



Victory Heights Primary School
City of Arabia
Safer Recruitment Policy

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Responsible SLT: Principal

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Equal Opportunities Statement

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to ensuring that recruitment decisions are made without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, religion, disability or any other protected characteristic. All candidates will be evaluated fairly based on their ability to meet the requirements of the role and contribute positively to the school's culture and values.

Policy Vision

This policy sets out the school's approach to safer recruitment to ensure that all employees, volunteers, and contractors are suitable to work with children. It applies to all appointments, including teaching and non-teaching staff, temporary workers, volunteers, and external service providers.

Volunteers and Parent Helpers

At Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia, volunteers and parent helpers play a valuable role in supporting school activities. While they are not subjected to the same rigorous vetting processes as permanent staff, they will always be supervised and will never be left alone with children. The school ensures that any individuals regularly volunteering are aware of the school's safeguarding expectations and will provide them with a safeguarding induction before they begin.

This distinction ensures the safety of children while allowing parents and volunteers to actively contribute to school life.

Aims of the Policy

- Ensure that those who work with children at VHPS-COA are safe, suitable, and capable of fulfilling their roles.
- Deter unsuitable individuals from seeking employment at VHPS-COA through clear job descriptions, safeguarding statements, and stringent pre-employment checks.
- Identify and address any potential risks at the recruitment stage.
- Establish ongoing practices to monitor and review safeguarding compliance post-employment.

Roles and Responsibilities

Primary Leadership Team (PLT)

- Oversee the implementation of the Safer Recruitment Policy and ensure that all appointments comply with it.
- Lead the training of staff involved in recruitment.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Ensure all safeguarding requirements are met during recruitment.
- Review and update the policy in line with new guidance and regulatory changes.

The Principal of the school is the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Headteacher acts as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, and acts in the ab

Human Resources (HR)

- Conduct recruitment processes following safer recruitment guidelines.
- Ensure thorough shortlisting, interviews, and reference checks.
- Manage and document pre-employment checks, ensuring compliance with KHDA and UK standards.
- Maintain records of all recruitment and vetting processes.

Regulations and Relevant Legislation

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

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (KCSIE), DfE, September 2023
- Protection of Children Act, 1999
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act, 2000
- The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012

In addition to the UK legislation and guidelines, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia's screening policy for new employees and volunteers complies with the following UAE legislation and guidelines:

- Federal Law No. 3 of 2016 Concerning Child Rights (Wadeema's Law)
- National Child Protection Policy in Educational Institutions in the United Arab Emirates

Pre-Employment Checks and Vetting Procedures

Identity Checks

All candidates must provide original documentation confirming their identity, including a government-issued photo ID (passport) and proof of address.

Criminal Background Checks

- For staff recruited internationally, an ICPC
- For staff recruited locally, a UAE Police Good Conduct Certificate must be obtained.
- Where candidates have worked in multiple countries, international clearance checks will be conducted.

International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC)

All staff recruited from the UK or countries with equivalent safeguarding arrangements are required to provide an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) to demonstrate they have undergone criminal background checks. For applicants from other countries, equivalent police clearance documentation will be required. The ICPC, or its international equivalent, is an essential part of the school's vetting process and helps ensure a safe environment for all children.

<https://www.acro.police.uk/>

Right to Work in the UAE

All candidates must provide documentation proving their eligibility to work in the UAE.

Employment History and References

- A minimum of **two professional references** is required, including **one from the current or most recent employer**.
- **References will be verified directly** with the referee to ensure authenticity and accuracy.
- References must specifically address the candidate's **suitability to work with children**, highlighting any safeguarding concerns or child protection issues.
- For **teaching roles**, the **primary reference must be from the candidate's last Principal or Headteacher**.

Where possible, references will seek to establish:

- The candidate's professional conduct and performance.
- Details regarding any disciplinary actions or safeguarding concerns.

- The reason for leaving previous employment, particularly if this involved working with children.

References will not be accepted from relatives or friends, and **open references (e.g., 'To Whom It May Concern' letters)** will not be considered unless verified by direct contact.

Prohibition from Teaching

- For all teaching positions, the school will conduct a check with the UK's Department for Education (DfE) to ensure that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order, which prevents them from teaching in the UK.
- For teachers applying from countries without a central regulatory body, the school will request equivalent evidence of good conduct, such as a certificate of good standing or a reference from their most recent employer.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-a-teachers-record>

Prohibition from Management

- For candidates applying for leadership positions, including Headteachers, Assistant Heads, and other members of the Senior Leadership Team, the school will check for **prohibition from management orders** issued under Section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- These checks will be conducted through the UK Teacher Services system, ensuring that the individual is not barred from holding a management position within a school.
- For international candidates, where applicable, checks will be made with relevant authorities or previous employers to identify any management prohibitions.

Qualifications Verification

All relevant qualifications will be verified by inspecting original certificates. In line with KHDA and UAE Federal guidelines, documents must be attested by an approved lawyer or notary public. Where necessary, equivalency certificates will be required to ensure that qualifications meet UAE standards. Cross-checks with the awarding bodies will be conducted as necessary to confirm the validity of qualifications. Without proper attestation or equivalency where required, employment offers may be revoked or delayed.

Medical Fitness

Candidates must provide a medical fitness certificate, as required by UAE labour law, to confirm their physical and mental fitness for the role.

Recruitment and Selection Process

Job Advertisements

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia ensures that all job advertisements reflect our unwavering commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The following measures will be applied when advertising vacancies:

- **Safeguarding Commitment:** All job adverts will clearly include a statement of the school's safeguarding expectations and outline the pre-employment checks required for the successful candidate, including background checks, references, and police clearances.
- **Equal Opportunity Statement:** As part of the school's commitment to diversity and inclusion, job adverts will include an Equal Opportunities statement ensuring that all applicants are treated fairly and equitably.
- **Reputable Platforms:** Advertisements will be posted on well-regarded, trusted platforms to attract high-quality candidates. This includes LinkedIn, educational job boards, recruitment agencies with proven vetting processes, and the school's official website. Well regarded local platforms/social media, will also be used.
- **Essential Information:** Adverts will specify key details, including the job description, essential qualifications, expected start date, and any safeguarding responsibilities associated with the role.

Safeguarding Statement for Job Advertisements

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our safer recruitment practices reflect the recommendations of the International Task Force on Child Protection, ensuring robust procedures to protect children. All successful applicants will undergo comprehensive background checks, which may include Enhanced ICPC (International Child Protection Certificate) checks, UK Enhanced DBS checks, police clearance certificates from relevant jurisdictions, verification of qualifications, and the receipt of satisfactory professional references. These measures ensure that we maintain the highest standards of child protection.

Equal Opportunities Statement for Job Advertisements

Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We welcome applications from all qualified candidates and ensure that recruitment decisions are made fairly, based solely on merit and suitability for the role.

Shortlisting Candidates

- Applications will be reviewed against job criteria, with particular attention to safeguarding red flags (e.g., unexplained gaps in employment).
- Candidates meeting the requirements will be shortlisted for an interview.

Interview and Selection

- **Trained Panel Members:** At least one member of the interview panel will be trained in safer recruitment practices to ensure that safeguarding is at the forefront of the selection process. This training will be refreshed periodically to maintain up-to-date knowledge of best practices.
- **Safeguarding-Specific Questions:** Interviews will include direct questions designed to evaluate candidates' understanding of child protection, their experience with safeguarding protocols, and their ability to identify and respond to concerns.
- **Assessment of Values:** The interview process will also assess the candidate's alignment with the school's ethos and values, ensuring they can contribute positively to the school's nurturing and inclusive environment.
- **Multiple Methods of Assessment:** Depending on the role, the selection process may involve additional tasks such as classroom observations and practical tasks to evaluate specific competencies, particularly for leadership roles.

References

- **Minimum of Two Professional References:** All candidates will be required to provide at least two professional references, including one from their current or most recent employer. For teaching roles, the primary reference must be from the candidate's last headteacher or principal.
- **Direct Verification:** References will be contacted directly by the school to confirm their authenticity and clarify any ambiguous or concerning information.
- **Safeguarding Focus:** References must explicitly address the candidate's suitability to work with children and any known safeguarding concerns.
- **Addressing Concerns:** Any issues or discrepancies raised in references will be discussed with the candidate and, if necessary, further investigated before any offer of employment is finalised.

Offer of Appointment

- **Conditional Offer:** A formal offer of employment will be made on a conditional basis, subject to the successful completion of all pre-employment checks.
- **Pre-Employment Checks:** These checks will include verification of identity, qualifications, references, ICPC clearance, prohibition from teaching or

management checks, and any additional requirements stipulated by KHDA and UAE law.

- **Withdrawing Offers:** If the results of the pre-employment checks are unsatisfactory or if safeguarding concerns arise that cannot be mitigated, the conditional offer may be withdrawn.

By following these robust processes, Victory Heights Primary School City of Arabia ensures that only candidates who meet both professional and safeguarding requirements are appointed to positions within the school.

Probation Period

- All appointments will be subject to a probationary period, during which performance, suitability, and adherence to safeguarding standards will be reviewed.

Safer Recruitment of Volunteers and Contractors

Volunteers

Volunteers who work with children on a regular or long-term basis will be subject to the same rigorous pre-employment checks as permanent staff, including ICPC checks, verification of identity, and professional references.

Ad-hoc volunteers, such as parent helpers assisting with occasional events or trips, will not be subject to the same level of checks, as they will always be supervised by a member of staff. However, if a volunteer's role evolves to become more frequent or ongoing, regardless of supervision, they will be required to undergo full pre-employment checks to ensure compliance with safeguarding standards.

Contractors

All contractors working on the school premises are expected to undergo full pre-employment checks, including police checks and verification of qualifications, before being allowed unsupervised access to any part of the school where children are present.

In the rare case that a contractor is permitted on-site without completed checks due to extenuating circumstances, they will be fully supervised at all times by a member of staff or a site manager. Their access to children will be strictly restricted, and their duties will be planned to minimise any interaction with children.

Monitoring and Compliance

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly in line with the Policy Review Policy. Updates and changes will be documented in the Version Control Table to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.

Version Control Table

Policy Title: Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Owner: Principal

Last Approved By: Primary Leadership Team

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes Made	Next Review Date
1.0	February 2025	PLT	Initial policy release (2025 re-write)	August 2025