Recruitment Policy

Approved by the Headteacher and Governing Body on 21.09.2026
Reviewed: 09.26
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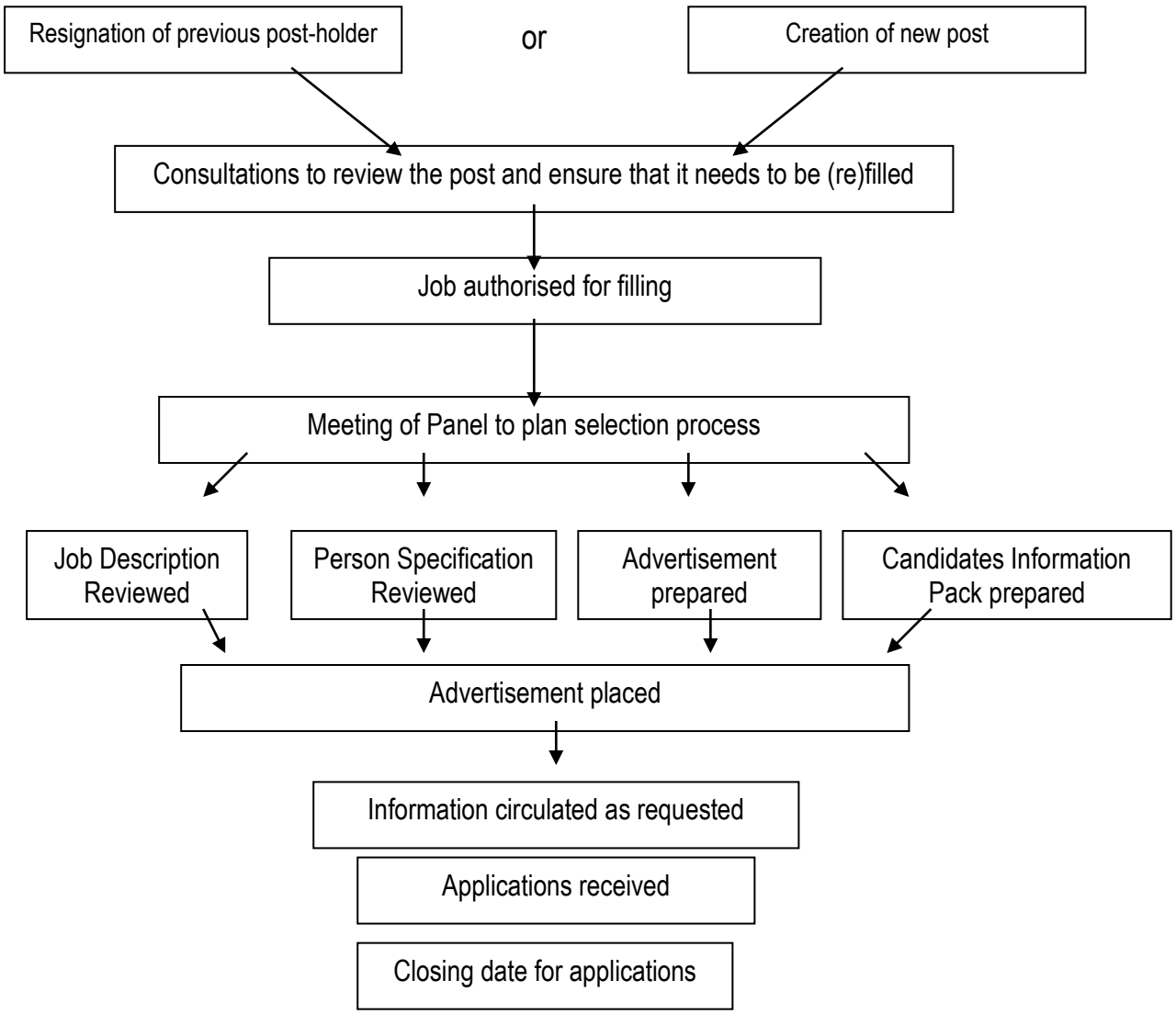
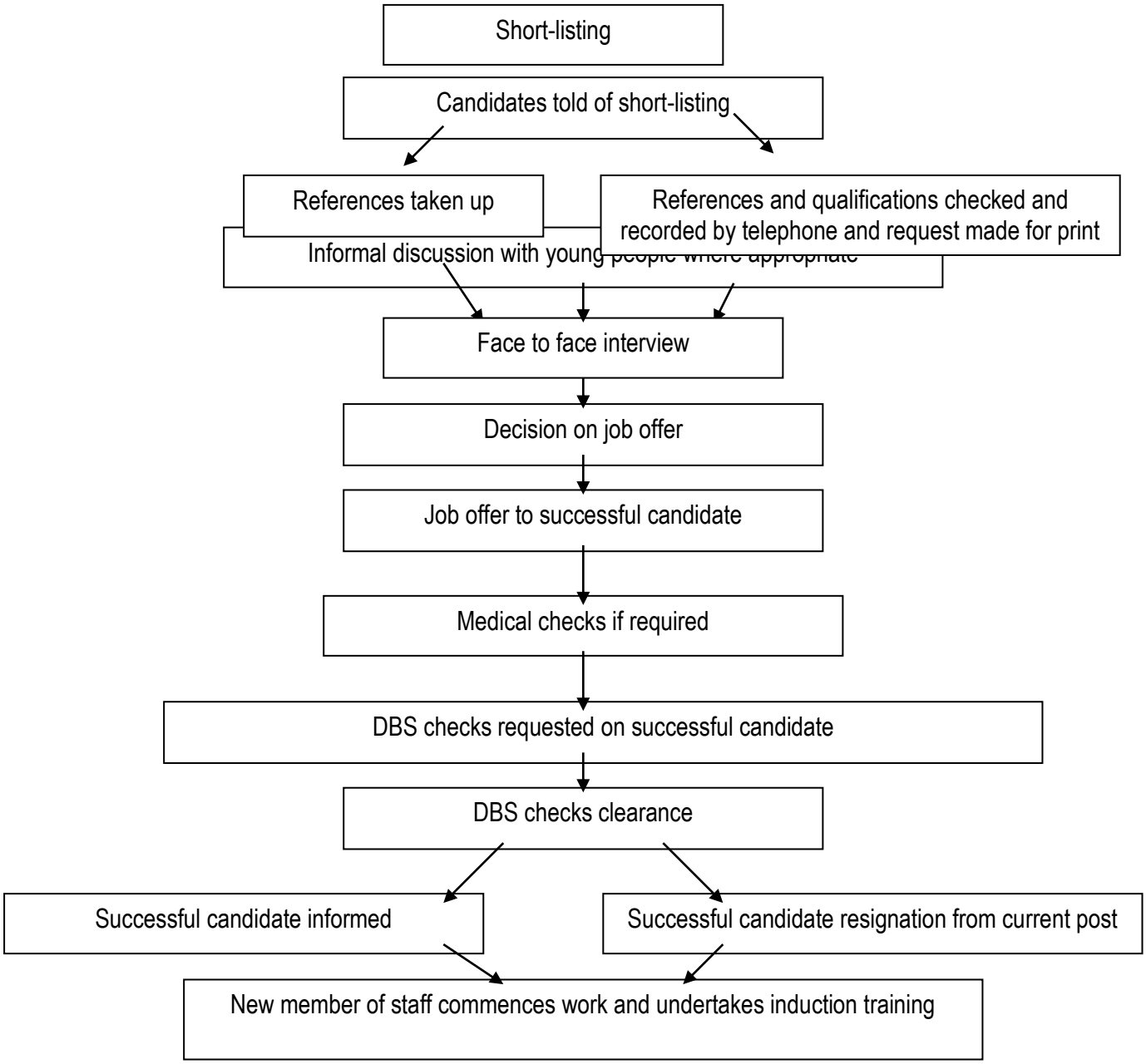
Process for the Appointment of a Member of Staff





Notes:

a. This chart is simplified and does not include many stages which may extend the process, such as holidays or re-advertisement.
b. Some of the stages can be speeded up, but in general it must be appreciated that carrying out staff selection correctly and with due regard to procedure is a lengthy process.

Preparing Information for Candidates

Staff selection is a two-way process. It is not only for the school to select staff from the candidates presenting themselves, but it is for the candidates to decide whether they wish to work at the school.

To make this decision they need information, and it may be helpful to consult staff in other similar posts to ascertain what would be most useful.

Some information will be made available to candidates through advertisements. It is necessary to decide in advance, however, what information will be provided to people requesting application forms and further details.

The following items of information should be considered for circulation to potential applicants:

- General information about the school.
- School policies
- The statement of purpose.
- The job description for the post.
- The person specification for the post.
- Details of the salary on offer, and conditions of service.
- Any selection criteria not made explicit in the job description and person specification.
- The selection process, including details of where and when interviews etc will take place.
- An application form.

Selecting Staff

This section covers the process from the receipt of application forms to the final selection of the successful candidate and the offer of the job.

Having attracted a range of applicants through the advertisement, this process represents a narrowing of the number of candidates by stages:

1. The provision of **full information** described in the previous section will lead some potential applicants to determine that the job is not for them.
2. **Short-listing** is the normal process for reducing large numbers of applications to the number appropriate for detailed investigation.

3. **Visits to the school** may be used by candidates to decide whether they wish to proceed.
4. **References** may be used to exclude some candidates.
5. If the number of candidates is large (especially if several vacancies are to be filled in the same process), **preliminary interviews** may be needed to reduce a "long list" down to a short list.

Selection exercises may be used to identify stronger applicants.

- Notes of the process should be kept for 12 months before being destroyed, so that any subsequent queries or complaints can be answered.
- Selection is a two-way process. The candidate needs to be as happy about working in the school with the team of prospective colleagues and the boarders as those making the appointment are happy about him or her.
- The purpose of the process described in this section is to identify the candidate most suitable for the job in terms of: Their personal attributes, disposition and character.

a. Their attributes in relation to others, including interpersonal skills, communication with children and young people, and skills in the management of people.
b. Knowledge and intellectual skills, in relation to daily tasks and childcare, including legislation.
c. Other skills, such as report writing, and working with new technology.

A list of the necessary and desirable attributes for the successful candidates should have been drawn up from the start. The next stage is to identify which assessment methods will reveal these attributes most clearly, and what types of exercises are therefore needed to do so.

Choosing the Selection Exercises

The planning of each selection process needs to be dealt with afresh, as the circumstances change. For example, different people may need to be involved in the selection panel. Different skills may be needed in looking for a member of staff to complement a specific staff team. The children and young people may need to be involved in one unit, but not in another, depending upon circumstances.

It is essential to:

- Identify the attributes, characteristics and qualities being sought in the successful candidate.
- Decide which selection exercises will reveal those characteristics.
- Plan the chosen exercises so that they form a coherent programme, which will provide the panel with the full range of information it needs to reach a decision, in particular:
  - **Who** will administer the various aspects of the process and what preparation and skills do they require? (see below)
  - **How** will the results of the various exercises be assembled? Will they be scored and aggregated to give a final total?
  - **When** and where will the various stages be carried out? Will they be over one or two days, or in stages?

Each of the following sections covers an aspect of the school's selection process which helps to identify the candidates who match the person specification and will fill the job description best. The strengths of each are given, together with an outline of how they are applied.

A template for deciding who will administer/participate in each of the recruitment stages is summarised in the following grid:

Process	**By whom**	**Training/skills required**
Short/long-listing	Panel	At least one member trained
References	Via personnel/admin to panel	Key staff trained
Preliminary interview	At least one panel member	At least one member trained
Final interview	The panel	At least one member trained
Written tests	Personnel/administration	Personnel trained
Group exercises	Panel members	Group-work
School visits	At least one panel member	At least one member trained

Involving Children and Young People

There are strong arguments for involving children and young people in the selection of staff, but the process has to be handled carefully if it is to be effective and not mere tokenism. The school's

purpose is to meet the needs of its pupil's and it follows, therefore, that they have a stake in the outcome of the interviews and a right to be involved.

Children and young people have a unique viewpoint from which to consider the applicants, and they are sensitive to some aspects of the applicants' personalities which adults might not perceive. In particular children and young people can test out candidates' ability to communicate with them and are often concerned whether staff will give them a sense of security or manage them confidently.

Involving the children and young people recognises them as individuals with a valid role to play. To confirm that their views are respected and valued, they should be made directly available for consideration by the interviewing panel.

Action Points

At St. Vincent's School we are aware that:

- It is important that the children and young people involved in the process should be properly briefed and trained, so that they feel confident in their roles. They may wish to select their own questions for discussion, or even the type of exercise they wish to use but may require support and guidance.
- There are limits to the roles that can be played by children and young people. They should not have access to confidential information about candidates, and it should be made quite clear from the start that they are not involved in the actual decision-making about the appointment.

Short-Listing

Short-listing should be undertaken by the members of the final interviewing panel, chaired by the designated appointing officer, to ensure consistency.

Candidates selected for the short-list must have all the characteristics designated as necessary in the person specification. No new criteria should be introduced. In general, the applications of the short-listed candidates will be those which match the profile of the person specification most closely.

Panel members should short/long-list independently and then pool their results to agree a final list.

We will consider any special requirements in the short-listing process. (For example, the equal opportunities policy may require the automatic short-listing of candidates who are registered as disabled if they meet the person specification.)

Short-listing should normally reduce the number of candidates to three or four. This will allow for choice between a variety of candidates, without excessive time being spent on the final selection procedures.

Exceptionally, it may be necessary to interview only one or two candidates, if there are few suitable candidates available generally, and no other applied within the criteria laid down in the person specification. Alternatively, in the event of a poor response, consideration should be given to:

- Re-advertisement, perhaps in alternative newspapers or journals.
- Adjusting the job or the grade to make it more attractive.

Exceptionally, it may also be helpful to interview more than three or four candidates, for example where more than one post needs to be filled or a pool of central staff within the school is being built up. Candidates may also represent radically different approaches to the work, and it may be worth investing the extra time involved in seeing an extra applicant for the sake of the wider choice.

Short-listed candidates will need to be informed as quickly as possible of the selection process, the programme and the venue. The latter needs to be accessible to people with disabilities, unless it has been explicit that they have been excluded from applying.

References

Written references are an essential source of information about potential candidates. The school is required to keep formal personnel records of all staff and at least **two written** references on file together with an enhanced DBS registration.

At St. Vincent's School we require written references that inform the school about:

1. The character, personality and qualities of candidates.
2. Their histories and performance as employees, or in other roles.
3. Their suitability for the post for which they have applied.

The school requires candidates to provide a full employment history and we reserve the right to approach any previous employer; the school's normal practice is to require at least two referees, one of which is the current or last employer.

At times, additional references may need to be sought, for example if:

- The candidate has found him/herself in the wrong job and is seeking to move soon after appointment, such that their current employer still knows little of the candidate.
- The candidate has no recent work record and is reliant on character references.
- An earlier job in the candidate's career appears to be especially relevant.
- A referee refuses to give a reference.

References should be sought as soon as short-listing has been undertaken, in order to check that the dates/history supplied are correct by a trained member of staff.

It is good practice for references to be shared by the referee with the candidate. However, as far as the recruiting process is concerned, they are provided on a confidential basis, unless it has been made explicit to referees in advance that the contents of the references may be discussed. Care therefore has to be taken during interview not to reveal the contents of references, even if issues contained within them have to be checked.

Referees should be sent:

- Details of the post for which the candidate has applied
- The statement of purpose and function of the school
- The job description
- The person specification
- A stamped address envelope

Referees should be requested:

To ensure that references contain no material, mis-statement or omission relevant to the suitability of the applicant for the post. The Warner Report states that a person providing the reference can be held liable if the reference is defamatory or conceals information which should be known to the prospective employer who suffers damage as a result.

Where references are insufficient or unclear, a member of the schools interviewing panel should telephone the referee for further information. The conversation should be summarised and recorded, and this information made available to the whole panel.

Members of the appointing panel should never be personal referees for candidates and should act as management referees only if there is no other alterative.