal documents will be shredded if they are not the preferred candidate after the interview stage.

22.0 Interview Panel

22.1 The interview panel should, ideally, consist of 3 people and at least one of them must be trained in safer recruitment procedures. The panel should also be balanced in terms of sex and other relevant factors. The Governing Body may decide to delegate full responsibility to the headteacher for some recruitment decisions. However, schools are advised to include at least one governor on all interview panels wherever possible and to ensure that recruitment decisions are always made by at least two people. For some staff, e.g. deputy and head teacher posts the Governing Body must be involved in the process and final decision. In maintained schools, panel members may only be drawn from the school's governing board, this means there is no provision for borrowing governors from another school for the appointment to head teacher. Other senior posts may also merit a larger selection panel or the involvement of more staff and Governors as appropriate in a range of selection activities.

23.0 Questioning candidates

23.1 The structure of the interview should be carefully planned. The prepared questions (which must specifically relate to the job description and person specification) should be asked of each candidate. Interviews must include safeguarding- focused questions designed to assess candidates' attitudes, behaviours, professional curiosity, understanding of safeguarding responsibilities and their suitability to work with children. Supplementary questions can be asked which are specific to a particular candidate. The panel should consider and agree any issues which need to be explored arising from the information contained in the application form and references so that all potential concerns are explored and resolved, including any inconsistencies in the information provided, gaps in employment and reasons for them.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

23.2 Candidates should not be asked at interview about their personal circumstances i.e. their marital status, sexual orientation, family, religion, politics, trade union affiliation, etc.

23.3 The questioning of applicants for a voluntary aided school and the amount of weight given to the applicant's religious opinions and beliefs needs careful consideration. However, Section 60 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 does allow for preferences to be given in appointing school staff to voluntary aided schools especially where a 'genuine occupational reason (GOR - as permitted by the Equality Act 2010), can be established.

23.4 When assessing the applicant's suitability for the post as described, the interview panel should also explore the following issues:

- any gaps in the candidate's employment record. (or study record, from the age of 16)
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the application or references including previous disciplinary record and social media checks.
- whether there are any issues which the candidate wishes to declare in the light of DBS checks or the self-declaration form etc.
- What attracted the person to the post and their motivation for working in a school/with children.
- their ability to understand and support the school's policies, including the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

23.5 Under the Equality Act 2010, employers are prevented from asking potential recruits questions about their health (and this should not be requested or detailed on the application) before a job offer is made in order to avoid liability for disability discrimination. The only exception to this is to establish the applicant's capability to carry out a function intrinsic to the work concerned, which is a specific requirement of the person specification – a 'genuine occupational reason' (GOR).

23.6 If the role is public facing, under the Immigration Act 2016, all applicants should be assessed on their English-speaking ability either through a formal test if the role requires this, or more usually as part of the interview questioning process. Alternatively, evidence can be provided of suitable proficiency in the English language by qualifications from UK establishments, specific courses in English, or having undertaken a comparable qualification which was delivered in English. Further guidance on this is available in the Code of Practice on the Fluency Duty Guidance.

24.0 Managing the interview

24.1 The chair of the selection panel should ensure all panel members are clear about their specific roles and clarify any issues to be explained with individual candidates.

24.2 When conducting the interview, the members of the panel should introduce themselves and encourage the candidates to feel at ease. It is often helpful to start the interview on

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

familiar ground with questions about their current job or their background and experience.

24.3 It is good practice to link the areas of questioning so that the interview flows naturally. The chair of the panel should keep an unobtrusive eye on the time. All panel members must remain objective and guard against subconscious prejudice or stereo typical views of particular candidates. Assessments should be based on whether or not the candidate meets the person specification on the basis of an objective assessment.

25.4 Finally, as the interview is a two-way process, the candidate should be given the opportunity to ask questions, be informed when they will hear the outcome, and thanked for attending.

24.5 Notes must be taken by all members of the interviewing panel to assist with assessment of the candidates and to help form the rationale for the decision. Notes and application forms for all candidates interviewed should be retained for at least 6 months. All information considered in decision making should be clearly recorded along with the reasons for the decision made.

24.6 It may be appropriate to confirm and/or discuss salary and conditions of service within the interview.

24.7 It is usual for the decision to be made directly after the interviews. Candidates should be informed of when the decision is likely to be made and advised whether they may leave the school and be notified later or whether they should remain. Finally, candidates should be thanked for the time and energy they have invested in the process as they will judge the school by the way they have been treated throughout the process, regardless of whether or not they are appointed.

25.0 Appointment Procedure

Decision

25.1 Following the final interview of the shortlisted candidates, the selection panel should immediately discuss each candidate, carefully recording where essential and desirable criteria have been met during the course of the interview. The panel's decision must only be made against the defined requirements of the job as detailed in the person specification.

25.2 Selection decisions must not be influenced by the sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership of the candidate. These are protected characteristics, and it is illegal to discriminate on such grounds, and such a decision can be challenged in an Employment Tribunal

25.3 The selection panel should be asked to share their records of each candidate with each other and attempt to reach a consensus about which candidate best fits the person specification. Where there is more than one candidate who meets all the essential criteria, reference should be made to the desirable criteria applying the relative

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

weightings agreed in advance where appropriate. If it is not possible to reach a unanimous decision, the panel will need to decide whether they are prepared to proceed on the basis of a majority decision.

25.4 Where there is uncertainty the panel need to consider whether it is appropriate to make an appointment or whether the post should be re-advertised. Once a decision has been made, the panel should confirm and record why the other candidates have been rejected and include the information with the application forms in case of a challenge at a later date. The chair of the panel should reiterate the need for confidentiality by all involved in the appointment process and any issues of concern should be referred to the chair of the appointing panel.

25.5 The appointing panel will determine the starting salary to be offered to the successful candidate, in line with the School Pay Policy and in accordance with information contained within the advertisement and other recruitment information. The appointment to all leadership and leading practitioner role will usually be to the minimum point of the pay range, and appointment to MPR and UPR will normally be to the minimum point within the pay band advertised. Where a candidate is simultaneously employed by another school, schools are not bound to make any pay decision based on their employment by another school. Where teachers have been appointed to the school during a cycle of additional support within appraisal or subject to the formal capability process the Governing Body will, where necessary, seek evidence from the previous school to assist pay decisions and any ongoing support that maybe required in the new post.

26.0 Conditional Offers and Pre-employment checks

26.1 Once a decision has been made the successful candidate should be provided with a verbal and then written conditional offer of appointment (toolkit appendix 15). All offers of employment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks.

The offer of employment forms a legally binding contract which can only be withdrawn in certain circumstances. Further advice can be obtained from your HR Business Partner if this situation arises.

26.2 A copy of the County Council's Safeguarding Children Statement (Appendix 2 in toolkit) must also be sent to the successful candidate with the offer letter.

The offer of appointment is conditional upon all of the checks set out in the Single Central Record Guidance and template document being completed satisfactorily. The school must:

1. verify the candidate's identity (if not already established). It is essential to ensure the person is who they claim to be, this includes the potential for an individual changing their name;

2. Obtain an Enhanced DBS check which will include barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity. *(Schools should determine*

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

whether a role constitutes regulated activity in accordance with current legislation and KCSIE guidance.)

3. Obtaining a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, or where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation and where all other relevant checks have been carried out.

4. Verify the candidates mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities;

5. Verify the person's right to work in the UK; Please seek guidance from you HR Business Partner if you are wanting to consider sponsoring a non-UK resident.

6. Verify the at least 2 satisfactory references from appropriate sources;(1 of the references must be from the current or last employer-see reference guidance notes)

7. Verify qualifications (if not already complete);

8. Verify professional status, e.g. QTS/ECT status, NPQH; For teaching posts this must include verification of successful completion of the statutory induction period (applicable to those obtaining QTS after 7 May 1999).

9. Complete prohibition from teaching check for (a) teachers (in maintained schools) and for (b) teachers and relevant support staff (in academy and free schools) where they meet the statutory definition of undertaking "teaching work." Checks on other staff may be undertaken but not a statutory requirement. This check provides confirmation that an applicant is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State to confirm an individual is not barred from teaching.

10. A disqualification under the childcare act 2006 check if the new starter works in a relevant setting, and a waiver form obtained from Ofsted if necessary.

11. for candidates who have lived or worked abroad the same checks must be undertaken as well as any further checks considered appropriate so that any relevant events that have occurred outside the UK can be taken into account. These could include
    - criminal record checks for overseas candidates, and
    - obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which the applicant has worked.

12. For a candidate taking up a management position in an independent school, including academies and free schools a check that they are not subject to a 128-direction issued by the Secretary of State.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

26.3 Schools must ensure that the above checks have been completed, and appropriate records established and retained including the Single Central Record as required by the latest version of the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE). Detailed advice and support on how to conduct the required pre-employment safer workings checks and completion of the Single Central Record (SCR) are available on the schools portal

26.4 If a school has concerns about and existing staff member's suitability to work with children or an employee moves from non-regulated activity to a post that is considered to be regulated activity, then the relevant checks must be carried out (see current version of KCSIE, and School's Disciplinary Policy).

26.5 Where a school allows an individual to start work in regulated activity relating to children, before the DBS certificate is available, it should ensure that the individual is properly supervised and that all other pre-employment checks, including the separate children's barred list check are completed.

27.0 Formal Confirmation and issuing of Contracts

27.1 Once the pre-employment checks are confirmed as satisfactorily completed, a further formal confirmatory letter of appointment should be sent to confirm the offer (toolkit - appendix 16)

27.2 Following issuing the formal confirmatory letter of appointment (appendix 16) schools need to ensure a contract of employment is issued prior to the first date of employment. If schools are issuing the contract, please refer to the portal for templates.

28.0 Candidate's Debrief

28.1 It is recommended good practice that all candidates are offered feedback on their performance at the selection process. This will help unsuccessful candidates to identify areas of improvement for future applications and assist with the induction of the successful candidate into school by identifying any particular areas for support and training.

28.2 Copies of personal documents of unsuccessful candidates' documents provided to the school as part of the interview process for checking, should be destroyed.

29.0 Recruitment Appeals

29.1 Any recruitment appeal should be referred to the headteacher or Chair of Governors as appropriate. An appeal may only be made on the grounds that an applicant reasonably considers they have been discriminated against during recruitment. Advice should then be sought from the HR Service.

30.0 Induction

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

30.1 All new staff (and volunteers) should have access to a carefully planned induction programme when they take up their new appointment. Line managers should ensure that staff are inducted in accordance with the School Staff Induction policy. The Induction checklist for Safeguarding should be completed for all new starters and the School Employee Code of Conduct for School Staff should be discussed with all staff each year who should then sign to confirm their understanding on a regular annual basis or as considered appropriate by the school. Governors should be inducted in line with the Governors Induction template.

30.2 A probation period of 6 months should be applied to newly appointed support staff. Further guidance is available in the School's Induction policy.

30.3 All new staff are expected to read and understand Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One, during their induction.

31.0 Employment of Agency and Supply staff

31.1 The Governing Body will need to ensure that where the requirement exists to employ agency staff or their own supply staff on an ad-hoc basis that a letter is received and retained from the agency confirming all of the required safer working checks are completed and to record this on the Single Central Record.

31.2 Agency or supply staff will also be required to comply with the Fluency Duty under the Immigration Act 2016 if they undertake a relevant public-facing role, such as teaching, and teaching assistant duties.

31.3 For staff supplied via an agency school should be aware that after 12 weeks of continuous service, their pay should be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the rate that would have been offered had they been directly recruited by the school, based on their experience and qualifications.

32.0 Volunteers

32.1 Volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults. The nature of a volunteer roles varies, so schools and colleges must undertake a written risk assessment and use professional judgement and experience when determining what safeguarding checks are required. Under no circumstances should a volunteer for whom appropriate checks have not been completed be permitted to undertake regulated activity with children.

All volunteers should be sent a letter requesting that they complete the **Standard Volunteer Application Form for a role in a Nottinghamshire School** – Appendix 17 in the toolkit prior to commencing volunteer work at the school. This will enable the school to gather sufficient background information to assess suitability and determine the appropriate safeguarding checks.

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption has been removed from the definition of regulated activity. As a result, some volunteer roles that were previously not regarded as regulated activity may now fall within the statutory definition of regulated activity, even where the volunteer is supervised. Schools must assess each volunteer role individually to determine whether it constitutes regulated activity and ensure that the appropriate safeguarding and DBS checks are undertaken. Volunteers undertaking regulated activity must have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.

32.2 The school will maintain a record of the risk assessment and regulated activity determination for volunteer roles and ensure that safeguarding checks remain appropriate where the nature of the role changes. Please refer to the R&S guidance for further information

32.3 Following the successful completion of the safer recruitment checks and/or risk assessment the schools must ensure volunteers receive an appropriate induction programme before commencing their duties. (see paragraph 30.1)

33.0 Maintained school Governors

33.1 Governors in maintained schools are required to have an enhanced DBS check. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to apply for the certificate for any of their Governors who do not already have one. Governance is not a regulated activity, and so Governors do not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity.

33.2 All Governors (including staff Governors) of maintained schools are also required to undergo a section 128 direction check.

33.3 Advice on the safer recruitment checks required for Governors is set out in the Single Central Record (SCR) Guidance and SCR Template documents.

34.0 Visitors

34.1 The Guidance on Visitors, including VIP's to Nottinghamshire Schools document provides comprehensive guidance on how schools should manage all school visitors and sets out the arrangements for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff

35.0 Ongoing vigilance

35.1 KCSIE reminds all schools of the need for ongoing vigilance beyond the recruitment process to ensure the safety of children. Good safeguarding must be embedded in the school ethos and all policies and procedures to maintain an educational environment deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour.

Document History

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved

JCNP Staffing regulations Working Party	**September 2021** **September 2022** **September 2023** **October 2025**
Lead HR Business Partner	**Francesca Waldrom/ Ellen Cottee**
Lead HR Senior Business Partner	**Andy Wilson**
Review date	**as per legislative changes**

Document produced by HR Service	**December 2014**
Document updated by HR Service (AW/RH/JS/FW)	**April 2017**
Document updated by HR Service (AW/FW/EC)	**September 2018**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2019**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2020**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**December 2020**
Document updated by HR Service (EC/FW)	**May 2021**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2021**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC	**April 2022**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2022**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2023**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2024**
Document updated by HR Service (FW/EC)	**September 2025**
Document updated by HR Service (EC)	**September 2026**

Copyright © 2026 Nottinghamshire County Council
All rights reserved