



# **Single Central Record of Recruitment & Vetting Checks**

## **Guidance**

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### **1 Introduction**

The DfE statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, sets out the responsibilities placed on schools when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This guidance has been produced to help schools ensure that their Single Central Record is completed accurately, updated as required, checked on a regular basis and prior to an inspection. This is to ensure that all the necessary information about the school's recruitment and vetting checks is contained in one central place.

This guidance is not comprehensive and should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

### **2 Single Central Record**

The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 require schools to produce and maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks. The Single Central Record will be checked early during an Ofsted inspection, with the expectation that it will be fully completed and meets the statutory requirements in KCSIE.

The Council recommends this should include:

- All staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, agency and third-party supply staff.
- All others who are in regular contact with children in the school, including volunteers, Governors; and
- In the case of academies, this should also include the members and trustees of the academy trust.

The single central record must show whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed, or certificate obtained/sighted:

- Identity check – including photographic proof
  - A check of professional qualifications, where required
  - Proof of qualified teacher's status, where applicable
  - An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided
  - A standalone children's barred list check
  - A prohibition from teaching check
  - A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
  - Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK, including EEA check prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021
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- A Section 128 check, where applicable

### **3 Single Central Record – Categories of staff**

#### **3.1 Existing staff**

All appropriate checks should be undertaken and recorded for all staff in school, at the point they are recruited into a post and prior to them commencing work. For DBS checks; a recheck is to be undertaken every three years.

#### **3.2 Agency and third-party staff**

Schools must obtain written confirmation from any agency or third-party organisation they use that they have carried out the same checks as the school would otherwise perform on any individual who will be working at the school (or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery). In respect of the enhanced DBS check, schools must ensure that written notification confirms the certificate has been obtained by either the employment business or another such business.

A barred list check must also be obtained by the agency or third party prior to the appointment of an individual. The school must also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. ID confirmation is therefore required.

Where the agency or organisation has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate before the person is due to begin work at the school, which has disclosed any matter or information, or any information was provided to the employment business, the school must obtain a copy of the certificate from the agency. The school must then make its own assessment of risk before allowing any work to be undertaken. The school does not need to see the checks except where there is information contained on the DBS certificate. The Agency must supply the school with a copy of the DBS certificate only if the disclosure reveals a trace, therefore allowing the school to make its own assessment of risk before making use of the teacher/support staff.

Schools must record, on the Single Central Record, the date they received written confirmation that the relevant checks have been undertaken by ~~from~~ the supply agency or third-party organisation.

#### **3.3 Volunteers**

It is recommended that anyone wishing to undertake voluntary work, complete a Volunteer Application Form (Appendix A), to help determine their suitability to work in school.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Prior to allowing a volunteer to undertake any work within school, a written risk assessment, see appendix A, should be undertaken to determine what checks are required.

Volunteers who regularly have unsupervised access to children will need to have an enhanced DBS check undertaken by the school, which includes a barred list check. For supervised volunteers not in regulated activity, schools should undertake an enhanced DBS check, that does not include a barred list check.

#### **3.4 Governors**

To take up the role as a Governor, individuals are required to have an enhanced DBS certificate, without a barred list check. Governance is not a regulated activity, so governors do not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they undertake a role that engages in regulated activity.

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Schools should also carry out a Section 128 check for governors in maintained schools. This should be done through Governors Support, as a person subject to a S128 direction is disqualified from being a governor.

In academy schools, the chair must ensure that identity and enhanced DBS checks are undertaken, for the other members of the body, and certificates sighted. They must also ensure that other members are not subject to a section 128 direction that would prevent them from taking part in the management of the school.

### **3.5 Other Public Sector Staff**

Individuals such as educational psychologists, nurses, dentists, centrally employed staff and other public sector staff should have been checked by their employing organisation, whether Local Authority, Primary Care Trust or Strategic Health Authority.

For the purposes of keeping a record of checks for other public sector staff, the school will need written confirmation from the employing organisation that the relevant checks have been carried out by the employing organisation. –The school does not need to see the checks.

Schools must record the date they received confirmation of the relevant checks from the employing organisation on the Single Central Record.

The school should still undertake appropriate identity checks to confirm that the individual arriving at the school is the individual referred by the employing organisation. Such evidence must be added to the Single Central Record. Schools should not be requesting sight of DBS certificates.

For Council employees, an emailed letter confirming the appropriate checks have been undertaken is sent from the Director Children Services. This, along with the employee's Council Identity Badge, should be used to update the Single Central Record.

### **3.6 Contractors/Other Providers**

Where schools use contractors to provide services, they should set out their safeguarding requirements in the contract between the organisation and the school.

Schools should ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity require an enhanced DBS certificate, including a barred list check. For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check, without a barred list check, will be required. In considering whether the contact is regular, it is irrelevant whether the contractor works on a single site or across a number of sites.

As a general rule, 'regular' contact means any time on more than three days in a 30 day period and between 2a.m - 6 am, if it gives the person the opportunity for face to face contact with children. Head Teachers must consider the duration, frequency and nature of the contact with children, young people and/or adults.

Under no circumstances should a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity relating to children. Schools are responsible for determining the appropriate level of supervision depending on the circumstances.

Schools should always check the identity of contractors on arrival.

### **3.7 Visitors**

Schools should not request DBS checks and barred list checks, or ask to see DBS certificates, for visitors (for example children's relatives or other visitors attending a sports day). Headteachers and Principals should use their professional judgement about the need to escort

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or supervise visitors. Trade Union Representatives also come under this category of visitor and should provide ID when attending school.

#### 4 The Checks

The Single Central Record must indicate whether the following checks have been completed. It must also show the date on which each check was completed, with the relevant certificate obtained, and should show who carried out the check.

All offers of appointment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. All schools must:

- **Verify a candidate's identity**

It is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, including photographic proof. You should also be aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available. Copies of original documents sighted, to verify identity, should be kept on employee personnel files in school.

- **Qualification and Registration**

If qualifications are an essential requirement for the post, e.g. posts where a person must have qualified teacher status (QTS), the Single Central Record must record the qualification required, the date of the check and a record of who carried out the check. Copies of original documents sighted, to verify required qualifications, should be kept on employee personnel files in school. In relation to any appropriate registration, HR Operations will verify the award of QTS and the completion of teacher induction via the Teaching Regulation Agency's (TRA) Employer Access Service.

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check**

As the majority of staff in school will be engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate which includes barred list information will be required for most appointments. To summarise; a person will be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they are regularly responsible for:

- teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on physical emotional or educational well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children; ~~or~~
- work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers.

Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes:

- relevant personal care, or health care provided by or provided under the supervision of a health care professional.

For all other staff who are either supervised, or who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be required. This would include contractors who may have the opportunity for contact with children.

It is a requirement that the original DBS certificate is seen, with the date sighted, who saw it (e.g. Head Teacher), the level of check and unique DBS reference number being recorded on the Single Central Record.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' requires that a separate barred list check must be obtained for an individual undertaking work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available. This check is obtained via the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA), which the HR Operations Team will undertake. The check is only undertaken if a barred list check has not been obtained by means of a DBS check by the time the individual starts work. Under no circumstances should an individual, working in regulated activity, commence work in a school without a barred list check being undertaken.

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- **Checks on the Right to Work in the UK**

Employers must check and confirm that those they employ, have the right to work in the UK. The documents that can be used to confirm the right to work in the UK can be found in List A and B of the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy. It is an offence under the Asylum and Immigration Act to employ someone who is not eligible to work in the UK. The evidence and date of these checks and a record of who carried out the check should be recorded on the Single Central Record. Copies of original documents sighted, to verify the successful candidate's right to work in the UK, should be kept on their personnel file in school.

- **Further overseas checks where appropriate**

Where individuals have lived or worked abroad, DBS certificates will not show any offences that may have been committed, but still must be sought. In addition, schools must make, or request from the applicant, any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This could include a criminal record check for overseas applicants, or the applicant obtaining good conduct certificates from relevant embassies or police forces, as required. The evidence and date of these and a record of who carried out the check should be recorded on the Single Central Record.

- **Prohibition from Teaching Check**

All employees to the school, employed to carry out 'teaching work' must undergo a prohibition order check, which will be carried out by the HR Operations Team. This must be done as part of the pre-employment checking process and a record must be kept on the school's Single Central Record.

The check ensures an employee is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, or for any sanction or restriction imposed by the GTCE, before its abolition in March 2012.

The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 defines teaching work as: planned and preparing lessons and courses for pupils; delivering lessons to pupils; assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

- **European Economic Area teacher sanctions**

Between 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020, schools had a statutory responsibility to check that applicants for teaching posts had not been sanctioned in any other EEA nation. Access to this list (on the Teachers Services website) is no longer possible now that the UK has left the EU.

The EEA column, on the schools Single Central Record, should evidence that the check was completed where required between January 2016 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, the entry in this column should be **n/a** for all new appointments.

- **Section 128 Direction**

A check must be undertaken on governors in maintained schools to ensure they are not subject to a Section 128 Direction made by the Secretary of State, which Governors Support undertake.

Academies must check a person taking up a management position, including Governors and Trustees, is not subject to a Section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State.

- **Childcare Disqualification**

Schools must ensure appropriate checks are undertaken to confirm individuals are not disqualified from working in relevant settings stated under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations. In schools this applies to individuals working with children aged 5 and under, including reception classes, and wraparound care for children up to the age of 8.

For further information, please see Disqualification Guidance and Disqualification Procedure for Staff.

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- **Online Check**

Under KCSiE statutory guidance, schools should consider carrying out an online search, as part of their due diligence, for shortlisted candidates. As a minimum it is advised schools undertake this check for their preferred candidate. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school may want to explore further with the applicant. Schools should inform candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

Online searches should focus on any information that is relevant to safeguarding and the person's suitability to take up the post. Care must be taken to avoid any unconscious bias or discrimination.

Online searches may also be undertaken on new governors when they are appointed to the Governing Board. Governors have an important role to play in the safer recruitment process within schools. It is therefore essential that schools are confident that there are no concerns about a governor's ability to recognise and demonstrate appropriate behaviours in a safeguarding context.

In addition, an online search may also be undertaken on volunteers working in school. This would cover those volunteers that are in school on a regular basis or for a specific period of time, rather than those that help out on an ad-hoc basis, such as a parent/carer accompanying a school trip.

Although keeping a record of two satisfactory employment references and medical clearances on the central record **is not a statutory requirement** it is recommended as best practice to record these on the Single Central Record

- **Details of two satisfactory employment references**

Information should be retained in relation to 2 x employment references, one of which must be the candidate's current or most recent employer. Employers should evidence that two references have been received and the date it was received. Please note, where the candidate has not worked with children and young people/vulnerable adults and the candidate has not worked with these groups for some time, but did in a previous role, then this organisation should also be contacted for a reference.

- **Medical Clearance**

Pre employment medical checks form part of our recruitment process, therefore employers should evidence that the report from Occupational Health has been received and the date it was received.

**All fields of the SCR must be completed. Where the information is not relevant to the individual or role, this should be indicated as N/A**

## **5 Confidentiality**

A school's Single Central Record should be kept securely on a confidential basis with access limited solely to those staff and governors that require it.

South Tyneside Council has produced a model template Single Central Record as guidance for schools in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, which schools may choose to adopt. Schools should contact their HR Adviser if they require support with their Single Central Record. Schools must ensure their Single Central Record is updated in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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