



QUEST TRUST

Supporting Young People from
Early Years to Employment

QUEST (A Church of England Schools Trust)

Privacy notice for QUEST Trust job applicants

September 2026

QUEST and its schools are committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal information. This notice explains how we collect, store and use information about people applying for employment with QUEST and its schools, including internal applicants and people who are not appointed.

It covers the recruitment process, from receiving an application to making an appointment or closing the recruitment exercise. If you are appointed, our Workforce Privacy Notice will also apply to the information used for your employment.

QUEST (A Church of England Schools Trust) is the data controller. Our Data Protection Officer is Debra Finch; her contact details are at the end of this notice. We process personal information under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, as amended.

The personal data we collect hold and share

We collect only information relevant to the role and the stage of recruitment. Depending on the circumstances, this may include:

- Your name, contact details, application form, supporting statement and any accompanying CV or correspondence.
- Qualifications, professional registration, employment history, experience, skills and explanations for gaps in employment.
- Shortlisting and assessment results, interview notes, recruitment decisions and communications with you.
- References and information from current or former employers relevant to your suitability for the role.
- Identity and right to work evidence, qualification checks and relevant overseas checks at the appropriate stage.
- Information about safeguarding and other suitability checks, including relevant criminal record declarations and the fact and outcome of DBS checks where the role requires them.
- Relevant publicly available information identified through online searches of shortlisted candidates.

Sensitive information

Where necessary and lawful, we may use health or disability information to arrange reasonable adjustments for your application, assessment or interview, and to assess fitness for the role at the appropriate stage. We comply with the restrictions on pre-employment health questions under the Equality Act 2010.

Optional equality monitoring may include racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability and sexual orientation. Monitoring information is kept separate from selection decisions and access is restricted. You do not have to answer optional monitoring questions.

Health and equality information can be special category data. Criminal conviction and offence information is a separate category with additional legal safeguards. We limit access to people who need it for their duties.

How we collect this information

We receive information directly from you through your application, correspondence, interviews and assessments. We may also receive information from recruitment agencies or application platforms, referees, former employers, qualification or professional bodies, DBS, the Department for Education and other authorised checking providers. Public online sources may be used as explained below.

Where we obtain information from another source, we provide the required privacy information within a reasonable period and no later than one month, or earlier where required by law, unless a lawful exception applies.

Why we collect and use this information

- Assess your qualifications, experience and suitability, shortlist applicants, arrange interviews and make appointment decisions.
- Communicate with you and provide reasonable adjustments during recruitment.
- Verify relevant information and carry out safer recruitment and right to work checks.
- Meet safeguarding, employment and equality obligations and monitor equality of opportunity.
- Keep an appropriate record of recruitment decisions and deal with questions, complaints or legal claims.
- Prepare an employment contract and transfer the necessary information to your personnel file if you are appointed.

References and online searches

For shortlisted candidates, we seek references before interview where possible, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education. We may contact referees or relevant employers to clarify information and explore discrepancies with you.

We may search via an online search engine for publicly available information about shortlisted candidates as part of safeguarding due diligence. Searches focus on relevant suitability concerns. We will inform shortlisted candidates and give them an opportunity to explain relevant findings. We do not ask for access to private accounts or passwords.

Our purposes and lawful bases for using this data

We identify and record the lawful basis for each use of your information. The following bases apply according to the purpose and stage of recruitment.

Public task

Article 6(1)(e) applies where recruitment and assessment are necessary to deliver our public education and safeguarding functions. These functions have a basis in education law, including the Academies Act 2010 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. This includes selecting suitable staff to deliver education safely.

Legal obligation

Article 6(1)(c) applies where checks or other processing are necessary to meet legal duties. These include the applicable safer recruitment requirements in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, right to work requirements under immigration law, and employment equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. We have regard to DfE statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Contract

Article 6(1)(b) applies where processing is necessary to prepare or enter into your employment contract at your request, for example after you accept an offer. We do not treat this as the basis for every recruitment activity.

Legitimate interests

Article 6(1)(f) may apply to retaining and using relevant records to establish, exercise or defend legal claims where this is outside our public tasks. Our interest is to protect the Trust's legal position and demonstrate fair recruitment. We assess necessity and balance this against your rights. We do not rely on this basis for performance of our public tasks.

Special category and criminal offence information

For necessary employment law processing, including reasonable adjustments, we rely on Article 9(2)(b) and Schedule 1 paragraph 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018. For equality monitoring, where the statutory conditions are met, we rely on Article 9(2)(g) and Schedule 1 paragraph 8. Necessary use for legal claims may rely on Article 9(2)(f).

Criminal offence information is processed only where Article 10 and an applicable condition under the Data Protection Act 2018 permit it, including Schedule 1 paragraph 1 for employment obligations or paragraph 6 for relevant statutory functions, as appropriate. Required policy documents and safeguards apply.

Consent

Consent is not our general basis for assessing applications or carrying out required checks. If we ask for consent for a genuinely optional, specific use, we will explain it separately. You can withdraw that consent at any time by contacting the Data Protection Officer, without affecting earlier lawful processing.

Providing your information

You choose whether to apply, but we need relevant application information to assess you. If required information or checks are not provided, we may be unable to consider your application or confirm an appointment. We explain which information is required and which is optional when collecting it. Please tell us if your details change.

We request criminal record self-declarations at the shortlisted stage rather than using them for initial shortlisting. DBS, barred list, prohibition, section 128, childcare disqualification and overseas checks are undertaken only where applicable and lawful for the role. Appointment is subject to the required checks.

How we store this data

Information is kept securely in authorised recruitment and HR systems, restricted electronic folders and secure paper records where used. Access is limited to authorised people involved in recruitment, HR, safeguarding or relevant administration, according to their duties. Service providers must meet appropriate confidentiality and security requirements.

How long we keep your information

Unsuccessful applicants: we normally retain recruitment records for six months after the recruitment process ends, then securely delete or destroy them. This includes applications, assessment and interview records, references and recruitment correspondence. The period allows us to respond to recruitment queries and complaints and demonstrate how decisions were reached.

A limited exception applies where relevant records are needed for an ongoing complaint, legal claim, safeguarding matter or another legal requirement. We retain only the information needed, restrict its use and review the retention period until the matter is resolved and any applicable requirement has ended.

Successful applicants: information necessary for employment and evidence of required checks transfer to your personnel file or the single central record, as appropriate. Retention then follows the Workforce Privacy Notice and the Trust's retention schedule. Recruitment material not needed for employment is deleted when no longer necessary.

DBS certificate copies and detailed criminal information are subject to separate safeguards. We retain a certificate copy only where there is a valid reason, and for no longer than six months. A limited record of the check, its outcome and the appointment decision may be retained as required. Unnecessary criminal information is removed sooner.

We do not automatically keep unsuccessful applicants' information for future vacancies. Any proposed separate use will be explained in advance, with its lawful basis and retention period. Equality statistics may be retained after they have been anonymised so that individuals cannot be identified.

Data sharing

We share only necessary information with authorised recruitment panel members, HR and safeguarding staff; recruitment, IT and checking providers acting for us; referees and relevant employers for verification; and professional or legal advisers. Where necessary and lawful, information may also be shared with DBS, DfE or the Teaching Regulation Agency, local authorities, police, regulators, courts or tribunals. Recruitment information is not routinely included in the school workforce census for unsuccessful applicants.

Transferring data internationally

As stated in our Workforce Privacy Notice, there are currently no suppliers or other recipients requiring access to or receiving personal information outside the UK. If this changes for recruitment information, we will explain the transfer and relevant safeguards, including how you can obtain details, before the new processing begins.

Automated decisions

QUEST does not use profiling or solely automated decisions that produce legal or similarly significant effects about applicants. Recruitment decisions are made by people.

How to access your information and your other rights

You can ask for a copy of the personal information we hold about you by making a subject access request. You do not need a particular form or wording. You may also ask us to correct inaccurate information and, where the relevant conditions apply, request erasure or restriction of processing. Data portability applies only in the circumstances set out in law. These rights are not absolute and depend on the processing and lawful basis.

Your right to object

You have the right to object, on grounds relating to your situation, to processing based on public task or legitimate interests. We will consider your objection under the applicable legal test. To object or exercise any other right, contact our Data Protection Officer.

Complaints

If you have a concern about how we handle your information, contact our Data Protection Officer. We will acknowledge your complaint within 30 days, make appropriate enquiries without undue delay, keep you informed and explain the outcome. You may also complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at any time; you do not need to complain to QUEST first.

Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

Telephone: 0303 123 1113.

Contact us

Debra Finch

Data Protection Officer

Email: d.finch@quest-trust.org.uk

QUEST Training Centre, 682 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan, WN2 4SQ.

Relevant guidance

DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Part Three

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

ICO Right to be informed

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/individual-rights/individual-rights/right-to-be-informed/>

Last reviewed	Changes recorded	Date
October 2026	New job applicant notice with six month retention period	07.10.2026