GUIDANCE NOTES TO ACCOMPANY APPLICATION FORM FOR A SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF POST

1. COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

a) **ALL SECTIONS OF THE APPLICATION FORM MUST BE COMPLETED**. Please note that a separate curriculum vitae is not regarded as an adequate alternative to full completion of the application form and the provision of a relevant supporting letter.

b) In addition to these guidance notes, please read carefully the notes you will find at the various sections on the application form.

c) If you would like the application form in another format because you have a disability (e.g. Braille or electronically) please contact us.

d) We will accept applications in other formats e.g. audiotape, if you have difficulty in completing the form because of a disability or learning difficulty.

e) Read the job description, person specification and any other documentation you have been sent before completing the form. Tailor your responses to the post for which you are applying.

f) We will use the information you supply to assess how well you meet the selection criteria, as set down in the person specification. Make sure you include evidence relating to all the essential and desirable criteria that apply to you.

g) Include experience and achievements from any sphere of your life. You could include evidence of knowledge and skills gained through voluntary work, involvement in community activities, managing a home and family, school/college and special interests as well as previous paid employment. Tell us about any unpaid work you do or any position of responsibility you hold, for example in a club or organisation.

h) Complete all the sections where questions are asked. You may complete the form by hand (in **black ink** please to assist photocopying) or by typing your responses in. Include extra sheets if there is not enough room in the spaces provided and ensure that each additional sheet, including curriculum vitae, has your name and the post for which you are applying clearly marked at the top.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

a) We value the diversity of the people in our workforce and aim to offer full equality of opportunity. We recognise that people can face disadvantage and discrimination in employment and are therefore committed to the development and implementation of policies to counteract inequality.

b) Employees and prospective employees will not be unfairly discriminated against on grounds of disability, gender, race, colour, ethnic origin, religion, belief, culture, nationality, national origin, age, sexual orientation or trade union membership / non-membership. This list is not exhaustive and there are other forms of discrimination which will not be tolerated.

c) Where an employee may be disadvantaged on these grounds, we will make every reasonable effort to rectify such disadvantage(s). Employment terms and conditions and decisions on recruitment, selection, training promotion and dismissal will be made solely on the basis of objective criteria.

d) Our aim is for our workforce to reflect the diversity of the population in our area and we will achieve this by taking positive steps.

e) Equal Opportunities survey form

Attached to the back of the application form is the Equal Opportunities survey form. We use this information to monitor our recruitment and selection practices and our workforce to see how well our workforce represents the communities that we serve. We also require this information from internal candidates to obtain a true picture of our workforce profile. Please complete the form and return it with your application. This part of your application form will be detached before your application is considered against the selection criteria for the post.

f) Job Sharing

We will consider applications for job sharing for all full time posts unless this is not practicable in the circumstances that apply. You do not need a job share partner in order to apply to job share.

g) Disability / Health

If you have indicated that you have a disability or long term medical condition and provide evidence that you meet all the essential criteria on the person specification (with any reasonable adjustments), you will normally be offered an interview as part of our commitment to the employment of people with disabilities.

Please tell us about any reasonable adjustments that would help you apply for this post, for example if you would have difficulty lifting heavy objects where the job could require this. The school may be able to make alternative arrangements but this cannot be guaranteed. We may also be able to provide sign language interpreters, time off for treatment, rest breaks during the day, special equipment, workplace adaptations etc.

All employees are required to complete either a health/disability declaration and/or a medical questionnaire after a conditional offer of employment has been made, depending on the nature of the work. Some employees, especially those who handle food or who work with vulnerable groups such as children, may also be required to attend a medical examination.

h) Definition of disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as having a disability if she/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on his/her ability to do normal daily activities.

This includes impairments, lasting or likely to last at least 12 months, or likely to recur, to one of the following:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to carry, lift or otherwise move everyday objects
- Speech, hearing or sight (not where sight is corrected by wearing spectacles or contact lenses)memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- Perception of risk or danger

The term impairment includes progressive and long term conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy and cancer.

We will make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment and selection process and to the post for successful candidates where the need for these is made known by the applicant / employee.

3. PRESENT POST

a) **Status**
Applicants whose qualifications were obtained abroad must provide written evidence that their qualification is valid in England and Wales.

b) **Salary**
It is most important to include details of the composition of your present salary in Section 3.

4. REFERENCES

a) The first referee should be your present / most recent employer. This would normally be the Headteacher (if you are currently employed in a school) or your Line Manager.

b) The second referee should be a previous employer or another person who is familiar with your professional work.

c) The school reserves the right to approach any previous employer during the previous five year period for a reference and may specifically ask for details of any disciplinary / conduct records.

5. HEALTH

The school reserves the right in appropriate circumstances to require applicants to produce a certificate of fitness from an approved medical practitioner after a conditional offer of employment has been made.

6. POLICE AND CRIMINAL RECORD

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974 (Exceptions Order, 1975)

Please note that applicants for posts in schools are not entitled to withhold information about past convictions, "spent" or otherwise, under the terms of the above Act. The Act made a specific exception in respect of employees in schools or establishments for further education and any other employment which is carried out wholly or partly within the precincts of a school or further education establishment which involves access to persons under the age of 18 as part of the employee's normal duties.

You must declare all * criminal convictions, cautions, bindovers, probation orders, community rehabilitation orders, absolute or conditional discharges, reprimands and warnings at the time of your application. You are also required to give details of any cases pending (or where you have been reported for consideration of possible prosecution). In the event of employment being offered and taken up, any failure to disclose such information is likely to result in disciplinary action by the school which may lead to dismissal.

* The amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance

Any information may be given on a separate sheet from your application form and will be kept completely confidential. It will be considered only in relation to an application for positions to which the Exception Order applies.

In addition, the school, on Home Office advice, will require the successful candidate to agree to an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check for convictions which may or may not be relevant to the appointment. A separate authorisation form will need to be completed after the interview and you will be required to bring in your DBS certificate for inspection by the school, as soon as you receive it, in order to verify its authenticity and record the certificate's number on the school's Single Central Record.

Similarly, if you already have a current DBS enhanced disclosure certificate you will be required to produce your original certificate for inspection by the school, either at interview or prior to commencement of your employment.

If you subscribe to the DBS Update Service you will be requested to give permission for the school to go online to carry out a check to find out if the information released on the DBS certificate is current and up-to-date.

If you do not subscribe to the DBS Update Service you will be required to apply for a new DBS enhanced disclosure, unless you are moving directly from a Suffolk LA maintained school, academy or free school with a break in service of less than three months.

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