: Learners Today.. Leaders Tomorrow :

The Gulf English School

Safer Recruitment Policy

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This policy applies across all campuses:
GES Gharafa (Infants, Juniors, and Secondary)
GES Bin Omran

Responsible, **R**espectful, **R**esilience

Policy Number:

Our Vision

We aim to develop a responsible, respectful, resilient school community, supporting the highest level of personal achievement in a changing modern intercultural world.

V1	We aim to develop a responsible, respectful, resilient school community,
V2	supporting the highest level of personal achievement
V3	in a changing modern intercultural world.

Mission Statements

M1	We provide a high-quality education, focusing on skills, knowledge and application, enabling our community to strive and achieve excellence
M2	We aim to develop a culture of life-long learning, independence, ambition, which is continuously demonstrated by our community.
M3	Our community promotes diversity and global citizenship where individual differences are understood and celebrated.
M4	To drive the development of creative skills and critical awareness in our students.
M5	Our school community provides a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment that focusses on the well-being of all
M6	We aim to integrate the use of technology on a day-to-day basis to enhance our teaching and learning.

Our Core Values: The 3 R's

- ✓ **Responsible:** Driven, Ambitious, Achiever
- ✓ **Respectful:** Empathy, supportive, caring, diversity
- ✓ **Resilient:** Risk takers, empowered, committed

1. Safeguarding Commitment

The Teacher Standards 2021 state that teachers, including Head Teachers, should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025)

The Gulf English School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff; volunteers, contractors and stakeholders share this responsibility.
Safeguarding underpins all recruitment processes.

This policy aligns with the British International Schools Safeguarding Coalition (BISSC) Safer Recruitment Code of Conduct (2025). https://www.bsme.org.uk/british-international-schools-safeguarding-coalition

2. Policy Aims:

The purpose of this policy is to set out the minimum requirements for safer recruitment at The Gulf English School.
It ensures that all recruitment processes:

- Attract high-quality applicants who align with the school's vision, values, and expectations.
- Deter applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.
- Identify and reject candidates who do not meet safeguarding and suitability requirements.
- Appoint individuals who demonstrate strong safeguarding awareness and professional integrity.
- Promote and embed a culture of safeguarding across the school community.
- Are conducted in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner in line with regulatory and best practice expectations.
- Apply equally to all appointments, including staff, governors, volunteers, and any individuals engaged in school activities.

3. Recruitment Principles

Safeguarding is embedded at every stage of the recruitment process. Members of the Leadership Team (e.g. Heads of School or senior leaders) involved in recruitment will have completed Safer Recruitment training. No member of staff will commence employment until all required safeguarding and pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

4. Recruitment Procedures

All recruitment procedures at The Gulf English School are designed to ensure that safeguarding is embedded at every stage. Job advertisements will include a clear safeguarding statement. Applications must provide a full and accurate employment history, and any gaps or inconsistencies will be identified and explored during the shortlisting and interview process. Interviews will include safeguarding-focused questions to assess candidates' understanding, attitudes, and suitability to work with children.

5. Inviting Applicants

All advertisements for posts will include the following statement:

"The Gulf English School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment."

This safeguarding statement will also be included on application forms, reference request forms, and the school website, ensuring that all applicants are aware of the school's safeguarding expectations from the outset.

6. The Selection Process

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and requirements of the vacant post; however, all appointments will include an interview for shortlisted candidates.
Candidates may be identified through a range of recruitment channels. Applications received directly via the school website, as well as recommendations from the school community, are reviewed by the HR Department in collaboration with Heads of School and senior leaders prior to shortlisting.

The school also works with a number of reputable recruitment agencies that understand the GES profile and the requirements of specific vacancies. These agencies support in identifying and screening suitable candidates in line with the school's expectations. All applications received through agencies are reviewed and shortlisted by the HR Department before interviews are arranged.

Throughout the selection process, candidates are assessed against the job description, person specification, and their suitability to work with children, ensuring that safeguarding remains a key consideration at all stages.

7. Interviews

Interviews at The Gulf English School are conducted through two main approaches, with a strong preference for face-to-face interviews.
The school prioritises in-person interviews through organised recruitment fairs held twice a year in London and Manchester, UK. Candidates are invited to attend and meet with members of the Leadership Team, who form the interview panel.

The interview process typically includes a combination of formal and informal elements, allowing candidates to demonstrate their experience, approach, and suitability for the role. Opportunities are also provided for candidates to ask questions where appropriate. Safeguarding-focused questions and/or activities form an integral part of the process to assess each candidate's understanding and commitment to safeguarding.

Candidates will be required to:

- Explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment

- Address any anomalies or discrepancies identified during the recruitment process
- Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

All interviews will be documented, and records will be maintained in line with school procedures. While the school aims to fill vacancies through these recruitment events, interviews may also be conducted online via video platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom, following the same structured approach and expectations. Where possible, successful candidates interviewed online may be invited to attend an informal in-person meeting during subsequent recruitment visits.

8. Vetting and Checks

The Gulf English School is committed to carrying out robust vetting and background checks to ensure the suitability of all staff.
As part of the recruitment process, the school may undertake online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence. This is to identify any publicly available information that may raise concerns or require further discussion at interview.
All successful applicants will be required to complete appropriate background checks, including:

- Police clearance from their country of origin and from any country in which they have lived or worked for a period of six months or more, covering at least the previous ten years. This includes any cautions or warnings.
- For candidates who have lived or worked in the UK, an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) will be required.
- Where applicable, DBS or ACRO checks will also be obtained.

Where a candidate is unable to obtain full background checks covering the required period, the school will undertake a formal risk assessment before any appointment is confirmed.

Any discrepancies identified through vetting checks will be fully investigated. Misrepresentation, falsification of documents, or failure to satisfactorily complete required checks will result in the withdrawal of an offer of employment or termination of employment.

9. Pre-Employment Checks

All appointments at The Gulf English School are subject to the satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. No employee will be permitted to commence work until all required checks have been completed and verified.
The following checks must be undertaken by the HR Department and relevant senior leaders in line with school procedures and regulatory requirements:

- Verification of a valid passport and identification documents in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Labour and relevant authorities in Qatar

- Receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory professional references, including one from the current or most recent employer
- A prohibition from teaching check, where applicable (including DBS checks for candidates from the UK, USA, or EEA)
- A satisfactory police clearance certificate from the candidate's country of origin and any country where they have resided or worked, as required
- ACRO Criminal Records Office certificate (for UK nationals, where applicable)
- International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) for candidates who have worked in the UK, where applicable
- Verification of academic and professional qualifications
- Verification of professional registration and teaching credentials, where applicable (e.g. QTS, ECT induction certification or equivalent)
- Medical fitness clearance in line with local regulations
- Approval from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE)
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Where applicable, a Section 128 check will be carried out for individuals appointed to leadership or management roles, in line with UK safeguarding guidance.

DfE Teacher Services (TRA system)
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-a-teachers-record
Agency or the individual can provide proof of this if required.

Where access to UK Teacher Services is not available, the school will seek alternative assurance through references and declarations. We triangulate through references, declarations, and safeguarding checks. The school will ask:

- The candidate to provide Proof of prohibition check
- Ask evidence from previous UK employer
- Ask the agency to provide this information

Any concerns arising from these checks will be investigated, and the offer of employment may be withdrawn if the candidate is deemed unsuitable.

10. Offer of Appointment

All offers of employment at The Gulf English School are made on a conditional basis, subject to the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment and safeguarding checks.
The appointment of all new employees is contingent upon the successful completion and verification of all required checks, including references, police clearance, medical fitness, qualification verification, and approval from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), in line with school procedures.
Any costs associated with obtaining required documentation (e.g. police clearance, ICPC, ACRO) are the responsibility of the candidate and will not be reimbursed by the school.

Failure to provide satisfactory documentation or to meet the required standards of clearance will result in the withdrawal of the offer of employment.

11. References

A minimum of two professional references must be obtained for all applicants, including one from the current or most recent employer. References must include safeguarding-related questions and be verified directly with the referee.

To support the aims of this policy, The Gulf English School will:

- Seek and follow up on references, ensuring they provide a clear and accurate account of the candidate's professional history. Where appropriate, additional references may be requested, including from senior leaders such as Heads of School.
- Use a standard reference proforma which requests information on:
    - Employment history and performance
    - Professional conduct, including any performance management issues, disciplinary warnings, or investigations
    - Any disciplinary offences, including those that may be time-expired, relating to the safeguarding of children
    - The candidate's suitability for the role
    - The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
    - Any safeguarding concerns or specific issues related to working with children

- Obtain references directly from the referee and not accept references or testimonials provided by the candidate (e.g. open or "to whom it may concern" letters).
- Where appropriate, request references prior to interview so that any discrepancies or concerns can be explored during the selection process.
- Contact referees by telephone or video call to verify references or clarify any anomalies or inconsistencies. A written record of these discussions will be maintained.
- Investigate any discrepancies between references and the application form.
- Carry out a risk assessment where concerns are identified before any appointment is confirmed.

Employees are entitled to request access to their references, in line with applicable data protection requirements, unless the referee has specified that the reference is confidential.

11.1 Providing Employment References Following Safeguarding Concerns or Dismissal

The Gulf English School (GES) is committed to ensuring that all employment references are accurate, factual and consistent with its safeguarding responsibilities and applicable legal requirements in Qatar. Where a current or former employee has been subject to safeguarding concerns, disciplinary proceedings or dismissal, the following procedures will apply:

- **Safeguarding Disclosure:** Substantiated safeguarding concerns, disciplinary findings or dismissals relating to the safety and welfare of children will be disclosed to prospective employers where legally appropriate and relevant to the role.
- **Unsubstantiated Allegations:** Allegations determined to be unfounded, unsubstantiated, false or malicious will not be included in employment references.
- **Authorisation:** Any reference involving safeguarding concerns must be reviewed by the relevant Head of School/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), in consultation with HR, and authorised by the Head of School or General Manager before release.
- **Accuracy and Confidentiality:** All information disclosed must be supported by documented evidence, presented objectively and handled in accordance with confidentiality and data protection requirements.
- **Record-Keeping:** HR will maintain a confidential record of the reference issued, the information disclosed and the authorisation provided.
- **Ongoing Investigations:** Where a safeguarding investigation remains ongoing, GES will seek appropriate guidance before issuing a reference and ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are not compromised.

GES will not knowingly provide misleading or incomplete references that could place children at risk. All safeguarding-related references must be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and applicable legal requirements.

12. Single Central Record

The Gulf English School maintains a centralised record of all recruitment and safeguarding checks for staff. This includes employees, contractors, and any other individuals engaged in school activities.

The school holds comprehensive personnel records for each employee, including both physical and electronic files for international hires. These records contain evidence of all required pre-employment checks, including identity verification, references, police clearance, qualifications, and medical fitness.

Confirmation that all required checks have been completed, along with the date of completion, is recorded and maintained securely by the HR Department. These records are subject to regular review to ensure compliance with safeguarding and regulatory requirements.

The school continues to develop its systems in line with best practice, including the maintenance of a Single Central Record (SCR) to further strengthen oversight and accessibility of recruitment and safeguarding information.

13. Induction

All staff must complete safeguarding induction and training prior to commencing work at The Gulf English School.
All newly appointed staff will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction programme and will be required to sign a declaration confirming that they have read and understood all relevant

safeguarding and school policies. Safeguarding training will be updated regularly, with all staff expected to complete annual refresher training.

The Gulf English School recognises that safer recruitment is not limited to the point of appointment but forms part of a wider safeguarding culture across the school. The school is committed to building, embedding, and maintaining a culture where the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount, concerns are taken seriously, and appropriate action is always taken.

All staff, members of the Board of Trustees, leadership team, and all school stakeholders are expected to remain vigilant and uphold safeguarding responsibilities at all times, supported through ongoing training and professional development.

14. Contractors and Agencies

All contractors and agencies engaged by The Gulf English School must comply with safer recruitment and safeguarding requirements. This policy applies equally to long-term contractors and agency workers, whether engaged in regulated or non-regulated activity.

The school ensures that all contracted staff, including security personnel, cleaning staff, and maintenance teams, receive appropriate safeguarding training and awareness. They are expected to understand and follow school procedures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.
The Gulf English School maintains oversight of all external providers to ensure that safeguarding standards are upheld at all times.

12. Reporting and Whistleblowing

The Gulf English School recognises the importance of reporting any concerns related to recruitment processes and safeguarding practices.

- Concerns may be reported internally to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), members of the Leadership Team, or the Board of Trustees.
- Concerns relating to safer recruitment practices may also be raised externally, where appropriate, in line with relevant regulatory bodies and professional associations.
- The school supports a culture of openness and accountability, and anonymous reporting will be supported where appropriate to encourage good faith whistleblowing.

All concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly in line with school procedures.

13. Policy Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in response to changes in legislation, safeguarding requirements, or best practice guidance.

This policy should be read alongside the Gulf English School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the GES Recruitment Policy (C3.00), and forms part of the school's wider safeguarding framework.

Appendix 1: Interview Evaluation form (Revised)

Appendix 2: Safeguarding Interview Questions

1. Describe a safeguarding concern you handled.
2. What would you do if a student disclosed abuse?
3. How do you maintain professional boundaries?
4. What would you do if concerned about a colleague?
5. How do you ensure student safety?

Appendix 3: Safer Recruitment Checklist

- ✓ Application reviewed (gaps checked)
- ✓ References received and verified
- ✓ Safeguarding questions asked at interview
- ✓ ID verified
- ✓ Police clearance received
- ✓ ICPC / ACRO (if applicable)
- ✓ Qualifications verified
- ✓ Medical clearance
- ✓ MOEHE approval