

Safer Recruitment Policy

Agreed: Jan 2024

Date to review: Jan 2025

1. Core principles

The Tommy Flowers SCITT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and requires all trainees to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

The appointment of all trainees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023 and the SCITT's Equality and Diversity policy. The Tommy Flowers SCITT will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, sex, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic background.

We will comply with the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education and ITT Criteria and Supporting Advice with regard to DBS and other pre-employment checks.

2. Selection panels

Selection panels will usually comprise two people, including one member of TFSCITT staff and a member of staff from a partnership school. In accordance with the statutory requirement, every selection panel will have at least one member who has undertaken Safer Recruitment Training. All TFSCITT Partnership Managers and Link Tutors are Safer Recruitment trained.

3. Advertising

All training opportunities will be advertised on the TFSCITT's website and the Department for Education's [Find Postgraduate Teacher Training](#) service to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible.

4. Information for Applicants

All applicants will be able to access information about the Tommy Flowers SCITT and its training programmes on the Government [Find Postgraduate Teacher Training Courses](#) site, the TFSCITT website, advertising material including information evenings and prospectuses.

5. Short Listing

Partnership Managers use the [ITT criteria and supporting advice](#) set out by the Department for Education to select applicants for interview. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants as set out in section 6 below.

6. Full recruitment Process:

- a. All applications are received through the Department for Education's [Apply for Teacher Training](#) service. CVs are not accepted.
- b. The administration team complete the first check for GCSE and degree qualifications and ENIC (where required) and will contact applicants where the qualifications do not meet the requirements or where documents (such as ENIC) are missing.

Administrators also complete online searches of the candidate as part of the due diligence checks, in line with KCSIE 2023.

- c. The Partnership Manager reviews the whole application to check for compliance, quality of the supporting statement, subject knowledge, gaps in employment history and safeguarding.
- d. Applications that meet the requirements are offered an interview. Interviews are completed by Partnership Managers and are usually held alongside Professional Tutors or Secondary Subject Tutors.
- e. The SCITT ensures the same process is followed for all candidates. The interview process is rigorous and demanding to ensure that candidates who have the potential to meet the Teachers' Standards by the end of the course are selected. The approach is to determine who is ready to train to teach, not who is already meeting the Teachers' Standards. In their invitation to interview letter, candidates are asked to inform the TSFICTT if any reasonable adjustments (such as additional time for candidates with dyslexia to complete the written task) are required for their interviews.
- f. The interview day starts with a review of documentation that is recorded on the interview document checklist. A declaration of offences form is completed, which also asks if the applicant has previously started an ITT course before and to explain any gaps in their employment or study history. If the applicant has previously started an ITT course before, this is followed up with the provider to check the reason for leaving. ID is required at interview – Passport or Driving License plus marriage certificate or change of name certificates (where applicable). Originals are seen and signed on the application checklist and saved on the Single Central Record, if successful.
- g. The interview includes: observed teaching activity to a small group of pupils and a formal interview. Secondary candidates complete part of a GCSE exam in their subject. Fundamental English and mathematics is assessed through a Vretta maths test (in advance), an unseen 20 minute written task and oral presentation at interview.
- h. If the candidate is successful at interview, they are given a conditional offer. The successful candidate will be informed via DfE *Apply* and in writing that their place on the course is subject to satisfactory completion of conditions including a satisfactory Enhanced DBS, reference checks, a health and fitness to teach check, updating any Vretta modules that fell below 80%, completion of a Subject Knowledge Enhancement course, completion of a degree at 2:2 or above and the presentation of unseen qualification certificates.
- i. Applicants with a conditional offer must provide at least two professional or academic referees. See section 7 below regarding references.
- j. Applicants with a conditional offer are required to complete a health and fitness to teach check following acceptance of a place on the course. See section below regarding health and fitness to teach checks.

- k. Applicants with a conditional offer are required to have an Enhanced DBS check. HR team complete prohibition checks on all trainees which is recorded on the Single Central Record. Candidates from abroad (or who have spent a significant time abroad) must provide a police check from abroad. Although no trainees are undertaking childcare activities, all primary trainees are asked to complete the disqualification self-certification. See section 8 below regarding safeguarding checks.
- l. Prior to each placement, placement schools are informed in writing that satisfactory checks have been completed by the provider of their trainees and that they are suitable for placement.
- m. For employed trainees and apprentices, the Professional Tutor must confirm that all employment checks have been completed via email and the Headteacher signs the Service Level Agreement to confirm that the checks have been completed.
- n. Fundamental maths and English: Where applicants do not pass all elements of the Vretta maths test at 80% or above, they are required to complete the upgrade activities for this module and pass the test prior to starting the course. If a candidate does not meet the minimum standard in maths or English, they are not accepted on the course. Primary trainees also complete a subject audit in maths and English and the key areas for development are both priorities for individual SK development but also built into training programmes. Mentors have to state that the trainees meet the requirements for English and maths at all three review points. Primary trainees complete maths and English audits to address minor shortfalls. Comments on subject knowledge given on every formal observation with direction on what to do to improve.
- o. We accept applications regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or background, provided they meet the ITT criteria.

7. References

Applicants holding a conditional offer must provide at least two professional or academic referees through the *Apply for teacher training* service. Only references supplied through this service will be accepted. Family or friends are not accepted and those candidates who use family or friends are rejected or asked to provide alternative referees. References are collected after conditional offers are made and are one of the conditions of offers. Apply asks all referees to confirm the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people. The suitability of the referee is checked as above and where additional references are required, they are requested.

References are the "property" of the Tommy Flowers SCITT and strict confidentiality will be observed by the Partnership Managers. References will be verified and any discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

8. Safeguarding checks

The offer of a place on the programme by the selection panel and acceptance by the candidate is subject to verification of right to work in the UK, satisfactory Enhanced DBS, teacher prohibition and barred list checks and for primary, the disqualification self-certification. Overseas candidates are subject to additional checks in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the ITT Criteria and Supporting Advice.

Enhanced DBS checks are completed in June and July ready to start in September (for tuition-fee trainees). We accept trainees who have signed up to the update service and complete a check within the same window which is recorded in the Service Level Agreement.

Trainees are required to make a disclosure to the SCITT Partnership Manager if they have been convicted or cautioned for a criminal offence and this will show up on their Enhanced DBS. For a tuition fee trainee, the SCITT Partnership Manager refers the disclosure to the Accounting Officer who conducts a Safer Recruitment Risk Assessment. If the offence is not a safeguarding issue, then the Accounting Officer can make the decision to continue the placement. The Partnership Manager is required to inform the placement school. For a salaried trainee, the employing school is required to inform the SCITT Partnership Manager and provide them with a copy of the risk assessment.

If the offence is a safeguarding issue, then the SCITT will follow its safeguarding policy and may suspend the trainee until a full investigation has been conducted and resolved.

In the case of a trainee being tuition fee, the SCITT provides the placement school with confirmation of the completion of the Enhanced DBS and other statutory checks listed above. The cost of the DBS check will be the responsibility of the SCITT. Where trainees are paid a salary, the employing school will provide confirmation of the completion of the Enhanced DBS and other statutory checks.

9. Health and fitness to teach checks

As a condition of offer, a health and fitness to teach questionnaire is completed by applicants, reviewed and signed off by the School Nurse. Where required, the School Nurse and School Business Manager will lead a welfare meeting to review the answers on the questionnaire and, if needed, an Occupational Health appointment can be arranged.

Where reasonable adjustments are required, candidates are informed during the welfare meeting and in writing afterwards, that the reasonable adjustments are made for the period of training, but there is no guarantee that they can be made during a subsequent period of employment. See the SCITT's Occupational Health and Reasonable Adjustments policy for further information.

10. Storage of application and interview data

Recruitment and selection information for the successful candidate will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of the programme and for seven years after completion of the programme in line with the Data Protection and GDPR policy.

The pre-course checks listed above must be completed before the trainee starts the ITT programme. Records of all checks are saved on the SCITT's Single Central Record.

In line with the GDPR policy, at the end of each academic year, all information about unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed.

11. Recruitment of Tommy Flowers SCITT staff

Employment of Tommy Flowers SCITT staff (e.g. SCITT Director, Partnership Managers, Link Tutors, Administrators, self-employed End-Point Assessors) will be subject to the Safer Recruitment policy of the employing school (Denbigh Alliance or St. Paul's Catholic School).