



SENSES Learning Hub

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Created: 26.03.24

Review date: 31.08.27

Dawn Oughtibridge (Director)

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John Fox (Director)

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Recruitment and selection process

The recruitment steps outlined below are based on part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Advertising

When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our Provision's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account

Application forms

Our application forms will:

Include a statement saying that it is an offense to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)

Include a copy of, or link to, our child protection and safeguarding policy and our policy on the employment of ex-offenders

Shortlisting

Our shortlisting process will involve at least 2 people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns



Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
- If they have a criminal history
- Whether they are included on the barred list
- Whether they are prohibited from teaching
- Information about any criminal offenses committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
- Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true.

We will also consider carrying out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that we may carry out these checks as part of our due diligence process.

Online searches will be carried out in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 as part of the pre-recruitment due diligence process on shortlisted candidates.

Seeking references and checking employment history

We will obtain references before the interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

When seeking references we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed

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- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children if they are not currently working with children
 - Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
 - Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed
 - References will be obtained directly from the referee and not solely through the candidate.
 - Where possible, references will be obtained before the interview. Where this is not possible, they will be obtained and satisfactory checks completed before an appointment is confirmed.

Interview and selection

When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

Pre-appointment vetting checks

- We will record all information on the checks carried out in the Provision's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.
- The single central record will be maintained in accordance with the current requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education and will include the required pre-employment checks for staff, volunteers, agency and third-party staff and other relevant individuals.

New staff

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity



- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and recruitment decision taken.

- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available

- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities

- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards

- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate

- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher

- Where applicable, check that candidates who are teachers are not prohibited from teaching using the Department for Education's current teacher record checking arrangements.

- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK. These could include, where available:

For all staff, including teaching positions: criminal records checks for overseas applicants

For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach

- Check that candidates taking up a management position* are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state

- Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, headteachers, principals and deputy/assistant headteachers.

Regulated activity

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or

- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not
- From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption for regulated activity with children has been removed. This means that relevant activity with children can constitute regulated activity even where the individual is supervised by another person who is engaging in regulated activity.
- Relevant activity is generally regulated activity where it is carried out frequently, meaning on more than 3 days in any 30-day period, or where it takes place overnight.
- Overnight activity means activity undertaken between 2am and 6am where the opportunity for face-to-face contact with children is provided.
- All volunteers engaging in regulated activity with children must have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.

The removal of the supervision exemption comes into force on 1 September 2026 under the Crime and Policing Act 2026.

Existing staff

In certain circumstances we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more
- We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:
 - We believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct; or
 - We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009; or
 - We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left
- We will make any required referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where the legal criteria for referral are met.



Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

- We will ensure that agency and third-party staff are subject to the appropriate checks required for their role and that written confirmation of the relevant checks is obtained and recorded.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity

An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

- Where a self-employed contractor is eligible for an enhanced DBS check, SENSES Learning Hub will consider obtaining the check or, where appropriate, obtaining and checking the individual's DBS certificate.

- The appropriate level of DBS check will be determined according to the duties and eligibility of the contractor and not solely by whether the contractor is self-employed.

The current DBS guidance confirms that self-employed individuals may apply for Enhanced or Enhanced with Barred List checks through a DBS Umbrella Body, and organisations may also apply on their behalf where appropriate.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

- Where trainee/student teachers are engaging in regulated activity with children, the appropriate enhanced DBS check, including children's barred list information, will be obtained or confirmed in accordance with the applicable requirements.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- From 1 September 2026, the removal of the supervision exemption means that volunteers who carry out regulated activity with children frequently or overnight will be regarded as engaging in regulated activity even where they are supervised.
- All volunteers engaging in regulated activity will therefore require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment.
- Occasional volunteers who do not meet the definition of regulated activity will be subject to an appropriate safeguarding risk assessment and will not undertake regulated activity unless the required checks have been completed.

The DfE confirms that from 1 September 2026 all volunteers engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.

Review Log

Review date	Completed by who
20.08.25	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge



31.08.26	John Fox and Dawn Oughtibridge
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