

Nurture ~ Believe ~ Discover ~ Achieve

Safa Vision

At SCS we aim to enable our learners to have success for today and to be prepared for tomorrow.

نحن في مدرسة الصفا كوميونيتي نسعى الى تأهيل طلابنا للنجاح اليوم وتحضيرهم لمواجهة المستقبل

Safer Recruitment Policy 2024 - 2025

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Safa Community School

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Purpose

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

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

- 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', (KCSIE), DfE, September 2024
- Protection of Children Act, 1999
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act, 2000
- The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012
- Federal Decree Law 2 Anti Discrimination and Equal Opportunities.

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

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

Policy in Practice

- Every employee must have a signed Criminal Background Declaration form.
- Suitable background checks and references are conducted for every employee at the school.
- Where employees will be working with children, a record of disclosure of criminal history will be required.
- Employees that are recruited directly from countries where there is a standardised process for obtaining criminal clearance must do so prior to joining Safa Community School. This includes the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.
- Advertising of post on TES will include the following statement:

At Safa Community School we hold ourselves to a high standard of effective practices in relation to child protection and we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Successful applicants will be subject to various background checks including, receipt of satisfactory references, proof of relevant qualifications, identification and police checks, including overseas checks.

- At least one member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for making offers of employment will have successfully completed training in Safer Recruitment within the last 2 years.

Recruitment Process, Selection and Procedures

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

- All prospective employees are required to submit a completed Safa Community School application form completed on TES, a copy of their full curriculum vitae and a covering letter
- These will be checked initially by the HR Manager, when any gaps or discrepancies will be followed up
- Following this initial check, a member of the SLT will review the application
- The application form and accompanying submissions will be kept on file along with the required original copies of relevant attested qualifications in order to meet the requirements of Dubai's Knowledge and Human Development Agency (KHDA). This can be done once an offer of appointment has been made.
- All prospective employees are required to have a reference check and must have two references, one being from their current Principal/Head of School for those in employment or their last Principal in the case of those not in school. In the case of non-educational staff, the person's current or most recent employer.
- The school does not accept open references. Formal, written references will be sought directly from the referees.
- Once received, at least one reference will be authenticated by the HR Manager, the Principal or their appointed deputy, by a phone call to the supplier of the reference, who may also be asked to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies through the school will endeavor to do this for all three references. Where this is the case, detailed records will be kept of such exchanges.
- Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Where this is the case, detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.
- Among other things, referees will be asked specific questions about the following:
 - (i) the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people;
 - (ii) any substantiated allegations;
 - (iii) any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the Safeguarding of children and young people;
 - (iv) the candidate's suitability for the post.
- Wherever possible, references will be requested in advance of the interview. All references will be kept on file.
- Whilst, the school asks all new employees to endeavor to provide evidence of police checks from every country in which they have worked and completed their teacher training, it is recognised that the international nature of the U.A.E. means that the School attracts applications from a range of countries around the world, many of whom do not have developed safeguarding and vetting procedures. Thus, it is not always possible to document a full career of police checks.
- Candidates working outside the UK at the time of application are required to get a local police check from the country in which they are working at that time (e.g. A Dubai Police Check) These are valid for 3 months only. Police checks are requested in English.
- All initial contracts are subject to a satisfactory outcome of the Disclosure and Barring Service checks where possible (only possibly if UK work history). For employees coming from the UK or with a previous UK address, the school will also insist on the production of the ICPC.
- The DBS must be less than 4 months old. If more than 4 months old, the school will conduct the COBIS Prohibition Check with the permission of the staff member which will be dated one month

before employment start date.

- The ICPC must be no older than one month from the date of starting.
- In light of BREXIT, as of 1 January 2021, the EEA section of the Prohibition Order check will no longer be available to access on the Teachers Regulation Agency website.
- For employees who have never worked in the UK, they will require a specific country Police report less than 4 months old from the country they are coming from.
- Where there is a break in employment of more than three months for a member of staff, a new Enhanced DBS or other Police check will be sought.
- Thorough check on social media accounts and digital footprints, this was implemented in September 2024, and is kept on the SCR.
- The employee will be checked against the 'Barred List' before the appointment is confirmed.
- As an additional check of identity, production of Birth Certificates are now required for all members of staff so that checks can be made against names at birth. This process is added to the policy from August 2024 and will be completed over the course of the academic year. The procedures set out above will not normally be necessary for:
 - (i) visitors to the school, who have no unsupervised contact with pupils;
 - (ii) building or other contractors provided they have no unsupervised contact with students;
 - (iii) volunteers or parents who only accompany staff at specific events or one-off trips (excluding overnight stays);
 - (iv) those on the school site only when students are not present.

All visitors and contractors sign in, with an Emirates ID or Passport (overseas visitors) and are given an ID badge and are fully supervised at all times as appropriate.

Social Media Screening Policy for Safer Recruitment

As part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people, Safa Community School adheres to the requirements of the KHDA (Knowledge and Human Development Authority), the BSO (British Schools Overseas) standards, and the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) framework. This includes conducting thorough background checks, which incorporate social media screening, for all prospective staff members.

Scope

The social media screening applies to:

- **All candidates** for roles involving direct or indirect contact with students (teaching and non-teaching staff).
- **Publicly accessible content** on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Twitter (X), and others.
- **UAE Cultural Values:** Content that is inconsistent with the UAE's laws, traditions, and cultural sensitivities, including but not limited to:
 - Disrespectful or offensive content related to religion, culture, or national symbols.
 - Advocacy of behaviors contrary to UAE laws or moral codes.
 - Posts that violate social harmony or promote divisive, discriminatory, or extremist ideologies.

Candidate Awareness

1. Disclosure on TES and Job Advertisements

- Social media screening will be clearly stated as part of the recruitment process in all job advertisements, including postings on **TES** and other platforms.
- Candidates will be informed at the outset that this process aligns with safeguarding and cultural expectations in the UAE.

2. Consent

- Written consent will be obtained from candidates before conducting any social media screening. This will be stated on our Criminal Records Self Declaration Form and will be uploaded onto the Single Central Record.
- This process will be explained as part of the pre-employment safeguarding checks in line with the school's commitment to student safety and UAE regulations.

Procedure

1. Scope of Screening

The screening will be limited to publicly available content and will focus on identifying any material that may indicate:

- Behavior inconsistent with safeguarding responsibilities and the school's values.
- Evidence of discriminatory, violent, or offensive language or conduct.
- Content contrary to UAE laws and cultural values.
- Online activity that may bring the school into disrepute or suggest a lack of suitability to work with children.

2. Implementation

- The screening will be conducted by designated HR personnel or a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- A standardised checklist aligned with KCSIE, KHDA, and BSO standards will be used to ensure fairness and consistency.

3. Assessment of Findings

- Any concerning content will be reviewed by the Child Protection Team in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and senior leadership.
- Candidates will be given an opportunity to explain any flagged content before a decision is made.

4. Decision-Making Process

- Recruitment decisions will prioritize the safety and wellbeing of students in line with KCSIE, KHDA, and BSO guidelines.
- Offers of employment may be withdrawn if the candidate is deemed unsuitable based on the findings.

Confidentiality and Compliance

- All findings will remain confidential, accessible only to authorised personnel.
- The process will comply with UAE data protection laws and respect cultural norms.

Interview Process - SCS Requirements:

- All potential candidates are always interviewed online as an initial interview.
- Interviews are always to be completed in twos, with at least one, if not both having received their Safer Recruitment training, updated every two years.
- The following safeguarding questions are compulsory to be asked on this call:
 - Can you give us an example of a time you faced a safeguarding issue and how you dealt with it?
 - What would you do if you were concerned about the behaviour of a child?
 - What do you see as your main responsibilities as a Teacher/Teaching Assistant regarding safeguarding?
 - Why do you want to work with children?
 - What is your approach to safeguarding at work?
 - Who is the person responsible for safeguarding your school?
- If successful, and are moved into the next round, they are invited in to complete a demonstration lesson, they will always remain with a member of the leadership team and never left on their own with a child.
- Notes from the interview are kept on file, for those successful, this will remain in their HR file. For those unsuccessful, these will be kept for up to 3 months.

Single Central Record

All pre employment checks and documentation is held on a Single Central Record, ours is held via a secure online platform: <https://onlinescr.co.uk>.

At Safa Community School, the Single Central Record (SCR) is an important element of safeguarding and regulatory compliance. It is managed and regularly updated by the HR Team to ensure all necessary checks are accurate and current. The SCR includes the following:

- **Identity Verification**
 - Copies of passports for all staff.
 - Emirates ID details and labour cards, where applicable.
 - Birth certificates, which will be added over the next calendar year to further enhance safeguarding checks.
- **Background Checks:**
 - Police clearance certificates for all employees.
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for staff with a history of work or residency in the UK. ICPC checks are also requested.
 - Prohibition from teaching checks, including maiden and married names for those who have undergone a name change.
 - Section 128 to ensure individuals in senior leadership positions, such as head teachers, governors, or trustees, are not prohibited from managing a school due to certain criminal convictions or disqualifications. These checks are to be requested by the Principal of Safa Community School.
- **Agency and Contracting Staff:**
 - Verification of identity and police clearance from the agency or contracting company.
 - Safeguarding induction to be completed prior to commencing work at the school.

- **Contact Information:**
 - Staff address and contact details for verification and communication.
- **Right to Work:**
 - Visa details and work permit information.
- **Training Records:**
 - Evidence of safeguarding and child protection training conducted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Safa Community School.
- **Document Management:**
 - All checks are added without overwriting previous records, ensuring a complete historical record of safeguarding and compliance checks. This can be accessed on SCR via the Historical Checks menu.

The HR team carefully monitors the expiration dates of identification checks and other essential documents, ensuring that renewals are carried out promptly. This diligent approach enables the school to maintain compliance with safeguarding policies.

Data Protection and Archiving

At Safa Community School, we take data protection seriously and are fully committed to complying with the UAE & UK Data Protection Act. The personal information recorded on the SCR is handled with care, used solely for safeguarding and regulatory purposes, and securely stored in accordance with privacy guidelines. When staff leave the school, we ensure their records are securely archived to maintain a complete history while adhering to data retention policies. This careful approach protects sensitive information and demonstrates our commitment to ethical and legal standards.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board of the school will:

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

The Principal will:

- ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures
- ensure that these are regularly reviewed and up--dated to reflect any changes to legislation, international best practice and statutory guidance
- ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in the school
- monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this document
- promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at every stage of this process

The Department for Education maintains the database of all teachers eligible to teach in England. The database is called The Teacher Services system (formerly known as Employer Access Online). Schools overseas cannot access the online database to carry out the Prohibition checks. The school uses the services directly from our online platform, <https://onlinescr.co.uk/partners/> to check the details of teachers who are still subject to disciplinary sanctions from the GTCE ensuring that all prospective appointments

- ensure that all staff receive appropriate safeguard training
- line manage the HR Manager to ensure compliance with this policy

The HR Team will:

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

Next Review Date: August 2025

Person Responsible: Leanne Fridd

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- HR Policy
- Communication Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- SCS Data Protection Policy