



Transforming Lives

EDUCATIONAL TRUST

**Safer Recruitment
Policy**

September 2024



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Contents

Section	Page
1. The TLET Way	4
2. Definition of Terms	5
3. Rationale and Statutory Requirements	5
4. Scope	5
5. Principles	5
6. Policy Statement	5
7. Procedure	6
8. Monitoring	11

1 – The TLET Way

Transforming Lives Educational Trust (TLET/The Trust) is a family of academies. Every TLET policy is rooted in and reflects our ambitions for pupils, students and wider stakeholders alike.

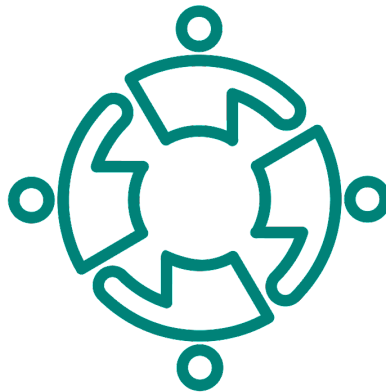
OUR AMBITIONS - As a Trust family, our shared ambitions drive everything we do, we call this ‘The TLET Way’.

Through the transformative values of courage,
kindness and loyalty, together we:



NURTURE POTENTIAL

We flourish in the
places we create
together.



INSPIRE COMMUNITY

We champion each
other to make a
difference.



DELIVER EXCELLENCE

We strive to
achieve our best.



2 – Definition of Terms

- 2.1 Pupils - to include pupils and students who currently attend one of TLET’s academies.
- 2.2 Children - any child or young person between the ages of 0-19 (where 19 years of age accounts for Sixth Form Students)
- 2.3 The Trust - Transforming Lives Educational Trust (TLET)

3 – Rationale and Statutory Requirements

- 3.1 Safer recruitment is a set of practices to help make sure our staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people. This policy sets out our framework to create a safe and positive environment and our commitment to keep children safe in education.
- 3.2 The recruitment steps outlined within this policy are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and they demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in our schools.

4 – Scope

This policy refers to;

Parents/Carers		Trustees	✓
Employees	✓	Volunteers	✓
Pupils/Students		Visitors	✓
Governors	✓	Community	

5 – Principles

- 5.1 The following principles underpin this policy and its related procedures:
 - To protect and prevent children from harm by deterring, rejecting or identifying those who are unsuitable to work with children and having the appropriate procedures in place;
 - To ensure consistency in approach when seeking to identify the right person for a vacancy;
 - To maintain and develop an on-going culture of vigilance and commitment to safeguarding children;
 - To ensure staff are suitability trained as appropriate to ensure the importance of appointing staff reflects the importance of safeguarding children;
 - To support multi-agency working by taking the appropriate action and reporting those who may be deemed as unsuitable to work with children;
 - To reduce the possibility of unsuitable people gaining appointment within TLET

6 – Policy Statement

- 6.1 All children have the right to be in an environment which keeps them safe from harm and abuse and with trustworthy adults. Transforming Lives Educational Trust (TLET) and its academies are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment in order to enable children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.
- 6.2 In this context it is vital that TLET applies recruitment and selection procedures that not only identifies individuals who are already known to pose a level of risk to children and young people but also to deter people to TLET, who may be unsuited to work with children and have not yet been identified as a risk.
- 6.3 The measures described in this policy should be applied in relation to everyone who has responsibility for the care of children for any length of time and, at the discretion of the Principal, those who regularly come into contact with children in a supporting or voluntary capacity. It will also apply to those people who may not have direct contact with children, but because of their presence in TLET they will still be seen as safe and trustworthy or have access to sensitive information.
- 6.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (the Document), taking particular note of its guidance on recruitment practices. Where a conflict may arise between this policy and the Document, guidance from the Document should be adhered to.

7 – Procedure

7.1 Recruitment

- 7.1.1 Academies with TLET should refer to the Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA) to determine who has responsibility for the recruitment to all roles. Ordinarily, responsibility for recruitment lies with Principal and or Line Manager with the exception of some Senior Leadership posts. In these cases, please refer to the scheme of delegated authority for further guidance.
- 7.1.2 The TLET's Recruitment Checklist will be shared with hiring managers and must be used for all recruitment campaigns, either internal or external. This document highlights the essential process and practice that must be followed for all recruitments, and therefore, must be adhered to by all staff with recruitment responsibilities.

7.2 Advertising

- 7.2.1 On advertising the post, the advert will contain an explicit statement about the TLET's commitment to safeguarding. Such a statement would be: *The Transforming Lives Educational Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and contractors to share this commitment.* An example advert can be found in Appendix 1.
- 7.2.2 The Trust's HR Department as well as the Principal or Line Manager in the case of Central team roles must approve all adverts for posts within the Trust and its academies.

7.3 Application Stage

- 7.3.1 A timetable for the process should be decided setting all the required dates e.g short listing, interviews etc.
- 7.3.2 Applicant packs prepared which will contain: Full job descriptions and person specifications which will be

reviewed and updated regularly.

- 7.3.3 The method of applying for advertised posts will be by completing a standard application form, which seeks out core information from all applicants, CV's will not be accepted in place of an application form but can be accepted as additional supporting evidence.
- 7.3.4 All applicants will be required to declare any spent or unspent criminal convictions at the application stage of the process.
- 7.3.5 The Application form will be TLET's standard application form, which seeks all relevant information. The standard application form can be found on our website or by contacting HR.
- 7.3.6 All literature concerning recruitment and selection e.g. job descriptions, person specifications, adverts, induction materials will contain an explicit statement about TLET's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Person Specifications will make specific reference to the applicant's suitability to work with children). They will also contain information about who the post holder is responsible for and to. Job descriptions and person specifications must be in the latest format and are obtainable via the HR department.
- 7.3.7 All applications must be submitted via HR who will anonymise all personal data on the application form before sharing with the hiring manager.

7.4 Short Listing

- 7.4.1 Short listing will always be an activity undertaken by at least two people, where at least one is Safer Recruitment trained, and no conflicts of interest are declared between applicants and those shortlisting. At this point any concerns around application forms will be shared with the panel and or HR.
- 7.4.2 Application forms will be scrutinised to identify any discrepancies / anomalies / gaps in employment. These will be noted and further work undertaken if the candidate is considered for short listing.
- 7.4.3 All candidates will be assessed equally and consistently against the criteria in the Person Specification.
- 7.4.4 Wherever possible, recruitment activities will be organised to allow references to be obtained on shortlisted candidates prior to interview only where their consent is obtained.
- 7.4.5 HR will obtain independent professional and character references directly from the referee that will answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns. TLET's standard reference request form should be used. Open references will not be accepted as a substitute for a reference. Panels should be cautious of references that are sent from personal email accounts. All electronic references must be verified by contacting the referee by telephone. HR will obtain a minimum of two references for all shortlisted candidates, one of which must be from the most recent employer.
- 7.4.6 All references will seek for specific information relating to disciplinary offences relating to children including those where any sanctions may have expired (e.g. warnings that may not be used in new disciplinary hearings). The reference will seek information on whether the applicant has been subject to any child protection concerns and if so any outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure
- 7.4.7 Specific questions relevant to the post will be included for comment by the referee. A statement about liability of accuracy will be included.

- 7.4.8 References will be checked against information provided on application forms.
- 7.4.9 Any matters raised on references will be noted and taken up with the applicant at interview
- 7.4.10 If references have not been received before the interview, candidates will be asked if there is anything they wish to declare or discuss in light of what may be asked from a referee, and all references received will be scrutinised and checked against the information provided in the application form. Any matters raised on references received after the interview will be taken up with the applicant prior to their appointment being confirmed.

7.5 Interview Stage

- 7.5.1 All recruitment campaigns will involve an interview stage, regardless of the number of shortlisted applicants. All applicants will be subject to an identity and professional qualification checks in all cases. Candidates should be asked to provide these on the day of interview and appropriate copies made in the academy. The panel should not accept pre-made photocopies.
- 7.5.2 Comprehensive information will be obtained from applicants and any information provided by applicants that may have discrepancies or anomalies, for example in their career history, will be taken up with candidates with a view to resolve them to a satisfactory level.
- 7.5.3 A face-to-face interview will be undertaken with a panel of interviewers as the minimum tool to explore the candidates' suitability for the post and to work with children.
- 7.5.4 TLET's Interview Template **must** be used by adding post-related questions to the template as well as asking TLET's required question/s already populated in the template which can be obtained through HR. These are important safeguarding questions and **must not be removed** or omitted from the template or interview process.
- 7.5.5 There will always be at least two people interviewing, of which one will have successfully completed the Safer Recruitment Training within 3 years (and not exceeding) prior to the recruitment process.
- 7.5.6 Panel members will have the authority to recommend the appointment of candidates. Further approval should be obtained by the Principal and or the Head of Department for central team roles.
- 7.5.7 The pupil/student voice is an important concept within TLET academies and where appropriate, nominated Pupil/Student Leaders will be appointed to take part in recruitment activity with the appropriate control measures in place, including the presence of briefed staff/panel members. Pupil/Student Leaders should be briefed and trained regarding expectations for their own conduct as well as on key assessment criteria prior to the recruitment activity taking place.
- 7.5.8 The panel will have discussed any issues arising from the application forms and references and the approach they intend to take to deal with them.
- 7.5.9 The interview will seek out the candidates' suitability for the role in terms of skills along with the person's attitude towards children, their ability to support the safeguarding agenda for TLET, any gaps in employment history and concerns or discrepancies provided by the candidate or referee. A candidate's fit to the organisation will also be considered. Specific questions should be asked at interview concerning safeguarding - these should avoid being hypothetically based or questions that candidates could research beforehand (i.e. *What do you understand by the term 'safeguarding'*). Rather, safeguarding questions should explore a candidate's safeguarding values and could be scenario based (i.e. *Tell us what you have done in the last 12 months to improve child protection in the workplace - how did this action arise? Tell us of a time when you felt like you fell short of the*

safeguarding standard. Have you ever had to challenge the views/practice of a colleague in relation to safeguarding a child?)

7.5.10 The panel will also ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.

7.6 Offer of Appointment

7.6.1 All offers of appointment are made conditionally and subject to satisfactory vetting and references. On offer of appointment, references should have been received. An unconditional offer of appointment must never be made under any circumstances.

7.6.2 A satisfactory Enhanced DBS check and satisfactory health clearance will be sought at the earliest possible stage and any offer of appointment will be made conditional to satisfactory reports.

7.6.3 An offer in writing will explicitly state the offer is subject to the above and TLET's commitment to safeguarding).

7.7 Post Interview

7.7.1 All notes of the selection procedure will be kept for the successful candidate and on the personnel file.

7.7.2 Copies of other notes will be destroyed in an appropriate manner, after retaining them for a minimum period of six months.

7.7.3 If a disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not previously declared during the course of the selection process, then further advice will be sought from HR and the relevant DBS and KCSIE guidance will be followed. TLET's HR department will complete a DBS Risk Assessment (following disclosure) and consult with the line managers, and Principals in the case of Academy employees/volunteers, as part of the risk management process. Please refer to the TLET DBS Policy.

7.7.4 If an applicant has provided false information on their application form, or the person has been disqualified from working with children or there are serious concerns about the applicants' suitability to work with children, then the facts will be reported to the police and the Children's Safeguarding Board, along with the Local Authority Designated Officer.

7.7.5 All overseas applicants will be subject to the same checks including DBS checks. Where a candidate has lived or worked abroad within the last five years further advice will be sought from the DBS Overseas Information Service where appropriate. In addition, a certificate of good conduct will be sought from the relevant overseas police force or embassy and an audit kept regarding the outcome.

7.7.6 Verification that the candidate has the mental and physical health capacity for the post will take place.

7.7.7 All newly appointed staff or volunteers will be required to familiarise themselves with the safe working guidance and will be subject to induction training, including safeguarding children. All training and reading materials will be sent directly to the candidate).

7.7.8 For staff with an applicable probationary period, line managers must ensure that clear performance parameters for this period are discussed with the employee, regular reviews occur throughout the period and a formal meeting is held between the line manager and employee at the end of the probationary period to either bring it

to an end, successfully pass or to consider an extension.

7.7.9 Existing staff will be required to undergo refresher training annually for safeguarding children. The purpose of the training will be to set clear expectations of what is required of them in terms of conduct, familiarise themselves with the TLET's and academy policies and procedures, clarify roles and responsibilities and enable the line manager or relevant person to address any concerns or issues immediately.

7.7.10 The content and nature of the induction programme will vary according to the individual. The safeguarding training at induction will aim to provide information about policies and procedures in relation to child protection, safe working for the protection of children and adults within TLET, how and with whom any concerns can be raised and any other relevant policies, e.g. Public Disclosure (Whistleblowing), Disciplinary and Capability.

7.8 Existing Staff

7.8.1 If TLET receives new information about a member of staff that suggests they are a risk to children, the matter will be fully investigated and where appropriate TLET will contact the relevant registered body(ies) and the local authority. TLET's disciplinary policy and procedure, and any other appropriate policy and procedure, will be referred to if there are any concerns regarding the misconduct of a member of staff and if they are potential risk to children.

7.9 Supply Staff

7.9.1 All supply agencies will be required to confirm any contractors supplied have undergone the necessary checks for safeguarding children, namely identification, qualifications, Enhanced DBS and references. References must be provided prior to the contractors start date, and these must be scrutinised by an appropriate member of staff, i.e. cover manager or similar. On their first day to an academy, the contractor will be required to provide photographic identification as proof of their name and confirmation they are the person whom the supplying agency has sent. Any contractors sent from external agencies such as sports coaches, will need to provide confirmation that Enhanced DBS checks as a minimum have been conducted. An identification check will be undertaken on their first day on arrival to school.

7.10 Other Local Authority Staff or Volunteers

7.10.1 All centrally employed and Local Authority staff will not be subject to a separate Enhanced DBS check as this will have been carried out at the employing organisation. The school will however conduct an identity check on their arrival to school.

7.10.2 Enhanced DBS checks will take place for all those who will have regular access to children (supervised and unsupervised), and subject to certain exceptions, a childrens barred list check will be carried out as a minimum. In this case, 'regular' means once per week or 4 times in every 4 weeks.

7.10.3 Volunteers can express an interest to partake in regular work with the pupils across TLET's academies by completing a Volunteer Application Form. This can be obtained from the HR department. . All volunteers will undergo a face-to-face interview with a representative from the academy. The appropriate procedure will be followed in conjunction with the Trust's HR department and the line manager for the department the work is intended to take place in.

7.11 Monitoring of Procedures

- 7.11.1 Recruitment and induction processes will be monitored by Board of Trustees and by Local Governing Boards (LGB's) to allow future practice to be better informed and will gather information on exit interviews and staff turnover including reasons for leaving and attendance to child protection training for new starters. The Trust's Safeguarding Trustee will oversee this monitoring.
- 7.11.2 An electronic Single Central Record (SCR) will be kept and maintained on all staff, contractors and volunteers who may have access to children in each of the TLET's academies. The record will contain the personal details of the individual, along with the checks that have been conducted on the individuals concerned. The information will be available to those with direct responsibility for inputting data for visitors, employees and contractors. The SCR will also be accessible to the Senior Leadership Team as well as the TLET's Chief Executive Officer, who can request access to an SCR at any time.

8 – Monitoring

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, and those they delegate authority, to ensure that the principles and procedures of this policy are adhered to. The use of this policy will be subject to routine monitoring and reporting of findings to ensure its fidelity in practice. The evidence gathered from monitoring at regular intervals shall inform any reviews and future revisions to the policy, and not later than that is stated on Page 2 of this policy.
- 8.2 This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any individual (with due regard to their protected characteristics), and it helps to promote equality across the Trust.