



Safer Recruitment Policy

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Introduction

Shrewsbury International School India (hereafter referred to as the School) is committed to providing the best possible care and education to its pupils and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The school is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment for its staff members.

To achieve these aims, it is fundamentally important to attract, recruit, and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The aims of the School's recruitment policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the position
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds, including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. We will use recommendations and guidance provided by organisations such as the Council of British International Schools (COBIS)
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting children's and young people's welfare by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in recruiting and selecting staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the School's Board of Management (hereafter known as the "BOM") to:

- Ensure the School has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with applicable UK and India legislative and regulatory frameworks and legal requirements, and to monitor the School's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Headmaster, Bursar and other Managers involved in recruitment to ensure:

- That the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school
- monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

With the exception of the appointment of the Headmaster and the Bursar, the BOM has delegated responsibility to the Headmaster (teaching staff) and Bursar (support staff) to lead in all appointments.

Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure

Recruitment

- The School will undertake child safeguarding measures while appointing new staff.
- As a part of the recruitment process, interviews of the applicants are conducted by an interviewing panel. The panel assesses the applicant's attitude towards children as also his/her ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The School clearly talks about the knowledge of Child Protection to the interviewee.
- Every member of the staff is given an ID Card which he/she must carry at all the time mandatorily.
- The School officially applies for police verification and background checks of the applicants.
- All newly selected candidates must also provide a signed affidavit to the educational institution that they have not been accused of offence under the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act, 2012 and Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.
- Regular training programs on all aspects of child safety are conducted by the School.
- All staff members are made aware of "Do's and Don't(s) in School Premises" which covers principles such as 'No touch policy', etc.
- Briefing on Do's and Don't(s) is done on a regular basis to ensure that the concept of Child protection is ingrained in the minds and behaviour of all staff members.
- As a part of preventive measures for the safety and security of pupils, visits to the school by outside visitors are strictly regulated. A visitor management system has been introduced whereby the visitors only have controlled access with written permission.

Training and Sensitisation

The purpose of training and sensitisation is to:

- Ensure that all staff, governors, and volunteers involved in recruitment understand their responsibilities in safeguarding children.
- Promote a consistent approach to safer recruitment practices across the school.
- Equip individuals with the skills to identify potential risks, inappropriate behaviours, and red flags in candidates.
- Foster a culture of vigilance, transparency, and accountability in all recruitment activities.
- All staff members involved in recruitment must complete mandatory safer recruitment training. Safer recruitment training will be refreshed at least every 2 years.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for ensuring that all recruitment-related staff complete the required training. The Headteacher and Governing Body are responsible for supporting the implementation of this policy and ensuring its effectiveness.

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the process. The designated head of department, line manager or member of the SLT must provide an up-to-date job description and person specification:

- A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and is finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It clearly and accurately sets out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.
- The person specification informs the selection decision. It details the skills,

experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. All person specifications must include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

For all teaching positions, candidates are required to have current qualified teacher status or equivalent experience.

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity and to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible, the School advertises all vacant posts. Normally, this entails an external advertisement in addition to promoting the post on the School's website.

All advertisements must make clear the School's commitment to safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children.

Application Forms

All applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and employment history and suitability for the role. If the deadline for completed application forms has not passed, incomplete forms will be returned to the applicant.

Applicants will receive a job description/information for the role for which they have applied.

The school's website will contain application forms, job descriptions, person specifications, and the Child Protection Policy.

Shortlisting

The shortlisting process will be carried out by two people. This would normally include HR, manager at the appropriate level and or the Headmaster.

Online Search

An online search will be performed prior to the interview for all shortlisted candidates to identify any incidents or issues that have happened and may be publicly available online. If anything has been identified those conducting the interview will explore the matter further with the applicant during the interview.

The date the search was performed, and results of the online search will be kept in the successful candidate's personal file. Candidates are informed of these online checks in the Recruitment Packs, and in the invitation to interview letter.

References

References for short-listed applicants will be requested immediately after short-listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In such cases, this reference will be taken up after the interview, if the applicant is successful.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the School. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve

work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will also be asked to confirm they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children.

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by telephone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

The School does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

Interviews will be conducted face-to-face wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps which have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstances of the individual case during the interview process, if it has been disclosed on the application form.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. All applicants who are invited to an in person interview will be required to bring with them evidence of identity, right to work in India, address and appropriate/relevant qualifications.

For interviews conducted online, applicants may be required to furnish the copies of the documents (via email) post interview.

Only original documents will be accepted, and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed 6 months after the recruitment process for the role for which they have applied is concluded.

Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process

Direct Employees

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the interview, any such offer will be conditional on all or any of the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's terms and conditions of employment.

- Verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified).
- The receipt of at least two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which the School considers to be satisfactory.
- A satisfactory assessment that the applicant is medically fit to undertake the duties of the role (see the section on medical fitness).
- A satisfactory outcome to vetting checks that meet the Part 4 of the Standards for British Schools Overseas, Suitability of Staff, Supply Staff and Proprietors, these include:
 - The person's identity
 - the person's medical fitness (see the section on medical fitness, below)
 - the person's right to work in the host country
 - where appropriate, the person's qualifications
 - where a person has ever worked, or currently works in the UK that they supply the school with an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC)
 - the proprietor ensures that, in the case of any person living or having lived outside the host country, where obtaining the ICPC is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, further checks are made as considered appropriate
 - the proprietor ensures that the appointment of the person adheres to all laws related to their role in accordance with local legislative and regulatory frameworks.

In addition, applicants must also provide, if not provided as part of the checks above, a copy of the Aadhaar and PAN card for Indian staff and Passports for expatriates. It should also be made clear that proof of date of birth is required in accordance with the Madhya Pradesh Teachers Eligibility Test (MPTET) Rules, 2018.

Proof of date of birth is also necessary so that the School may verify the identity of, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history of all applicants.

All of the above checks must have been completed. Based on the information received via those checks and that accrued during the selection process in general, the appointing manager (typically, the Headmaster or the Bursar) must satisfy themselves that the person is suitable for the position to which the person is appointed.

Suitability of Agency Workers and Contractors (Outsourced Service Providers)

This section outlines the procedures Shrewsbury India will follow to ensure the suitability of all agency staff and contractors (outsourced service providers) working on or off the school premises or interacting with its students. This includes, but is not limited to, personnel providing services such as cleaning, catering, security, coaching, and other enrichment or extra-curricular activities. Shrewsbury India is committed to ensuring that all individuals working within its environment meet appropriate safeguarding standards, equivalent to those applied to directly employed staff, in line with local legislative and regulatory requirements in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, and relevant COBIS guidelines.

Process for Ensuring Suitability:

Third-Party Providers (e.g., Catering, Cleaning, Security Agencies):

- Each provider must submit an annual letter to the Headmaster (or designated safeguarding lead) confirming they conduct necessary background checks on all employees working at Shrewsbury India or interacting with its students, detailing the checks undertaken in line with local regulations.
- For each individual, the provider must complete and sign a checklist confirming background checks, accompanied by copies of their valid government-issued photographic identification and current police clearance certificate (or equivalent as per Bhopal regulations).
- Before starting work, each individual must present the original identification and police clearance certificate to a designated school HR department for verification against the copies. Verification will be documented and recorded on the single central record.
- All staff will receive annual safeguarding training either in English or Hindi.

Supply Teaching Staff (Engaged Through Agencies):

- Shrewsbury India will only use agencies that are compliant with all local legislative and regulatory requirements in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Before a supply teacher starts work, Shrewsbury India will:

- Before starting work, each individual must present the original identification and police clearance certificate to a designated school HR department for verification against the copies. Verification will be documented and recorded on the single central record.
- All staff will receive annual safeguarding training either in English or Hindi.
- Verify their identity through the presentation of original, valid government-issued photographic identification.
- Assess their suitability for the specific role, considering agency information and potentially seeking references or conducting brief interviews.

Volunteers, Temporary Workers, and Other Enrichment/Extra-Curricular Personnel (Not Directly Employed):

- The level of background checks will be determined by a risk assessment that considers their role, interaction with students, and duration of involvement at Shrewsbury India, adhering to Bhopal regulations.
- Based on the risk assessment, appropriate checks will be conducted, potentially including identity verification, police clearance certificates (or equivalent), and reference checks.
- Records of all checks will be maintained by the HR department[.]

Where there is a need to use (agency) supply teachers, only individuals offered in accordance with local legislative and regulatory requirements related to their role will be considered.

Agency supply teachers must not begin work at the school until:

- The school has checked the individual's identity.
- It has been determined that the person is suitable for the work for which the person is employed.

Volunteers

The School may request a background check on all volunteers, the only exception is for those volunteers whose volunteering duties are subject to regular, day-to-day supervision by a fully checked member of staff or by a volunteer whom the School has deemed appropriate to supervise and ensure the safety of those pupils in their care.

Under no circumstances will the School permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with pupils.

Where checks are required, they may include but are not restricted to:

- Formal or informal information provided by staff, parents and other volunteers
- character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source
- an informal, safer recruitment interview.

Additionally, for expatriates, this may also include a requirement to present a satisfactory ICPC and/or additional police/criminal record check certificates from the location where they have been resident for 3 months or more during a period of up to 5 years.

Proprietor and members of the Governors

All Proprietors and Governors will have the following checks as part of the safeguarding commitment of the School, which include:

- Identity checks
- Police checks
- Reference checks.

Until checks are complete, the proprietors and governors should wear visitor badges.

Visiting speakers

Prior to any event at which an external speaker presents, the School shall check that the speaker and content is suitable for the audience and that they are also appropriately supervised.

All visiting speakers will be required to wear a visitor's badge at all times, and they will be escorted by a fully vetted member of staff throughout their time on campus..

The School may also obtain such formal or informal background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and/or permit a speaker to attend the School.

Medical fitness

The School is entitled to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment is confirmed.

All applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete a Medical Declaration.

If the Headmaster has any doubts about an applicant's fitness, the School will consider reasonable adjustments in consultation with the applicant. The School may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.

Retention of Records

If an applicant is successful in their application, the School will retain in his/her personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in India, medical fitness and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help the School to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g. so that the School may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

This documentation will be retained by the School for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the School and afterwards for as long as it, the School, deems fit, and at its sole and absolute discretion.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will be destroyed when the School deems fit, at its sole and absolute discretion.

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about supply staff and volunteers involved with school activities.

Single Central Record of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in school and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the Guidance provided by the Council for British International Schools (COBIS 2025). This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Human Resources Department. The Single Central Record (SCR) will contain details of the following:

- All employees who are employed to work at the School; all employees who are employed as supply staff to the School, whether employed directly or through an agency
- Governors as members of a proprietorial body
- and all others who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, peripatetic staff and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members.

The DSL will be responsible for auditing the SCR and reporting his/her findings to the governor, who will be responsible for safeguarding at each of its meetings.

Queries

If an applicant has any queries on completing the application form or any other matter, they should contact the Bursar or Head Human Resources.

Appendix A: Risk Assessment: Exclusion of Birth Certificates from Safer Recruitment Process at SISI

Introduction

Safer recruitment in schools is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of students. The exclusion of birth certificates from the documentation process introduces various risks that could compromise the integrity of recruitment procedures. This risk assessment identifies potential threats, their impact, and mitigation strategies.

Identified Risks

Risk ID	Risk Description	Likelihood (Low/Medium/High)	Impact (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigation Strategies
R1	Inability to verify identity	Medium	High	Alternative official documents such as passports or national ID cards ADHAAR or PAN cards are required. Conduct additional identity verification checks.
R2	Increased risk of fraudulent documentation	Medium	High	Implement rigorous background checks and verification with relevant authorities—Utilise digital identity verification services.
R3	Non-compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements	High	High	Adhere to safer recruitment guidelines, including thorough identity verification as regulatory bodies recommend.
R4	Increased risk of employing individuals with false identities	Medium	High	Cross-check all documentation against national databases. Conduct in-depth reference checks.
R5	Potential hiring of individuals barred from working with children	Low	High	Maintain stringent DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) or equivalent checks. Ensure compliance with legal requirements.
R6	Reputational damage to the school	Medium	High	Strengthen recruitment policies, conduct regular audits, and provide staff training on document verification.

Mitigation Measures

1. **Require Alternative Identity Documents:** Schools should mandate the submission of passports, national ID cards, or driving licenses if birth certificates are unavailable.
2. **Enhanced Background Checks:** Verify all candidate identities through digital verification services and national databases.
3. **Compliance with Regulatory Standards:** Schools must align recruitment processes with national safeguarding and employment laws.
4. **Training for Recruitment Staff:** Provide regular training on safer recruitment practices and document verification techniques.
5. **Audit and Review Procedures:** Conduct periodic internal audits to ensure compliance with safer recruitment policies.

Conclusion

Excluding birth certificates from safer recruitment processes introduces risks that could undermine the safeguarding of students and the integrity of hiring procedures. By implementing robust mitigation strategies, schools can ensure secure and compliant recruitment practices that uphold the highest child protection standards.