

Recruiting your principal designate

Pre-employment checks

Summer 2021

**New
Schools
Network**

Introduction

The appointment of your principal designate is an exciting part of your journey to opening. Finding the right person will help secure your vision in the school and support its progress towards a successful opening. This document contains some of the practical tasks you need to undertake to secure your principal designate. If you would like more support with recruiting your PD, including advice on developing your recruitment and induction plans and quality assurance of your recruitment pack and assessment process, you can access the PD recruitment service through the [NSN Delivery Programme](#).

What should a conditional offer contain?

A conditional offer means you are able to offer a post with the requirements that the candidate meets certain checks. This helps you ensure that the academy trust is protected if it is later discovered that the candidate does not meet these requirements.

The conditional offer between you and the successful candidate should contain the following:

- The name of the school
- The job title
- The start date
- The end date if applicable
- If it is permanent
- The days of work, if applicable
- The salary and any additional income
- Whether it is full-time/part-time/job-share
- The grade of the post
- Policies of the school/employer, if relevant
- Probationary period
- Benefits offered e.g. healthcare or childcare vouchers
- Number of annual leave days offered
- A request for two suitable references: one reference must be from the previous employer (this could be requested before the assessment centre take place).

What pre-employment checks should be carried out?

Pre-employment checks are an important process which ensures that your candidates will meet legal requirements for the statutory guidance of [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). The table below includes details of the key checks that will need to be carried out, when to undertake them as part of the recruitment process and where evidence must be stored:

Check	When should it be carried out?	Where should it be sent/stored?
Disclosure and Barring Service check	Before taking up the post. If this proves difficult, a risk assessment should be carried out while you are waiting for the DBS to come through.	Stored on the Single Central Record (SCR). Note that you are no longer allowed to keep a copy of the certificate.
Immigration, asylum, nationality checks – entitlement to work in the UK	Before taking up the post.	On personal file/SCR.
Foreign Police Check	Before taking up the post. This is only relevant if the person has spent more than three months working abroad.	On personal file.
Proof of satisfactory teacher status	Post offer.	On SCR.
Prohibition order check – prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work	Before taking up the post. Check on teacher services online – www.services.signin.education.gov.uk	On SCR.
Childcare Disqualification checks – this prohibits anyone who is disqualified from work in early-years provision	Before taking up the post. Usually done by self-declaration Relevant for anyone with responsibility for children up to the age of 8.	On personal file along with any waiver that has been requested from Ofsted.
At least two satisfactory references	Preferably before interview for the shortlisted candidates although the offer may be	On personal files and SCR.

	conditional on receiving satisfactory references.	
Qualifications to verify	At interview.	On personal file.
Verify address and contact details	At interview.	On personal file.
Information on past convictions/court cases/cautions	On the application form.	With the application form in personal file.
Evidence of driving licence, where applicable	At interview.	On personal file.
Information about other work/secondary employment	On the application form/at interview.	On personal file.
Equal Opportunities in Employment Declaration	With the application form.	On personal file.

What health checks should be carried out?

Health checks are regulations that set out activities to ensure a staff member is able to successfully develop their roles. Health checks are part of the pre-employment process for recruiting new staff and only need to be carried out once a candidate is successful. It is important to note that it is unlawful and against the [Equality Act](#) to conduct pre-employment health enquiries as part of the application process.

You may use a health questionnaire as part of the induction process. This questionnaire helps employers to make adjustments to the workplace, identify medical conditions which could pose a safety risk to the candidate or colleagues and check that the candidate is not vulnerable to any hazards.

The purpose of the health declaration is also to ensure that the school fulfils its obligations under the statutory regulations with regard to mental and physical fitness to carry out the role. Under certain circumstances and with the permission of the employee there may be a need to complete an Occupation Health referral. Under the [Disability Discrimination Act 1995](#), it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled persons in connection with employment or to make provision about the employment of disabled persons.

The employer also has a duty to consider reasonable adjustments so the candidate is not at a substantial disadvantage under the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Useful resources

- [National Standards for Headteachers](#)
- [The National College](#)
- [National Professional Qualification for Headship](#) guidance
- [Equality Act 2010: guidance](#)
- [Pre-employment checks: guidance](#)

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New Schools Network Delivery Programme

New Schools Network (NSN) has supported free school groups in pre-opening since 2014. NSN's unrivalled knowledge and experience has been informed by our work with over 70% of open and approved free school groups throughout the application and pre-opening phases.

The NSN Delivery Programme has been designed to address the challenges of the rigorous pre-opening process. The NSN Delivery Programme fills gaps in capacity and/or capability, providing a range of support options to prepare schools for a successful opening. We provide tailored support whether you are newly approved to open a free school or if you are already deep into the pre-opening phase, and to all phases and types of free school.

Delivery Programme services offer support for each key milestone across pre-opening:

Services following your approval into pre-opening

- Project Set-Up
- Project Development Grant

Services for your final year of pre-opening

- Site and Buildings
- Funding and Finance

- Governance (Advisory or Plan Delivery)
 - Site and Buildings
 - Pupil Recruitment and Marketing
 - Section 10 Consultation
- Education Brief
 - Media Training
 - Readiness to Open Meeting

You can [download our brochure](#) for more information on each service. If you are interested in one or more of NSN's pre-opening services, please contact us at helpdesk@newschoolsnetwork.org or call 020 7537 9208. We would be happy to discuss how we can support your free school project and send you a price list of our services.