



Approved: 2020

Updated August 2025

## Safer Recruitment Policy

### Aims

The aims of the St Andrew's International School's (SAIS) Safer Recruitment Policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their qualifications, merits, abilities, suitability for the position and their ability to work within the School's staff culture;
- ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds, including: race, colour, religion or religious belief, gender or sexual orientation, marital status or disability;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant Bahamian legislation, recommendations and guidance, including the statutory guidance published by The Bahamas Department of Immigration, and The Bahamas Ministry of Education (if applicable);
- to ensure compliance with the Council of International Schools (CIS) Code of Ethics; and
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks. Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

### A. Recruitment and Selection Procedure

All applicants for employment will be required to submit a cover letter and curriculum vitae/ resume including their qualifications, academic and employment history, their suitability for the role and two professional references.

Should there be any gaps in academic or employment history, a satisfactory explanation must be provided. An online application will be acceptable. The job description/person specification for the role applied for will be provided upon request.

In establishing a shortlist, the school will ask the applicant's present employer to complete the School's Online Applicant Reference Form.

The shortlisted applicants will then be invited to attend an in-person or telephone/video conference interview at which his/her relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. The interview team will consist of the Principal and/or Head of Primary/Secondary, as well as the relevant line manager. This interview team may be added to or reduced at the discretion of the Principal and on occasion may include a Board member. For teaching staff, it is the School's preference to observe a lesson for local candidates and may request a video of a recorded lesson for overseas hires where it is impossible to send a representative to observe. The process may also include an interview by students and a paperwork/planning task.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the interview and lesson observation process, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the School's standard terms, conditions of service and the CIS Code of Ethics;
- verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified);
- verification of the applicant's qualifications;
- the receipt of two professional references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer), which the School considers to be satisfactory;
- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness.
- Overseas applicants must provide Police/Criminal record check(s) which cover the last five years of employment.
- Local applicants must produce an up-to-date Police record

The School will aim to complete a recruitment process within a two (2) week period and communicate to those successful and unsuccessful candidates during or by the latest at the end of this time period.

#### **A.1. Relevant Qualifications and Experience**

For teaching positions, the School looks to appoint applicants with the relevant degree from a recognised educational institution, a relevant teaching qualification and the relevant experience.

A 'relevant degree' is matched to the teaching subject/section/area. For example: To teach English a Bachelor of Arts with English.

A 'relevant teaching qualification' is appropriate to the section of the school the applicant would like to teach in – Early Years, Primary or Secondary. This qualification must include an appropriate period of teaching practice as part of its programme. For example: Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

Ideally, the School looks to appoint teachers with the relevant experience, although on occasion there might be the capacity to employ a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) with the appropriate structures in place.

'Relevant experience' is matched to the curriculum taught. For St Andrew's, these include the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) and Diploma Programme (DP), United States Common Core Standards, Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education and the International General Certificate in Secondary Education. 'Equivalent experience' is also acceptable and includes programmes such as: the



International Primary Curriculum, Middle Years Programme, International Middle Years Curriculum, A-Level, Advanced Placement, Cambridge Curriculum, etc.

#### **A.2. Medical Fitness**

The School is required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the School, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

It is the School's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must provide a doctor's certificate confirming that the applicant is in good health. This information will be reviewed according to The Bahamas' Immigration requirements. The School may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertake a full medical assessment. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence, considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

#### **A.3. Pre-employment Checks**

The School carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees. For local and foreign applicants, this will include a Bahamas Police check and/or overseas equivalents.

In addition to the checks set out below, the School reserves the right to obtain such formal or informal background information about an applicant as is reasonable in the circumstances to determine whether they are suitable to work at the School. This may include disclosure and barring services, the internet and social media searches.

In fulfilling its obligations, the School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, religion or religious belief, gender or sexual orientation, marital status or disability.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

The School asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with the Bahamas Department of Labour and Immigration requirements. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the School may verify the identity of, and check for any possible unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history of all applicants. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age; however, it has a normal retirement age of sixty-five (65) years.

Pre-employment checks will also take place if the School has used a recruitment agency.

#### **A.4. References**

References will generally be taken up on shortlisted candidates prior to the interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two (2) professional references which are considered satisfactory by the School. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most

recent employer. If the current / most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

At least one (1) referee will be asked, in a telephone call from the Principal or nominated person, whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the position for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record;
- whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired), except where the issues were deemed to have resulted from allegations which were found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious; and
- whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people, except where the allegation or concerns were found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee, and it will not accept references or testimonials provided by the applicant or open references or testimonials.

The School will compare all references with any information given on the application. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant and the relevant referee before any appointment is confirmed.

The School may, at its discretion, make telephone contact with any referee to verify the details of the written reference provided.

#### **A.5. Police/Criminal Records Check**

The applicants must provide a disclosure containing details of all convictions and Court appearances on record, together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on them by local Police. It could also contain non-conviction information from local police records, which a chief police officer considered relevant to the role applied for at the School.

It is for the School to decide whether a role amounts to "regulated activity," taking into account all the relevant circumstances. However, nearly all posts at the School amount to regulated activity. Limited exceptions could include an administrative post undertaken on a temporary basis in the School Office outside of term time or voluntary posts which are supervised.

It is a condition of employment with the School that the original disclosure certificate(s) is provided to the School prior to the start of work. Employment will remain conditional upon the original certificate being provided and it being considered satisfactory by the School.

If there is a delay in receiving a police/criminal check, the Principal has discretion to allow an individual to begin work pending receipt of the disclosure certificate.

Police/Criminal record checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous Bahamian residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including a police/criminal records check from the relevant jurisdiction(s), a certificate of good conduct and/or references from any employment held. Work can only commence once the overseas information has been received and only if the School has considered that information and confirmed that the applicant is suitable to commence work at the School.

## B. Third Parties

### B.1. Contractors

Contractors engaged by the School and working at the school campus during the school day should be supervised by the department responsible for that work. In addition, the person responsible for that work will ask the contracting company to confirm that the workers are safe to work around children. All contractors will sign in and out at reception, wear a visitor badge at all times and will be escorted by an authorised staff member between work assignments.

### B.2. Visiting Specialists and Tutors

Tutors engaged by the parents who use school space during the school day must complete the same police / criminal records check that the School is required to complete for its staff. The School requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before tutors can commence work at the School.

### B.3. Volunteers

The School will request all parent volunteers to sign a Code of Conduct. This is because their volunteering duties are subject to regular, day-to-day supervision by a fully checked member of staff or by a volunteer who the School has deemed appropriate to supervise through the police / criminal records check process and ensure the safety of those students in their care.

### B.4. Visiting Speakers

It is not needed to obtain a police / criminal records check on any visiting speaker who does not engage in regulated activity at the School or perform any other regular duties for/on behalf of the School. All visiting speakers will sign in and out at Reception, wear a visitor badge at all times and will be escorted by an authorised staff member between appointments. The School will also obtain such formal or informal background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and/or permit a speaker to attend the School premises. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, gender, sexual

orientation, marital status, disability or age. Note: The School reserves the right to obtain such information on any other person appointed to work for or at the School.

#### **B.5. External Organisations**

Organisations such as the SWIFT swim club, etc., will sign a lease with the School and are expected to uphold the terms of the lease.

### **C. Disclosure of Information**

#### **C.1. The School will:**

- store disclosure information and other confidential documents in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted;
- not retain disclosure information or any associated correspondence for longer than is necessary, and for a maximum of six (6) months. The School will keep a record of the date of a disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question and the recruitment decision taken; and
- ensure that any disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding and deletion.

#### **C.2. Retention of Records**

The School is required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, the School will retain in their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in The Bahamas, medical fitness and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help the School to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g. so that the School may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

This documentation will be retained by the School for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with the School. It will be retained in accordance with the School's retention of records policy after employment terminates.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six (6) months.

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with School activities.

#### **C.3. Whistleblowing**

All staff are trained in Child Protection and Safeguarding so that they understand they are expected and encouraged to raise concerns they have, whether related to the safeguarding and welfare of students, the



conduct of staff or other matters, during the course of their employment in accordance with the School's polices (including the Child Protection Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct).

## D. Queries

If an applicant has any queries on how to complete the application form or any other matter, he/she should contact the Principal's Personal Assistant.

Appendix: List of valid identity documents

Group 1: Primary Identity Documents

- current valid passport
- birth certificate; full or short form acceptable, including those issued by the relevant authorities overseas
- adoption certificate

Group 2: Trusted Documents

- birth certificate
- marriage certificate

Group 3: Financial and Social History Documents

- work permit/visa (where applicable)
- bank account/letter

ANY QUERIES RELATED TO THIS POLICY SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE PRINCIPAL OR DESIGNATE

With thanks to Warwick Academy, Bermuda. Some of this policy is adapted, with permission.