



**The Grange
Therapeutic School**

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

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This reviewed guidance has taken in to account the Department for Education document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016)' and the School Safeguarding Policy 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Grange Therapeutic School, which is part of the Acorn Care and Education Group (Acorn), is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The School/Home recognises the vulnerability of the children and young people in its care and is committed to operating to the highest standards when recruiting employees. The School/Home accepts that it is vital to adopt recruitment and selection procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Whilst this policy does cover other areas the protection of children is at its heart.
- 1.2 The School operate a non-discriminatory, fair and objective recruitment and selection process. In line with the School/Home's Equal Opportunities Policy, internal and external applicants will receive equal treatment and access to opportunities, irrespective of sex, age, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, membership or non-membership of a Trade Union.
- 1.3 In the event of an application being received from an employee of a School or Fostering Agency within the Acorn Group, the candidate will be informed that they must notify their current line management, prior to their application being processed. The School/Home receiving the application will then be in a position to contact the applicant's current employer as with any other applicant.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all internal and external applicants for advertised posts and promotions. Its principles should also be applied when considering permitting volunteers and contractors on site.

3. ELEMENTS OF SAFER PRACTICE

- 3.1 The School recognises that safer practice in recruitment requires considering and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process. This starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise, and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the School/Home's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants.
- 3.2 The School accepts that it is good practice to ensure, at the outset, that all recruitment materials (e.g. the application form, job description, person specification and information/guidance for applicants), which form part of the pack to be sent to prospective applicants, is up-to-date and clearly sets out the extent of the relationships/ contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled.
- 3.3 Candidates will receive an information pack which should include a copy of:-
- the application form
 - the job description, and person specification
 - any relevant information about the School/Home and the recruitment process

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- statements of relevant policies such as the Equal Opportunities, the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, Child Protection Policy Statement
 - the terms and conditions relating to the post
- 3.4 When a vacancy is advertised, the advertisement will include a statement about the School’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake a criminal record check via the DBS, where appropriate, as well as the usual details of the post and salary, qualifications required, etc.
- 3.5 An application form should be used in order to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants. It is not good practice to accept curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants in place of an application form, because these will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.
- 3.6 The Job Description should clearly state:
- the main duties and responsibilities of the post,
 - the individual’s responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons s/he is responsible for, or comes into contact with.
- 3.7 Person Specification should include:
- the qualifications and experience, and any other requirements, needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people,
 - the competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate, and,
 - an explanation of how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process.
- 3.8 Shortlisting for job candidates will be carried out on a fair and equitable basis against the job criteria and person specification for the post. All applications should be scrutinised to ensure:
- that they are fully and properly completed,
 - that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies,
 - that any gaps in employment are identified.
- 3.9 Incomplete applications should not be accepted and should be returned for completion. Any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified should be noted so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant.
- 3.10 The School commits to obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant’s suitability to work with children and follow up any concerns.
- 3.11 The process will involve at least one face to face interview that explores the candidate’s suitability to work with children as well as his/her suitability for the post.
- 3.12 In addition to candidates’ ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:
- the motivation to work with children and young people,
 - the ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people,
 - the emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours, and
 - the attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.

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3.13 As part of the process the School commits to:

- verifying the successful applicant's identity
- verifying that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed
- checking his/her previous employment history and experience
- certifying that s/he has the health and physical capacity for the job
- the mandatory enhanced criminal record check via the DBS
- checking that a candidate to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service
- checking that candidates newly appointed to management roles have not been prohibited under Section 128, as required by the Department for Education as an independent school
- completing a checklist which provides a record for signing-off each stage of the process and can be filed as a permanent record.

3.14 The School will adhere to its mandatory responsibility to secure enhanced DBS disclosures on all new applicants for work and for those applicants who have worked lived or worked abroad to seek additional information about an applicant's conduct (*see Appendix 2*). DBS checks will be renewed every three years.

3.15 The School will keep a single central record collating when checks on staff were made and by whom, including identity, qualification requirements, List prohibition order and DBS checks.

3.16.1 No employee can commence without first having received an enhanced DBS check.

3.16.2 For our Day School/Homes, the Head of School will have discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the Disclosure but must ensure;

- that the employee is appropriately supervised
- the request for a DBS Disclosure has been submitted
- written references have been secured and verified.

3.16.3 The School commits to request full details of DBS checks carried out on staff supplied through an agency, for School/Homes.

3.17 **Contractors / agency staff** (this information also applies to the school's visitor's policy)

The Grange has an approved contractor list for building/maintenance repairs. Regular contractors have undergone the same recruitment procedure as a member of staff. They have a DBS check and are recorded on the staff central register. These contractors are allowed to travel around the site unattended by a member of staff. All other/one-off contractors are accompanied by a member of staff and fall under our 'Visitor Guidelines'. Contractors will only attend site at the request of the Estate Manager.

The school also uses contract Therapy staff. The Therapy staff all have a DBS check paid for by the school and references are sought and verified. Their DBS certificate is checked and recorded on the staff central register. The Therapy staff travel around the school site unattended and see pupils on a one to one basis. The Therapy staff have been approved by the Head of School.

All agency staff are supplied to the school via an approved recruitment agency and all will meet with the Head of School before starting work to check their suitability for the role. All agency staff have been checked by the

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agency and have a DBS certificate with the agency that the school is recruiting them through. Agency staff are required to provide valid photo ID and a copy of their DBS is taken. All agency staff receive in-house Child Protection training before coming in to contact with the school’s young people and are supervised by staff.

3.18 All ancillary staff at The Grange Therapeutic School are recruited using safer recruitment guidelines.

4. GENERAL RECRUITMENT PRINCIPLES

4.1 Recruiting the right person to a post is crucial. Where this does not occur, it can quickly lead to the discontent of the employee, and may, in turn lead to lowering the morale of a team or department, and, of course, increased labour turnover and recruitment costs should the post have to be re-advertised.

4.2 All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

4.3 Ensuring fairness and objectivity during the recruitment and selection process is essential. Successful candidates will be appointed on merit against the job based on the job description and person specification. Standardised recruitment processes will be used.

4.4 Standardised questions should be prepared for the vacant post and all candidates asked the same interview questions with additional probing questions as appropriate.

4.5 Standardised interview record sheets should be completed for all candidates during the interview.

4.6 At least two interviewers should interview each candidate (e.g. line manager and one other).

4.7 In order to assist with the monitoring of the School/Home’s Equal Opportunities Policy and its recruitment and selection processes, all candidates will be asked to complete a confidential Equal Opportunities Monitoring form,

4.8 The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.

4.9 Ideally, references should be sought on all short listed candidates, including internal ones, and should be obtained before interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview.

4.10 Candidates should also be asked to bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body. N.B. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies written confirmation of his/her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body. A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate’s identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file.

4.11 Unsuccessful external candidates will be informed in writing with constructive feedback to be given where deemed appropriate and/or requested.

4.12 Unsuccessful internal candidates will be invited to a meeting to receive constructive detailed feedback.

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5 THE APPOINTMENT

5.1 All verbal offers of appointment are to be made "subject to references satisfactory to the School/Home" and a medical declaration from the candidate.

5.2 An offer of appointment to the successful candidate should be conditional upon:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references, (if those have not already been received),
- verification of the candidate's identity (if that could not be verified straight after the interview),
- a satisfactory enhanced DBS Disclosure,
- a prohibition from teaching check
- verification of the candidate's medical fitness,
- verification of qualifications (if not verified after the interview),
- verification of professional status where required,
- satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

5.3 All checks should be:

- confirmed in writing,
- documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information imposed by DBS regulations), and
- followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

5.4 In all cases where an applicant has worked or been resident overseas in the previous 5 years, the School/Home will where possible obtain a check of the applicant's criminal record from the relevant authority in that country. Not all countries provide that service, but the DBS provides an Overseas Information Service. Further information about the Overseas Information Service can be obtained from: http://www.DBS.gov.uk/services_overseas.asp, or by telephoning the DBS enquiry line on 08700 100 450. In cases where a criminal record check is not possible, particular care should be taken with the other required checks, especially those of identity and qualifications, and to obtain satisfactory references.

5.5 All successful candidates will receive written offers of employment.

6. INDUCTION

6.1 There should be an induction programme for all staff and volunteers newly appointed in an establishment, including teaching staff, regardless of previous experience. The purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about the establishment's policies and procedures
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged
- confirm the conduct expected of staff within the School/Home, and,
- provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities, and,
- enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

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6.2 The content and nature of the induction process will vary according to the role and previous experience of the new member of staff or volunteer, but as far as safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is concerned the induction programme should include information about, and written statements of:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism, physical intervention/restraint, intimate care, internet safety and any local child protection/safeguarding procedures,
- safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and pupils in the establishment,
- how and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised, and
- other relevant personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, capability and whistle-blowing.

The programme should also include attendance at child protection training appropriate to the person's role.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND 'UNCHECKED' STAFF AND VISITORS

7.1 Contractors / agency staff (this information also applies to the school's visitor's policy)

The Grange has an approved contractor list for building/maintenance repairs. Regular contractors have undergone the same recruitment procedure as a member of staff. They have a DBS check and are recorded on the staff central register. These contractors are allowed to travel around the site unattended by a member of staff. All other/one-off contractors are accompanied by a member of staff and fall under our 'Visitor Guidelines'. Contractors will only attend site at the request of the Estate Manager.

The school also uses contract Therapy staff. The Therapy staff all have a DBS check paid for by the school and references are sought and verified. Their DBS certificate is checked and recorded on the staff central register. The Therapy staff travel around the school site unattended and see pupils on a one to one basis. The Therapy staff have been approved by the Head of School.

All agency staff are supplied to the school via an approved recruitment agency and all will meet with the Head of School before starting work to check their suitability for the role. All agency staff have been checked by the agency and have a DBS certificate with the agency that the school is recruiting them through. Agency staff are required to provide valid photo ID and a copy of their DBS is taken. All agency staff receive in-house Child Protection training before coming in to contact with the school's young people and are supervised by staff.

7.2 The school's commitment to Safeguarding pupils is made clear to visitors, contractors and agency staff through the school's 'Safeguarding Statement'.

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Appendix 1

(Appendix - School Administrator's guidance to 'Steps to Safer Recruitment')

Steps to Safer Recruitment at The Grange Therapeutic School

Features of the Safer Recruitment process –

1. We set time aside for planning and structuring – 12 weeks is recommended
2. We prepare clear job, role and person specifications, setting down boundaries and expectations of the role including responsibilities and requirements for safeguarding
3. Clear messages about safeguarding are sent to candidates from the outset - a statement about commitment to safeguarding is incorporated into the advert and included in the job description/person specification
4. We use application forms, not CVs
5. We obtain references before interview, including specific enquiries about the applicant's background in relation to safeguarding, but no appointment will be made without verification of at least two references
6. We ensure references are given full consideration in the selection process
7. Interviews are face-to-face and include other methods for teaching and care staff, such as presentations, teaching a lesson or involvement in activities and asking our pupils' views
8. Interview questions are used to question motives, attitudes and behaviours
9. We seek information about criminal activity and use this appropriately to make decisions
10. We ensure there is an ongoing culture of vigilance in the school's recruitment processes
11. We follow the Acorn Care and Education Safer Recruitment & Selection Guidelines policy.

From - Safer Recruitment in Education – National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's services

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Steps to recruitment at The Grange

- A variation request is discussed by SLT. The School Administrator processes and submits the request to Acorn via Cascade
- The School Administrator prepares the advert, job description and person specification in liaison with the recruiting member of SLT. The advert, job description and person specification will clearly state: *“The Grange Therapeutic School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening including checks with past employers, an Enhanced Disclosure via the DBS, the Employer Access online service and social media.”*
- Once the variation request has been approved the advert is sent to the advertising company for a quote and the School Administrator then confers with the Finance Manager who agrees to the cost
- The advert runs online or in the local newspaper and prospective candidates contact the School Administrator for an application pack to be sent out to them
- The School Administrator emails the candidate with the link to the Acorn website where they can apply online (which is the preferred method) or sends the information out by post. The candidate is advised that a CV will not be accepted, that the application form must be completed in full and signed/dated (if they are not completing the form online), and that references will be sought prior to interview if they are short listed. The school accepts that it is good practice to ensure, at the outset, that all recruitment materials (e.g. the application form, job description, person specification and information/guidance for applicants) which form part of the pack is up-to-date and clearly sets out the extent of the relationships/contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled
- The job description clearly states:
 - the main duties and responsibilities of the post
 - the individual’s responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people s/he is responsible for or comes into contact with

The person specification includes:

- the qualifications, experience and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people
- the competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate
- clear expectation of working within school policies, safeguarding the welfare of children
- After the closing date has passed the application forms are printed off and collected for the recruiting member of SLT to look through. Shortlisting candidates are carried out on a fair and equitable basis against the job criteria and person specification for the post. All applications are scrutinised to ensure:
 - that they are fully and properly completed

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- that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies
- that any gaps in employment are identified
- In the event of an application being received from an employee of a school or fostering agency within the Acorn Care and Education group the candidate will be informed that they must notify their current line management, prior to their application being processed. The school will contact the applicant's current employer as with any other applicant
- A shortlist is created and an interview time and date is agreed
- The School Administrator contacts the selected candidates and invites them to interview – asking them to bring in specific original documentation for verification (so that the online DBS application process can be started straight away should they be the successful in securing the post). This is reiterated in the interview letter and a list of acceptable documentation is also sent out. Candidates will also be asked to bring proof of their qualifications (particularly if applying for a post within education/care) or will be expected to provide them prior to their start date
- The School Administrator checks that the referees given on the application forms are from their current place of work, and from the place where they last worked with children if the post is within education/care. Reference requests are emailed and/or sent out as hard copies to all of the referees given by the shortlisted candidates on their returned application forms
- When the candidate attends for their interview the School Administrator will make copies of the original qualification certificates and documentation for the DBS application and sign and date it to confirm that the originals have been seen. The candidate's right to work in the UK will be accepted upon seeing the necessary documents as stated on the gov.uk website
- The School Administrator will have already produced an employment timeline so that the interviewers can ask the candidate about any gaps in their employment history. In addition to candidates' ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:
 - the motivation to work with children and young people
 - the ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people
 - their commitment to safeguarding children
 - the emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours
 - the attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline
- The interview is conducted by at least two people, one of whom is trained in Safer Recruitment. The interview questions sheet are signed and dated by each member of the interviewing panel
- Once the successful applicant has been chosen the School Administrator will go through the following processes:
 - if the candidate has secured a teaching post the School Administrator will check their Teacher reference number on the NCTL Teachers Services website checking the current employment address matches the application form, to see if they have any sanctions; check their QTS status and the date of completion, and the date they passed their induction
 - if all checks are satisfactory, the School Administrator will then begin the online DBS application process on the GBG Online Disclosures website. An email prompt is sent to the candidate's email address instructing them to input the document information in order to proceed

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- the School Administrator receives notification that the applicant has inputted their information and is awaiting verification. Once this is completed and paid for, the application goes through a five stage process as an Enhanced Disclosure as well as DBS Children’s barred list. Upon completion if the School Administrator is notified of whether the DBS application is clear or not. If it is not clear they will need to contact the applicant and ask them to bring in the hard copy that will have been posted out to them by GBG Online Disclosures so that they can discuss the matter with them and the recruiting member of SLT and a decision will be made as to whether the applicant will take up the post
- if the application comes back clear the School Administrator will document the DBS certificate number and candidate’s details on the school’s single central register and on Cascade. They will register the candidate for the DBS Update Service and also record the reference number and date on Cascade
- The School Administrator will also chase up any outstanding references, calling the referees to verify that they completed them on behalf of the candidate
- The information given (periods worked, etc.) in the returned references is cross-referenced with that in the application form
- in the case of an applicant applying for a position within education/care, the School Administrator will check that one of the references has come from the Head teacher/Head of Care from their last place of employment
- in all cases where an applicant has worked or been resident overseas the school will, where possible, obtain a ‘good conduct’ certificate from the relevant authority in that country (details on the application can be checked at http://www.DBS.gov.uk/services_overseas.asp or by telephoning the DBS enquiry line on 08700 100 450). In cases where a criminal record check is not possible, particular care is taken with the other required checks, especially those of identity and qualifications, and to obtain satisfactory references
- The applicant is able to start in their new role once they have worked their notice period in their current job
- An offer letter highlighting the contract, detailing the salary and days/hours of work is posted out to the candidate along with a medical form and an offer acceptance letter. The candidate will also be asked to bring in their original cleared DBS certificate so a copy can be made for their personnel file
- The School Administrator draws up the contract, giving two copies to the successful candidate and asks them to read, sign and date one and return it for their personnel file
- If the candidate will be working as teaching staff the School Administrator will ask them for their Teacher’s Pension reference number and pass this on to the Finance Manager. If they are newly qualified the Finance Manager can obtain one for them
- The candidate must pass a three month (ancillary and Teaching Assistants) or a six month (teachers, therapy staff, care staff) probationary period. A meeting will be held with the Line Manager to go through areas for discussion. If the probationary period is successfully completed the School Administrator will draft up a letter using the notes passed on from the Line Manager, informing them they have passed their probationary period and to consider themselves substantively employed.

Agency staff and volunteers

We require written confirmation from the agency (either on company letterhead, or an email from a company email address with company footer) of the temp’s details:

- name
- date of birth
- current DBS number and date of issue

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- teacher reference number (so that a prohibition check can be made in the case of a supply teacher).

We also ask for copies of the references sought by the recruitment agencies, or obtain our own in the case of the agency having a closed-reference policy.

The applicant must bring valid photo ID with them on their first day (we cannot allow them to work with the pupils without it and they would be expected to return home for it if necessary).

The ID will be photocopied by the School Administrator, who will sign them in at Reception, and then sign and date the copy. This will be filed in the Agency file along with the confirmation email from the Recruitment Consultant and the copy of the DBS certificate. The certificate number will be recorded on the Staff Central Register and the temp will be added to the Agency Attendance spread sheet.

Recruitment process checklist

- Variation request
- Advert, job description and person specification
- Get advert quote
- Advert runs in paper/online
- Send out application packs
- After the closing date print off applications
- Shortlist created
- Contact the selected candidates and invite them to interview (ask to bring DBS documents and relevant qualifications)
- Send out interview confirmation letter
- Create working history timeline to check for gaps in CV
- Send out reference requests

At interview

- Make copies of ID documents for DBS, and relevant certificates (teaching qualification, etc.)
- Ensure gaps in CV are covered during the interview
- Interview questions will also explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Check that interview questions sheet has been signed and dated

Once successful candidate has been chosen –

- If candidate has applied for teaching post:
 - Check TRN (teacher reference number) on the NCTL Teachers Services website (checking the current employment address, sanctions, QTS status and the date of completion, date induction passed)
- Set candidate up for their DBS application on the GBG Online Disclosures website and commence with the online process
- Ask candidate to assist in obtaining a ‘good conduct’ certificate if they have spent time overseas
- Chase up outstanding references; call referees to verify then sign and date to indicate complete
- Cross-reference information from references with application form – check that one has come from the head teacher/head of care from last place of employment (if applying for a position within education/care)
- When DBS is clear sign applicant up for the DBS Update Service and record certificate/reference numbers on Cascade
- Applicant is able to start in their new role once they have worked their notice period
- Send out offer letter, stating that the job is subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references, along with a medical form and an offer acceptance form

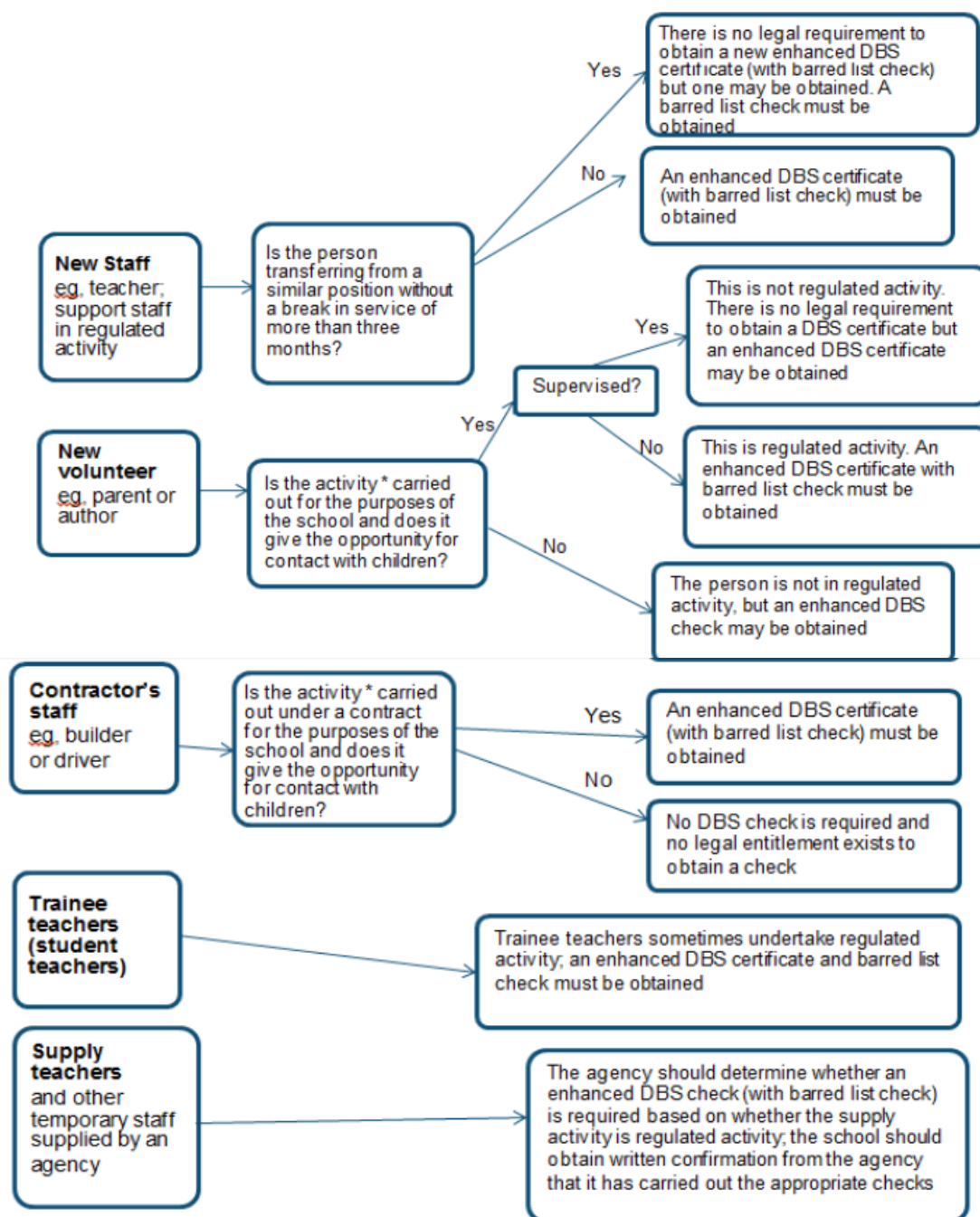
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- Draw up the contract, giving two copies to the successful candidate and ask them to read, sign and date one and return it to the School Administrator for their personnel file
- A three (ancillary, teaching assistant) / six month (teachers, therapy, care) probationary review meeting is held with the Line Manager. If passed successfully draft up a letter using the notes from the meeting, informing them they have passed their probationary period.

Appendix 2

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Flowchart of Disclosure and Barring Service criminal record checks and barred list checks



* Activities listed under the guidance's definition of regulated activity and which are carried out 'frequently'

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