



SEAX TRUST Recruitment & Retention Plan

LEADING, LEARNING, CHANGING LIVES



Recruitment & Retention Plan

Approved by the Board of Trustees &
Effective Date of Adoption:

23rd October 2019

The **SEAX Trust** is committed to being a fair and reasonable employer and to ensuring that it provides a professional and ethical environment which serves and protects the whole education community.

Through the Scheme of Delegation, the SEAX Trust is responsible for determining HR policies in accordance with all appropriate regulations:

- Setting Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Establishing Trust-wide policies – Pay, Performance Management, Code of Conduct, Recruitment, Capability, Discipline & Dismissal, Grievance, Leave of Absence, Sickness Absence, Redundancy & Re-structuring
- Appointing CEO/Executive Principal
- Appointing cross-Trust staff
- Dismissing CEO/Executive Principal, local Principals/Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and senior cross-Trust staff in accordance with the Trust Disciplinary and Capability Policies

Through effective HR management the SEAX Trust will:

- Establish and maintain an effective organisational structure in which all staff are clear about their roles;
- Recruit, deploy and retain staff flexibly to meet the establishment's priorities and future plans, making the best use of individual skills;
- Induct and develop staff in line with their individual needs and those of the establishments' improvement plans;
- Establish and maintain constructive and harmonious staff relationships through good channels of communication, consultation and feedback;
- Ensure equal opportunities in recruitment, staff development, training, management, pay;
- Develop, maintain and operate policies and procedures which motivate and support staff and facilitate the early resolution of disputes and promote attendance;
- Allocate appropriate resources to HR management and equip managers at all levels to effectively manage HR issues;
- Regularly monitor, measure, evaluate and review all aspects of HR management;
- Have in place appropriate administrative systems to support the management of HR issues

The SEAX Trust is responsible for determining the Pay Policy and Performance Management Policy, following consultation with staff.

The Resource & Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing and proposing amendments to the Pay Policy and the Performance Management Policy, for consultation with staff.

The Local Academy Committee (LAC) is responsible for implementing the Pay Policy and Performance Management Policy and making pay decisions following Performance Management Reviews.

All Appeal Committees will have representation from LAC members/Trustees across the Trust.

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1. Introduction

This policy has been adopted by the SEAX Board of Trustees to provide a framework for the recruitment and retention of all posts within the approved staffing structure of the SEAX Trust and SEAX Trust Academies.

Trustees are fully aware of their responsibilities in ensuring recruitment procedures are free from unlawful discrimination. Trustees also appreciate the importance of fair, open and effective procedures to enable the Trust to recruit and retain people with the right skills, aptitudes and attitudes.

It is also recognised that poor recruitment practice can result in increased staff turnover, lowering of staff morale and increased costs for the Trust.

Consequently, all staff, Trustees and LAC/EC/IEC members are required to work in ways that are entirely consistent with this policy at all times.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this policy are to:

- Recruit and retain high quality staff with the right skills, aptitudes and attitudes so that our pupils and students feel safe, supported and are able to achieve their full potential
- Ensure all staff are recruited on the most appropriate contract terms to meet the needs of the Trust, whilst ensuring a satisfactory work life balance
- Ensure that equality of opportunity is a key consideration at each stage of the recruitment and retention process, thereby encouraging diversity
- Ensure our recruitment and retention practice reflects positively on the Trust as an employer
- Ensure that recruitment and retention procedures are efficient and cost-effective
- Ensure that all staff recruited are supportive of our Trust ethos
- Monitor, review and improve our recruitment and retention practices continuously

3. Recruitment and Selection Principles and Process

- 3.1 The Trust will ensure that training is provided for all staff and LAC/EC/IEC members involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and that it is appropriate to their role and that all recruitment panels include at least one person who has successfully undertaken approved training in Safer Recruitment.
- 3.2 All decisions on the appointment of staff will be made by an appropriately appointed recruitment panel. The appointment of Heads of Department or above will normally include LAC/EC/IEC involvement, as set out in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

- 3.3 The Trust will structure and implement its recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that all legal requirements are met when seeking staff to work with children. At the same time, care will be taken not to unlawfully discriminate against candidates on grounds of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age, and to comply with data protection law.
- 3.4 Prior to any recruitment advertisement the Headteacher/Principal/Manager responsible for the appointment will review the needs and necessity of the post before commencing the advertising procedure.
- 3.5 Careful consideration will be given to the working hours and arrangements for each vacancy so that posts will be open to applicants wishing to work on a part-time, job-share or flexible basis where possible and practical.
- 3.6 Prior to any recruitment advertisement appearing, the Headteacher/Principal/ Manager responsible for the appointment will ensure that there is an up to date job description, person specification, a clear recruitment timetable and a relevant package of information for each post being advertised.
- 3.7 All vacant posts will be advertised by means of a formal notice on the staff notice board as a minimum. Unless there are good reasons to the contrary then any vacant post will be advertised internally across all Trust schools and the Trust's Central Team and externally through Essex County Council's Schools' Jobs website and the relevant academy website. Teaching jobs will also be advertised through the DfE's Teaching Vacancies website. Use of other media, such as external notice boards, academy newsletter, Essex County Council's Jobscene magazine, local or national newspaper will be carefully considered for cost effectiveness.
- 3.8 Recruitment advertisements will comply with all national and local guidance regarding commitment to safeguarding children.
- 3.9 All enquires for further details, further information or informal visits to the Academy/Trust will be dealt with promptly and professionally to reflect positively on the Trust as a potential employer.
- 3.10 Deadlines for all advertisements will allow reasonable time for completing and submission of applications, certain pre-employment documentation and return of references.
- 3.11 All applicants must complete the SEAX Trust application form in full and, in particular, ensure that the declaration is clearly signed and dated. The Academy/Trust may reasonably decide to reject an application where incomplete and/or ambiguous information is provided. Applications by CV alone will not be considered.
- 3.12 All shortlisting decisions will be made by the shortlisting panel with clear reference to the skills and qualities set out in the person specification.
- 3.13 All selection decisions should be informed by relevant selection test(s), where possible in addition to formal interviews. All selection tests will be clearly focussed on the priority needs from the person specification and will avoid any unlawful discrimination. Where

possible and practicable, applicants for teaching and learning positions will be observed practising on the day of interview at the relevant Trust Academy. Candidates will be informed of the selection tests to be used prior to being invited for interview.

- 3.14 The interview panel will ensure that they prepare properly for the interviews, having read the applications beforehand and considered any specific questions that need to be asked of each candidate. The panel will ensure that all candidates are received and treated in a way that reflects positively on the Trust and that, generally, the programme keeps to schedule.
- 3.15 All questions used in selection interviews will be focussed on the priority needs of the post and will avoid any questions or language that could be held to be unlawful discrimination. Candidates will be marked on their answers by the panel independently in order to obtain a fair and constructive comparison at the end of the interview process.
- 3.16 At the end of the interview process, the respective merits of each and every candidate will be carefully considered and the position will be offered to the person best meeting the skills and qualities set out in the person specification.
- 3.17 In the event the person offered the position declines the appointment, then the panel will consider carefully whether to offer the position to the next best candidate, whether to re-advertise the vacancy or whether to cover the duties in another way.
- 3.18 If it is felt that none of the available candidates fully meet the requirements of the person specification, then the panel must not rush into an appointment but must take time to carefully weigh up the various alternative actions.
- 3.19 All appointments must be made subject to satisfactory recruitment checks. The Academy/Trust will ensure all persons appointed have satisfactory and up to date DBS certification and any other recruitment and/or security checks required by national or SEAX Trust policy, prior to the contract position being confirmed. This includes work permits or other evidence of the ability to work in the UK.
- 3.20 Documentary proof (not photocopy) will be required and checked for any qualification specified in the person specification for the post or otherwise required by national or local policy.
- 3.21 The Academy/Trust will ensure that two satisfactory references are obtained prior to any contract position being confirmed. These references must be complicit with the Trust's Reference Procedure. References will also be obtained for internal candidates.
- 3.22 As far as possible, references will be obtained prior to the selection interview so that any relevant questions arising can be raised with the candidate before a selection decision is made.
- 3.23 The offer of employment may be made verbally by the interview panel if appropriate. As a verbal offer is legally binding, the panel must make a note of any discussion which has taken place with the successful applicant. All offers of employment will be confirmed in writing by the Academy's HR department.

- 3.24 The offer of employment is conditional upon receipt of all necessary pre-employment checks being subsequently in place and satisfactory, in accordance with the Trust's Pre-Employment Check Procedure. **No appointment can be confirmed until the above information is obtained.**
- 3.25 The Academy/Trust will ensure that all new appointments are subject to a satisfactory health report and will ensure that the employer's duty to fully consider any reasonable adjustments is fulfilled prior to an offer of employment being confirmed.
- 3.26 It is essential that all persons working in the SEAX Trust are trustworthy and reliable. Failure by an employee to provide accurate and truthful information at the time of applying for their position will be considered a disciplinary matter. Where it is found that an employee intentionally provided inaccurate information or withheld information that is relevant to their appointment, they may be dismissed.
- 3.27 Data will be held on the HR system to facilitate the monitoring of the Trust's Equality Plan. The Academy/Trust's HR department will maintain statistics at certain stages of the recruitment process. Information processed will be in accordance with the requirements of current Data Protection procedures.
- 3.28 Information provided by the candidates, referees, or through the clearance procedures must not be discussed with, or disclosed to, any other party, except as determined by current Data Protection procedures. All photocopies of applications must be destroyed following interviews.
- 3.29 If, within three months of the closing date, the position becomes vacant or if an additional identical post is advertised, Managers may re-examine the applications received from the previous vacancy. Advice may be sought from the Trust's HR department in such instances.
- 3.30 The importance of adequate records cannot be over-emphasised. It is the responsibility of the individual Academy's HR administration department to ensure that notes are kept at each stage of the recruitment process. The recruitment file and all documentation shall be kept in accordance with the Trust's Document Retention Schedule under current Data Protection procedures.
- 3.31 Any applicant may request feedback on the reasons why they were not shortlisted or appointed and this will be provided either in writing or verbally within a reasonable period of the request. Feedback will be given honestly, but sensitively, making reference to the scoring system used by the panel.
- 3.32 As far as is reasonably practical, the Academy/Trust will make any reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of a disabled person. This will apply to the recruitment process and to the workplace or working arrangements on appointment. The Academy/Trust will seek appropriate advice from relevant agencies to achieve this where necessary.
- 3.33 All new employees will undergo a period of induction. Induction is a process whereby new employees are familiarised with their new job, their colleagues and their new working environment. This is to help support them to feel part of the organisation as quickly as possible.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 The SEAX Trust has overall responsibility for the adoption and review of this policy, including approval of any amendments.
- 4.2 The Principal/Headteacher/CEO, as appropriate, has responsibility for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that all recruitment and selection actions are consistent with the aims and principles set out above.
- 4.3 Responsibility for the day to day operation of this policy, including management of the administration process rests with the senior member of staff in charge of HR within each Academy and the Director of HR within the Trust's Central Team.

5. Legal Framework

- 5.1 This policy has been drafted to ensure compliance with current employment legislation and contractual requirements as set down by national and ECC conditions of service.
- 5.2 In particular, the Academy/Trust will ensure it fulfils its obligations as an employer under the following legislation:
 - Equal Pay Act 1970
 - Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
 - Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986 (as amended)
 - Race Relations Act 1976
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
 - General Data Protection Regulations 2018
 - Protection of Children Act 1999
 - Criminal Services and Court Services Act 2000
 - Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
 - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
 - Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
 - Gender Pay Gap Reporting 2018

6. Staff Retention

6.1 Introduction

A number of initiatives have been put in place nationally to ensure schools as a whole are seen as a model employer and an employer of choice. These initiatives make up the Trust's **Total Reward Package** and seek to attract more teachers and support staff into the school environment and retain existing staff by improving their working lives and creating a work/life balance.

The Trust endeavours to retain the services of its staff. Various strategies have been put in place to encourage staff to continue to work in the Trust. These are described below:

6.2 Retention Incentives for SEAX Trust Staff

- Competitive pay progression
- Holiday pay and 12 month salary instalments for support staff

- Local Government and Teachers Pension Scheme facilities
- Staff involvement in certain whole Trust decisions
- Regular staff feedback surveys and an ethos open to change
- Trust-wide career progression opportunities
- Teams of experienced staff to provide learning opportunities
- The operation of the Trust's 'Performance Management' system
- Challenging roles and recognition of achievement
- Flexible working/working from home
- CPD opportunities through both work based training or formal courses
- Wellbeing Initiatives including, for example, free counselling support helpline for staff and immediate family, Occupational Health referrals and mediation, as appropriate

Further information in respect of the Trust's Total Reward Strategy can be found at Appendix A.

6.3 Exit Questionnaires

Exit questionnaires can provide a valuable source of information regarding working practices. The Trust's Exit Questionnaire is forwarded to all staff leaving the Trust by the relevant HR department. This questionnaire helps identify any areas where improvements or change are required. The data obtained from this can be used to develop a costed retention strategy that focuses on particular causes of turnover in the Trust.

Exit questionnaires are treated in the strictest confidence. Where there are particular concerns/issues/improvements highlighted, the Chair of Trustees will be notified directly. Any information received will be evaluated on a regular basis and will be made available to the Trustees in an anonymised format.

In addition, if a member of staff wishes to undertake a meeting with the Trust's Director of HR, this can be arranged.

7. Complaints

Anyone who feels that their treatment has been in breach of this policy may bring a formal complaint.

Existing Trust staff should use the established grievance procedure. External applicants should raise their complaint by writing to the Chair of Trustees, setting out the relevant details, who will ensure that a full investigation of the complaint is undertaken and that a written response is provided within 21 days of receiving the complaint.

Appendix A

Further information from the SEAX website:

Work with us ...

The **SEAX Trust** is a small but growing partnership of Special Academies within the community of Essex, whose Vision is to:

- **Provide outstanding educational experiences for children and young people with special educational needs**
- **Put the well-being and achievement of pupils at the heart of all decision making**

We consider the main asset towards achieving our Vision is our body of **highly-valued staff** and, in recognition, we implement a wide range of **strategic and person-centred reward practices** in all of our Trust Academies.

Be rewarded by us ...

- We offer a clear and competitive **pay policy** and **progression route**
- **Holiday pay** and **salary** which is paid *evenly* across the year for our support staff
- Teachers and Local Government **Pension Scheme** facilities

Progress with us ...

- A focus to provide high quality **professional development** opportunities for all staff
- An extensive range of **in-house training** opportunities
- Experienced and **dedicated practitioners** who are keen to help you learn
- A range of exciting internal **career opportunities**

Be inspired by us ...

- **Challenging** roles and **recognition** of achievement
- A **motivational** strategy towards both education and business
- Staff **involvement** in wider decision-making

Be reassured by us ...

- A strategic aim to ensure a **fair work/life balance**
- A **highly supportive** organisational culture
- A firm commitment to the strengths of **equality and diversity**
- A sense of **cohesion and belonging**
- A policy to raise **matters of concern**

Register your interest with us ...

If you would like the opportunity to progress your career within the **SEAX Trust**, we would be delighted to hear from you. You can register your details and area of interest by contacting:

Kate Stannard, Director of HR for SEAX Trust

Email: jobs@seaxtrust.com Telephone: 01245 262779

All **SEAX Trust** MAT vacancies are advertised on this page. Vacancies for all of our individual Academies are advertised on the relevant Academy websites, which can be accessed through the portal below or via the individual links on our home page.

Ask us ...

Should you have any general queries regarding staffing at **SEAX Trust**, we will be pleased to speak to you. Please contact:

Director of HR for SEAX Trust

Email: jobs@seaxtrust.com **Telephone:**

The **SEAX Trust** is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All posts are subject to satisfactory medical checks, enhanced DBS clearance and references.

[View our Workforce Privacy Agreement.](#)

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Vacancies in Our Academies

For details of vacancies in any of the SEAX Trust Academies, please click 'Apply here' and use the links to visit our Academy websites. Alternatively, links to all Academies are available on the home page.... [Apply here.](#)