

PRIOR PARK EDUCATIONAL TRUST
POLICY ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS
AND
SECURITY OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION
(Revised 1 November 2007)

INTRODUCTION

1. It is vital that people who take up appointments in one of the Prior Park schools do not pose a risk to the children in the care of those schools. There is therefore a need for the schools to apply for and review any criminal records of successful applicants for positions, and to carry out other checks, before making a formal appointment. The schools are registered with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for the purposes of making these checks on potential occupants of paid and voluntary posts.
2. The Prior Park schools are committed to the fair treatment of their staff, potential staff, parents and pupils, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offences in their background.
3. The confidential and personal information, known as Disclosure, from the CRB, must be protected and must not lead to discrimination.

DISCLOSURE

3. There are two grades of Disclosure, Standard and Enhanced. As two of the schools have boarding pupils, any member of staff could potentially have a high degree of contact with children living away from home. It is therefore considered essential for all personnel to have the higher degree of clearance. The cost of the Enhanced Disclosure is borne by Prior Park.

PROCEDURE

4. Applicants are required to provide proof of their identity to the school. This is normally a birth certificate, a passport and at least one item of address-related evidence which is usually a driving licence. Where an applicant has changed his/her name by deed poll or for other reasons (eg marriage, adoption) the school will require evidence of this change of name. These documentary checks are carried out by the Bursar's Secretary at the College, by the Headmaster at the Preparatory School and by the Deputy Headmaster at the Paragon. The CRB application form will be completed and signed by the applicant for the position and countersigned by the registered person at the school, usually when identity checks are being carried out.
5. Application forms for positions within the schools contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of a successful application, so that applicants are aware of the situation. They also state that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position, in order to reassure applicants that Disclosure information will not be used unfairly.

6. A new Disclosure application will be completed for all new members of staff and for contractors who are very regularly on sight during term-time. However, sight of the original copy of a recently issued Enhanced Disclosure will suffice for those joining for short periods of teacher training and the like.

7. A copy of this policy is sent to all applicants. The Criminal Records Bureau Code of Practice is available on request or more information can be obtained from www.disclosure.gov.uk.

RESPONSE TO A DISCLOSURE

8. The CRB may reveal a conviction or other information. In that case, Prior Park's policy is to consider the following factors:

- a. Whether the conviction or other information disclosed is relevant to the position in question.
- b. The seriousness of the offence or other matter revealed.
- c. The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred.
- d. Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters.
- e. Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or the other relevant matters.
- f. The circumstances surrounding the offence or incident and the explanation(s) offered.

9. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

10. Any matters revealed in Disclosure information will be discussed with the person seeking the position before any withdrawal of an offer of employment.

STORAGE AND ACCESS

11. As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, each of the Prior Park schools complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice for the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. They comply fully with their obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and have this written policy on these matters.

12. Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personnel file and is always kept separately and securely in a safe. Access is strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

HANDLING

13. In accordance with current legislation, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. This is usually the counter-signatory who signed the original application. However, on occasions it may be necessary to inform the Headmaster, Director of Music or Catering Manager of some of the contents of a Disclosure for an applicant in their departments. This would only be in instances when it was deemed necessary to do so by the Counter-Signatory.

USEAGE

14. Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the Applicant's full consent has been given.

RETENTION/DISPOSAL

15. Following a recruitment or other relevant decision being made, Disclosure information for unsuccessful job applicants is retained for 12 months. The upper portion of Disclosures obtained for staff members is retained throughout their employment. The lower portions of Disclosures, and forms for members of staff who leave the schools are shredded. The unique identity number shown on each Disclosure is recorded on the information sheet at the front of individual personnel files and on the schools' master personnel schedule..