

St Chad's College, Durham

Policy on the Recruitment of ex-offenders

Preamble

St Chad's was founded to provide a College at the University of Durham in keeping with the principles of the Church of England. The responsibility to love other people is therefore at the heart of the College's principles and respect for the person, understood as made in the image of God, is a core value, as is our commitment to equality and inclusion for all who come here. The command of God to love and respect other people is found throughout the Bible, the spirituality and the pastoral traditions of the Church. It is integral to what it means to care for others, and so, in recent years, the mandate has taken shape in the term "safeguarding", with particular concern for those who, because of their vulnerability, whether children or adults, are at risk of abuse or exploitation. This policy and guidance, then, not only observes our legal duties as a charity and a College, but forms part of our broader Christian responsibility to protect, safeguard and care for all the members of our College community and those who visit us. Because of our underlying principles and values, no one should feel unsafe at our College. By the same token, no member of St Chad's may fail in their duty to respect another person's dignity. Thus we strive to do everything we can to prevent and counter abuse of any kind

Introduction

St Chad's College is committed to ensuring that all applicants for vacant positions in the College undergo a fair recruitment process, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. The College actively promotes equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. All candidates are selected for interview based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.

Positions which meet certain criteria, such as roles involving work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, will require applicants to undergo a criminal record check processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). As advised by the DBS Code of Practice published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997, any applicant for a position requiring a DBS check who has a criminal record will be treated fairly by The Board and not discriminated against because of a conviction or other information revealed.

Having a criminal record does not necessarily prevent an individual from working in certain roles. This will depend on the exact nature of the position applied for and the details and circumstances of the individual's offence(s).

Criminal record information does, however, need to be considered in a fair, effective and robust manner, focusing on the need to safeguard people and, where necessary, exclude individuals with particular forms of criminal record.

Policy Provisions

1. as an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), St Chad's College complies fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly
2. St Chad's College undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed
3. St Chad's College can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that St Chad's College are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)
4. St Chad's College can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected
5. St Chad's College is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background
6. St Chad's College actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records
7. St Chad's College select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
8. an application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position
9. St Chad's College ensures that all those in St Chad's College who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences
10. St Chad's College also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
11. at interview, or in a separate discussion, St Chad's College ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment

12. St Chad's College makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice and makes a copy available on request
13. St Chad's College undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
14. Staff recruitment will be conducted with such guidance as set out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), and the National Association for the Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO).¹ As an Anglican Foundation, the College also operates within the context of the Church of England's Safeguarding policies and advice.

¹ For example: <https://www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/support-for-employers/recruiting-safely-and-fairly-guide-a-practical-guide-to-employing-ex-offenders/>