



RECRUITMENT POLICY

REVIEW DATE:

AUTUMN 2025

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

AUTUMN 2026

1. Introduction

This policy has been introduced to provide a framework for the efficient and effective recruitment of trainee teachers, apprentices and Assessment Only candidates within South Farnham SCITT.

South Farnham SCITT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Accordingly, this policy complies with the current DfE guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' and is supported by the Trust's Safer Recruitment Policy.

2. Aims of the Policy

For Trainee Teacher Recruitment:

- To ensure that successful trainee teachers, apprentices and AO candidates possess the most appropriate prior learning, blend of qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities to meet the demands of Initial Teacher Training, Teacher Apprenticeship or Assessment Only routes and the wider teaching profession
- To ensure recruitment aligns with the Secretary of State's requirements as set out in the ITT Criteria and Supporting Advice, Assessment Only Route to QTS guidance and Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship guidance
- To ensure a consistent and equitable approach to the recruitment and selection of all trainee teachers, apprentices and AO candidates
- To ensure that all relevant equal opportunities legislation is adhered to (The Equality Act 2010, Education Regulations (Health Standards and School Teachers' Qualifications, England) 2003 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) and that trainees are recruited without regard to gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave
- To recognise and value prior learning in the recruitment process
- To ensure that all recruitment practices are compliant with DfE safeguarding guidance, with clear links to child protection policies and procedures, thereby ensuring as far as possible that all trainees recruited are suitable to work with children and young people
- To ensure that general data protection regulation legislation is adhered to (Data Protection Act 2018)

3. Responsibilities

For Trainee Teacher Recruitment:

The SCITT team and interview panel have responsibility for ensuring the implementation of safer recruitment measures. The safeguarding measures noted in this policy are not exhaustive or designed to obviate the need to refer to the most recent DfE guidance ('Keeping Children Safe in Education' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children') and SFET's Safeguarding Policy.

The Director of ITT (or designated deputy) is responsible for ensuring that recruitment processes for trainees align with DfE requirements and SCITT quality standards.

4. Safer Recruitment

Please also refer to:

- SFET Safer Recruitment Policy
- SFET Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Matters of child protection, safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children will be central to the recruitment process, starting with the planning of recruitment needs through to the recruitment exercise itself. Particular measures to ensure safe recruitment practice are outlined in the trust's Safer Recruitment Policy and are compliant with the DfE advice, identified throughout this policy. The selection panel have responsibility for ensuring the implementation of these measures. The safeguarding measures noted in this policy are not exhaustive or designed to obviate the need to refer to the most recent DfE guidance.

Safeguarding Measures (Trainee Recruitment):

Matters of child protection, safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children will be central to the recruitment process. These include:

- Obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information about candidates, taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies
- An interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as their potential to train to teach/meet Assessment Only/Apprenticeship criteria
- Verifying the candidate's identity and qualifications
- In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Criteria and Supporting Advice*, we conduct additional safeguarding checks for candidates who have lived or worked overseas.
 - Where a candidate has been **resident in a single country outside the UK for three months or more in the last five years** — including for work, study, volunteering, or extended travel with a fixed base — we will seek an overseas criminal record check or certificate of good conduct from that country, where available.
 - Short-term travel or tourism (e.g., backpacking or holidays) is not considered residency for this purpose.
 - Where checks cannot be obtained, a documented risk assessment will be completed and appropriate safeguarding measures applied.
- Work history will be examined and interviewers informed of any 'gaps' in work history, so this can be discussed with the candidate

5. The Planning Process

Trainee Teacher Recruitment:

The SCITT reviews its recruitment needs annually in line with:

- DfE allocations and recruitment permissions

- Partnership school capacity and demand
- Quality assurance requirements
- Market analysis and demand forecasting

Entry criteria for ITT programmes, Teacher Apprenticeships and Assessment Only routes are determined by the Secretary of State and published in:

- ITT Criteria and Supporting Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-criteria>
- The Assessment Only Route to QTS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-assessment-only-route-to-qts>
- Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeships: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/provide-training-for-postgraduate-teaching-apprenticeships>

6. Advertising

- All South Farnham SCITT courses are advertised externally on <https://www.gov.uk/find-postgraduate-teacher-training-courses>
- In addition, schools seeking a Post Graduate Teacher Apprentice will advertise via their own recruitment channels and additionally are encouraged to advertise through the SCITT website
- Assessment Only places are available throughout the academic year and are welcomed with support of their employing school

7. The Application Process

Trainee Teacher Applications

- All applications for a trainee teacher position must be made through DfE Apply via the website <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-teacher-training>
- CVs will not be accepted except in the case of late applications where the cycle has closed but a school supports an application

Assessment Only Programme

- Applications are made using South Farnham SCITT's AO application form
- Applications can be made at any point during the academic year
- South Farnham SCITT will conduct the screening of applications to determine whether applicants meet the eligibility criteria for the AO programme

8. The Selection Process

The Selection Panel

Partnership schools are invited and encouraged to take an active part in the recruitment process. Typically the interview panel will consist of representatives of South Farnham SCITT's partnership schools (usually Headteachers and senior leaders) and South Farnham SCITT staff (Director/Deputy Director/Support Tutors/Cohort Leads). **A minimum of one member of the panel will have completed safer recruitment in Education training.**

The interview panel will receive instruction about the assessment forms, grading descriptors and format of the interview day. This will include explanation of the documents for completion during the assessments, scoring systems, entry criteria and ensuring the process of recruitment is consistent.

8.1 Short-listing

ITT Programmes and Teacher Apprenticeships:

The application form and interview process will consider candidates' suitability to train to teach and will focus on:

- Academic standard (in accordance with the entry criteria) and potential training needs/requirements. Applicants will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they can meet the stated requirements through certified evidence (including relevant equivalent qualifications)
- Fundamental Skills in English and Mathematics
- Commitment to the teaching profession
- Enthusiasm for teaching and a capacity to inspire and engage learners
- Awareness of the current educational landscape
- Intrinsic passion for learning
- Commitment to own professional development
- Personal experiences, qualities, attitude, ethics, values and attributes
- Ability to reflect upon strengths, areas for development and to respond to feedback
- Organisational, communication and inter-personal skills
- Ability to establish effective relationships
- Flexibility and willingness to act upon advice
- Emotional and personal resilience
- Professionalism and ability to meet Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards
- Safeguarding and suitability to work with children

Those successfully shortlisted through the screening process will be invited for interview. The screening process includes:

- Eligibility criteria is met (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-criteria>)
- Consider ENIC comparison (where relevant)
- Quality of Personal Statement (vision, understanding, commitment and quality of written English)

Notification will provide details of the interview process and format and will be made via:

- DfE Apply portal
- Emailed letter

Any reasons for rejecting an applicant will be clearly identified at this stage.

Repeat Applicants Policy Addition (Aligned with DfE ITT Criteria)

We recognise that some candidates may apply to our ITT programmes multiple times across different recruitment cycles. While we value continuous commitment to the teaching profession, we must also ensure that our recruitment practices are rigorous, fair, and aligned with the Department for Education's statutory guidance.

- In accordance with the DfE's ITT Criteria and Supporting Advice (2024/25), particularly under C1.3 Suitability and C1.4 Recruitment Practices, our admissions team will:
- Assess each application on its individual merit, regardless of whether the candidate has applied previously.

- Review any changes in the applicant's profile since their last application, including qualifications, experience, or personal statement.
- Maintain a clear audit trail of decisions, especially where a repeat applicant is not invited to interview.
- Provide feedback to repeat applicants where possible, outlining areas for development and reasons for non-progression.
- Reserve the right not to invite to interview where:
 - The applicant has previously been interviewed and rejected multiple times with no significant change in profile.
 - The applicant does not meet the minimum eligibility criteria as outlined in C1.1–C1.3.
 - There is clear evidence that the applicant is unlikely to meet the Teachers' Standards by the end of training.
- Safeguards and Quality Assurance:
 - Decisions will be made by trained admissions staff with reference to the ITT criteria and supporting advice.
 - Repeat rejections will be monitored to ensure fairness and consistency across subjects and phases.
 - Where appropriate, applicants may be signposted to alternative routes or support services.

Assessment Only Programme:

Applications are shortlisted or rejected in line with the application screening process using a standard AO checklist to consider:

- Eligibility criteria is met (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-assessment-only-route-to-qts>)
- ENIC comparison (where relevant) confirms the eligibility of qualifications
- Quality of references and supporting evidence
- Safeguarding
- Quality of Personal Statement

The selection process will consider candidates' suitability to teach and ability to demonstrate meeting all of the Teachers' Standards without the need for further training, including:

- Academic and intellectual standard (in accordance with the entry criteria)
- Prior experience (in accordance with the entry criteria)
- Health and physical capacity to teach (in accordance with the entry criteria)
- Commitment to the teaching profession
- Awareness of the current educational landscape
- Intrinsic passion for learning
- Commitment to own professional development
- Evidence of meeting all of the Teachers' Standards, including Part Two (without the need for further training)
- Safeguarding, DBS checks and suitability to work with children

Notification (via email from the allocated Assessment Only Assessor) will provide details of the interview process and format, including a self-assessment against the Teachers' Standards (to be signed off by the employing school).

8.2 References

Trainee Teacher References

- References must be provided via the DfE Apply Application and work/professional email addresses. Personal email accounts will not be accepted

- Where references are provided via personal accounts for Apply, South Farnham SCITT will seek for the candidate to update email addresses/provide an alternative reference on DfE Apply. If not possible South Farnham SCITT would follow up directly to confirm the legitimacy of the reference and relation to the applicant
- One of the references should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer and will come from a professional email account, for safer recruitment purposes
- If the applicant is a recent graduate, South Farnham SCITT would expect that one of the references should be from the applicant's University via a professional email account
- If the applicant is working or volunteering in a school, a school reference would be preferred, via a school email account:
 - If an applicant is volunteering in a school the reference would be from the headteacher
 - If the applicant is employed within a school a headteacher reference is preferred
- The SCITT does not accept open references, testimonials or references from friends or relatives
- References are checked after offers are made and accepted. If unsuitable references are provided South Farnham SCITT will ask for further references to be provided as part of a conditional offer, due to safer recruitment practices

8.3 The interview and selection process

Prior to the interview and selection process candidates will be given any relevant information, e.g. details of any selection methods that will be used. Candidates who have a disability or any other particular needs will be given the opportunity to highlight this prior to any selection activities in order that reasonable adjustments may be made to the recruitment process.

The full format of the interview process is detailed in the invitation to interview email. Interview days will be determined in line with incoming applications.

Interviews will generally take place at the lead school (South Farnham School); adaptations are made for candidates living overseas. At each stage of the interview process the applicant will be assessed and the outcome rigorously documented on the interview recording sheets and at the end of the day recorded in the 'recruitment' spreadsheet.

The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to train to teach and South Farnham SCITT is looking for 'personality, commitment and potential' to become a good trainee.

Applicants that have been selected for interview (as part of the logistics discussion), will be asked to identify their preferred training key stage (primary) and a selection of potential schools will be discussed.

Interview Teaching Task:

- Applicants will be asked to prepare a short 'teaching task' and they will teach the skill to the panel. The panel may ask questions as part of this process. The teaching task looks for key skills and competencies and is graded on a 1-4 scale
- The panel will assess the applicant's:
 - Communication/interpersonal skills
 - Ability to organise/plan/prepare
 - Passion/motivation and ability to engage
 - Presence
 - Engagement
 - Basic ability to reflect

Panel Interview:

- Following the teaching task, applicants will be asked a series of pre-planned questions using the South Farnham SCITT interview proforma. All answers will be recorded on a scale from 1-4
- This part of the interview will focus on assessing the applicant's suitability for the programme. It is an opportunity for the candidate to expand on their experiences and the information they have provided on the application form. The interviewers will consider:
 - Their commitment to teacher training
 - Their understanding of a school-based route
 - Personal experiences and attributes
 - Communication skills
 - Interaction with the panel and ability to respond to the questions asked
 - Resilience and ability to listen to and take on board feedback (even if this is critical of practice)
 - Ability to reflect
 - Their understanding of the roles of teachers and professionalism
- Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer being made
- At the end of the interview the panel will complete the second page of interview questions sheet. A recommendation will be made to the Director of ITT (recommend, reservations or unsuitable)

Reading Task:

- Primary candidates are required to listen to a child read. This part of the interview process focuses on candidate's ability to:
 - Adapt communication appropriately
 - Engage
 - Actively listen
 - Begin to build positive relationship
 - Support, encourage and motivate
 - Gauge any evidence of the child's understanding

Logistics Discussion:

- After the interview candidates will meet a member of the SCITT team to discuss the programme and logistics (location, potential schools) and explore any relationships they may already have with schools

Core Testing:

- This part of the process includes:
 - Written task (to assess the structure of writing, presentation skills, development of themes, spelling, punctuation and grammar)
 - Maths testing at year 6 levelThese activities inform South Farnham SCITT's provision of further support sessions needed for individuals and groups. **Results of core testing alone will not determine the success or otherwise of a candidate**

Assessment Only Programme Interviews:

Interviews are conducted at the employing school (or online where appropriate) and will involve a member of the SCITT Leadership team, the Headteacher and AO Candidate. A minimum of one member of the panel will have completed safer recruitment in Education training.

The full format of the interview process is detailed in the invitation to interview email. Interview days will be determined in line with incoming applications.

At each stage of the interview process the applicant will be assessed and the outcome rigorously documented on the interview recording sheets and at the end of the day recorded on the

candidate's AO Checklist.

The interview will consist of the following activities:

Lesson Observation:

The applicant will be assessed within the assessed age range/subject using the South Farnham SCITT exemplification and assessment criteria

A judgement (with supporting evidence) will be made for each of the Teachers' Standards (including part two)

Interview:

- The AO candidate and employing Headteacher will be interviewed separately
- This part of the interview will focus on assessing the applicant's suitability for the AO programme and to ensure that there are no further training requirements
- It is an opportunity for the candidate to expand on their prior experience (and the information they have provided on the application form) and the Headteacher to provide supporting evidence regarding eligibility and current performance
- South Farnham SCITT will consider:
 - Personal experiences, qualities, attitude, ethics, values and attributes
 - Communication skills
 - Intellectual and academic capabilities
 - Interaction with the panel and ability to respond to the questions asked
 - Depth of response to questions asked in regard to each of the Teachers' Standards
 - Degree of responsibility for the teaching and learning of children during prior experience and current employment
 - Consideration of the AO candidate's current teaching timetable and responsibilities
 - To ensure that there are no further training needs prior to assessment

9. Offers to Successful Candidates

ITT Programmes and Teacher Apprenticeships:

Decisions will be recorded in the 'Recruitment Scores' spreadsheet and all paperwork stored in the Applications File. Decisions will be relayed to the applicant via the DfE Apply portal and all applicants will receive email notification of the decision that day. This will include feedback from the panel interview as well as the teaching and reading tasks. Successful applicants will be informed that an offer has been added to DfE Apply that day.

All offers will be conditional upon all elements of the entry criteria being met and additional conditions may be added to DfE Apply. Each individual will be clearly guided towards the criteria they need to address prior to commencement of the chosen programme.

In addition to bespoke conditions, all offers will include these mandatory expectations:

- Completion of a Fitness to Teach questionnaire by an independent health advisory group*
- Satisfactory disclosure being issued through an enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with regard to the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory guidance*

*For Apprentices, School Direct Salaried and AO applicants, the completion of these will be the responsibility of the employing school as part of their pre-employment

10. Data Protection

Records relating to recruitment and selection activities will remain confidential and accessible only to those who require information either as part of the recruitment decision-making process, for the administration of the process (including monitoring activities for the purposes

of this policy or equality policies) or for on programme needs. Records relating to successful candidates will be placed in trainee files. Records for unsuccessful candidates will be retained in a secure place for a period of seven years, after which time they will be destroyed. Inappropriate access or disclosure of recruitment data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Trust's data protection policy. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

11. Status of Policy and Review

The content and operation of this policy is reviewed annually by the Trust Board/Strategic Board. The policy is discretionary and does not confer any contractual rights.

Addition – Use of Previous Provider Information in ITT Recruitment

This addition outlines how South Farnham SCITT uses information about a candidate's previous Initial Teacher Training Provider, as supplied by the Department for Education (DfE) through the Apply service, during the recruitment process

1. Lawful Basis for Processing

- South Farnham SCITT processes previous provider information under the lawful basis of legitimate interest, in accordance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- The purpose is to ensure fair and informed recruitment decisions, prevent misuse of public funds, and support candidates appropriately.

2. Permitted Uses

Previous provider information will be used for:

- Confirming whether a candidate has previously achieved Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- Understanding prior training history to identify support needs or suitability for retraining.
- Ensuring compliance with DfE funding and eligibility requirements.

3. Prohibited Uses

- Previous provider information will not be used to discriminate against candidates based on the identity or reputation of the previous provider.
- Decisions will not be influenced by competitive or commercial considerations.

4. Transparency

- Candidates will be informed via our Privacy Notice that previous provider information is collected and used for the purposes described above.

5. Data Protection

- All data will be handled securely and in compliance with UK GDPR principles.
- Access to this information will be restricted to staff involved in recruitment and compliance checks.

Review

This policy addition will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in DfE guidance or data protection legislation.