



AZBUKA Russian-English Bilingual school

Recruitment and Employment Policy

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Head Teacher
Approved by: Governors of AZBUKA Foundation
Approved: September 2025
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: September 2026

Our school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and we expect all school personnel and volunteers to share in this commitment.

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. AZBUKA Russian-English bilingual school (“AZBUKA”) is also committed to providing a safe, supportive and flexible working environment for all its members of staff.

The School attracts and recruits teachers and educational professionals of the highest caliber to both English and Russian sections who share this commitment.

The School is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the School (teaching, support, contractors, agency and admin staff; paid or volunteers; employees or self-employed staff members) is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, professional, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. The School complies with the principles set down in the School’s Equal Opportunities Policy.

We are aware that ‘Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children’s welfare.’ (Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024 (KCSIE)/ inc. Jan 2021 Post EU exit).

We believe that by creating a culture of safe recruitment by undertaking robust and rigorous processes we will deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children from gaining positions within the school and thereby ensure that the workforce is fully committed to the safe welfare of children.

We ensure that at least one member of the school personnel (usually from the SLT) who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training. All decisions about the suitability of a prospective employee are based on checks and evidence, including criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks, together with references and interview information.

We wish to appoint the most suitable person for each vacant position regardless of age or perceived age, marital status, sex, racial or ethnic background, religion or belief, sexual orientation or disability. Also, we will take no account of an applicant’s membership or non membership of a trade union.

We recognise the importance of ensuring all school personnel enjoy a reasonable balance between their working life and their out of school commitments and interests. It is not in the interests of either the school or the individual for any employee to work excessively without complementary rest or recreation. We are committed to ensuring that positive steps are taken to promote a healthy work-life balance for all school personnel.

We recognise the importance of promoting and supporting the health and well-being of all school personnel as we wish to improve moral, job enrichment, the quality of work life and the continuous improvement of educational achievement.

We work hard to create and maintain a skilled, balanced, conscientious, diverse and committed staff that reflects the diversity of the local community and share the Ethos and Philosophy of the AZBUKA Russian-English Bilingual School and the AZBUKA Foundation.

The aims of the AZBUKA School recruitment policy

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability of the person
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently in all sections and departments of the school
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any ground including age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation as outlined in the Equality Act 2010
- To ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and wellbeing of all children by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
- To ensure the School is compliant with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sep 2024), Independent schools standards, the ISA and the code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- To ensure that all employment checks are recorded accurately on the AZBUKA School's electronic Single Central Register (SCR) in Scholar Pack school management software as well as a separate file (if needed).
- To ensure we support staff in their new role and Azbuka employment.
- Ensure the health and well-being of all staff members is promoted and supported

Roles and Responsibilities

- Azbuka Governors in conjunction with the Head Teacher and school Governor will review the Recruitment and Employment policy at least once a year.
- It is the responsibility of the School's Head of Administration and school governor, in conjunction with the Headteacher and AZBUKA Foundation governors, to ensure all pre-employment checks are complete before employment begins and that they are recorded on the Single Central Register.
- It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other senior managers involved in the recruitment process to ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and carries out all appropriate checks on all staff, work experience students and volunteers who work at the School.
- At least one member of the senior leadership team as well as the Headteacher involved in recruitment of staff will undertake Safer Recruitment training.

- Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.
- Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this policy; and promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.
- It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies who provide services to the School to comply with safer recruitment practices.

PROCEDURES

Advertising

The School will advertise new vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. Normally we will run an external advertisement on teacher recruitment websites and portals, Azbuka website, Fb, Instagram or other school social media accounts or specialist groups, community groups, newspapers or via recruitment agencies. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate. A short job description and person specifications as well as key requirements for the role will be attached or included in the main advert.

Applications

All applicants for employment will be required to complete a confidential application form and in addition send us their CVs containing questions/information about their academic and employment history and their suitability for the role. The curriculum vitae will only be accepted *alongside* an application form.

Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

The shortlisted applicants are then invited to attend a formal interview at which the applicant will be introduced to School and the philosophy and work of the AZBUKA Foundation (external applicants) and his/her relevant skills and experiences as well as the role will be discussed in more detail (all applicants).

Interviews. Verification of identity and address

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, right to work in the UK, current address and qualifications:

- Passport or photo-card driving license or Identity card providing photographic identity;
- Two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address;
- Documentation confirming their National Insurance Number (P45, P60 or National Insurance Card/number);

- Original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form or their CV.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or an other means (eg marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to bring documentary evidence of the change.

The School asks for the date of birth of all applicants (and proof of this) in accordance with the Guidance. Proof of date of birth is necessary so that the School may verify the identity of, and check for any unexplained discrepancies in the employment and education history of all applicants. The School does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Interviews.

Interviews and the selection process will always include the following;

- A tour of the School/Safeguarding rules for Visitors
- Introduction to the AZBUKA Foundation Project, Philosophy and Ethos of the school
- Explanation of the role/position advertised, overview of the conditions/terms of employment at AZBUKA
- A face to face professional interview including questions relating to safeguarding children
- *Verification of Qualifications and/or professional Status*

Teaching a lesson/day trial. Short listed applicants (for teaching positions) will also be required to provide proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation on the day of interview. They will also be asked to teach a lesson.

- The candidate will be observed teaching a lesson (position for primary school or EYFS teacher) or have a day trial (Nursery, TAs or other staff members)

Pre-Employment checks

VERIFICATION OF THE DOCUMENTS

The School will verify that applicants have actually obtained any qualifications legally required or deemed essential for the job and claimed in their application by asking to see the relevant certificate, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body / institution. If the original documents are not available, the School will require sight of a properly certified copy. Where applicants have obtained qualifications abroad, a certified comparability check by ENIC will be preferable. Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the chair of the panel/headteacher.

The School requires applicants to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history on the application form. Where any applicant is shortlisted, any gaps will also be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in an application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected. Where false information is provided in support of an application to work at the School, the School is required to report the matter to the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Police and other relevant professional bodies.

REFERENCES

References (2) for shortlisted applicants will be requested immediately after short-listing. The only exception to this is where applicants have indicated on the application forms that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview and prior to any offer of employment being made. *One reference will be sought prior to interview wherever possible.*

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied. All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification relevant to the role for which the applicant had applied. If the referee is a current or previous employer, they will also be asked to confirm the following:

- The applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance and disciplinary record
- Their relationship to the applicant
- Whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children
- Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired
- Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people

The school will accept references obtained directly from the referee and will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or open references of testimonials only. The School will not accept references from relatives of the applicant or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend.

References will be compared to the application form to ensure that the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant and/or the referee before any appointment can be confirmed. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

MEDICAL FITNESS

It is the School's practice that all applicants to whom an offer of employment is made must complete and sign a self-declaration of medical fitness which forms part of the School's job application procedure. The School will arrange for the information contained in the self-declaration to be reviewed. This information will be reviewed against the job description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role ie proposed timetable, extra-curricular activities, layout of the School etc. The School may also seek a further medical opinion from a specialist or request that the applicant undertakes a full medical assessment.

The School is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments and suitable alternative employment.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE

Due to the nature of the work, the School requires and applies (if needed) for an enhanced disclosure check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of all members of staff, proprietors and volunteers on entry to the school's workforce.

An enhanced disclosure check will contain details of all convictions on record (including those which are defined as “spent” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. An enhanced disclosure will also reveal whether an applicant is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DBS. An enhanced disclosure may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

DBS checks will be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence. These applicants may also be asked to provide further information, including the equivalent of an enhanced DBS disclosure, from the relevant jurisdiction(s).

For any person who have applied to the DBS update service the School will examine the original certificate, check it matches the individual's identity and run an online update check, which will provide information about any changes since the certificate was issued. If the check indicates that there has been a change then the individual must apply for a new certificate.

If there is a delay in receiving an enhanced DBS disclosure before a person starts work in regulated activity, the headteacher may allow the member of staff to commence work:

- after a satisfactory check of the barred list if the person is working in regulated activity;
- and all other relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily;
- provided that the DBS application has been made in advance;
- with appropriate safeguards taken (for example, Risk Assessment carried out and appropriate supervision put in place)

The Risk Assessment will be reviewed every two weeks and a note added to the single central register. The staff member will be informed of all safeguards put in place.

Schools are not required to retain copies of DBS certificates.

If, because a person 'living or having lived' outside of the UK for three months or more in the last five years, a DBS check is not considered sufficient to establish suitability to work in a school (because a UK check would not cover offences committed abroad, but only those on the UK Police National Computer), the School would carry out such further checks as the Governors and the Head considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the DfE and ISA/ISI. Such checks will be completed before the person starts person. This applies where relevant both to foreign nationals and UK nationals returning from overseas.

Further checks could include where applicable overseas criminal record checks and for those seeking teaching positions, obtaining a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating body in the country in which the applicant has worked.

AZBUKA follows the latest advice of the government guidance and legislation for safer recruitment in education (Department of education, Keeping Children Safe in Education – Sept 2025, ISA, ISI and independent schools Standards)

PROHIBITION ORDER CHECKS

Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out 'teaching work' in schools, sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting.

The prohibition from teaching check is carried out using the Teacher Services system.

Teaching work is defined in The Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012 to encompass:

- planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils;
- delivering and preparing lessons to pupils;
- assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils
- reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

“Delivering” includes delivering lessons through distance learning or computer aided techniques.

However, none of these is “teaching work” if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher or other person nominated by the headteacher.

It is our policy that all new teaching staff will be subject to a prohibition check before commencing work AZBUKA and a record will be kept on the school's single central register.

As part of the shortlisting process we consider carrying out an online search as part of school due diligence procedure on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school will explore with the applicant during recruitment interviews .

PROHIBITION FROM MANAGEMENT OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS DIRECTIONS

The following staff are considered to be in management positions for the purpose of this check:

- headteachers;
- all staff on the senior leadership team (including non-teaching staff)
- teaching positions with departmental headship;
- EYFS and Nursery managers
- proprietors

The checks will be carried out using the DfE sign in portal.

DISQUALIFICATION – EARLY YEARS AND RELEVANT LATER YEARS PROVISION

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006

We will make sure that anyone who falls within the relevant categories of staff is made aware of the legislation.

All present and new staff members who fall within the regulations of relevant childcare provision will be asked to sign a declaration form to confirm that they are not disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 and Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.

An entry of staff working within relevant childcare provision will be made on the single central register, including the date disqualification checks were completed.

The declaration made will be rechecked annually as part of the staff appraisal procedure and will form part of a staff members contract, stating that they should inform the school if their circumstances change.

CONTRACTORS AND AGENCY STAFF

Contractors engaged by the school must complete the same checks for the employees that the school is required to complete for its staff. The School requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the contractor can commence work at the School. The School will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency.

POLICY ON RECRUITMENT EX-OFFENDERS

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out below.

Assessment Criteria

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- Whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- The seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

Assessment Procedure

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above. The assessment form must be signed by the headteacher before a position is offered. Such convictions will also be discussed with the applicant at interview.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, he/she can do so by contacting the DBS direct. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the School will, where practicable, defer a decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

Post-Brexit overseas checks

Letter of Professional Standard (World Wide) or similar documents will be requested by the school from all those applicants who have worked overseas and returning to the UK.

All pre-employment checks will also depend on where the role is related to regulated or non-regulated activities.

Employment Offers

It may be possible to negotiate a **provisional offer and start date** with the preferred applicant, however, the checks detailed above must all be completed before a person's appointment is confirmed. Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed and received, an offer of employment will be made.

Terms and Conditions of Employment (Contract or Terms/Agreement for self-employed staff) will be issued upon satisfactory completion of all checks. All new employees will be subject to a satisfactory probationary period during which their progress will be monitored by their mentor and members of the SLT.

Internal Promotions. If the successful candidate is a present member of staff then they will be sent:

- ☐ a letter confirming the variation to his or her terms and conditions
- ☐ details of the planned induction programme
- ☐ the start date

SCR. Single Central Record of Recruiting Vetting Checks

In line with DfE requirements, the School will keep and maintain a SCR. The SCR will list all staff who are employed at the School, including casual staff, supply agency staff whether employed directly or through an agency, proprietors and those who provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not employed by the School eg specialist sports coach or artist. The SCR will indicate whether the required pre-employment checks have been completed, what documents have been checked, when and by whom. The SCR will also clearly show which members of staff are working in the Early Years.

Staff members have a duty through their contract to immediately disclose during their employment if they are:

- charged or convicted of any criminal offence;
- in receipt of a police caution, reprimand or warning, or if there is a formal child protection;
- disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (when working in relevant childcare provision)
- barred from working with children or vulnerable adults;
- the subject of a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Staff will also be asked at their yearly annual appraisal meetings whether they have any of the above to disclose, including where relevant disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

We will keep a single central record of recruitment and record checks of:

All teaching staff
Governors who work as volunteers
School governors

Support staff
Supply teachers
Volunteers (including volunteer parent helpers)
Visiting teachers
Club teachers
Admin/office
Contractors
All other members of staff who work in regulated activity

staff

Retention and Data Protection

If an applicant is appointed, the School will retain any relevant information provided on his/her application form, together with any attachments and evidence of the pre-employment checks completed on his/her personnel file.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after six months.

The School will store all confidential personnel files in locked, non-portable storage containers, access to which will be restricted to members of the School's senior management team;

Personnel files will be kept for six years after the person has left.

The School will also ensure that any personnel information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding.

Induction

The induction programme for all newly appointed school personnel will include all school policies dealing with the safeguarding of children and young people. See a separate INDUCTION POLICY OF AZBUKA SCHOOL.