



Safer Recruitment Policy

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Maple Haven School's Safer Recruitment Policy is comprehensive and reflects a strong commitment to safeguarding. Following a review against current safeguarding expectations and KCSIE 2026, the following amendments are recommended to strengthen compliance, improve clarity and align the policy with current best practice.

Legislation

This policy should be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- The Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Maple Haven School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Aims and objectives

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to help deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The aims of the school's recruitment policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the position and the pupil.

- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently.
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education - Updated 2026 (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2016 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- To ensure that the school meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy. All policies are kept in the school main policy file. Policies can also be requested. Policies can also be viewed via our website: www.maplehaven.school .

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance (including KCSIE 2026 and Prevent Duty Guidance).

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

The school aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly whilst obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at Maple Haven School.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the governing body of Maple Haven School to:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the school's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school.
- Monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

The Governing Body of Maple Haven School has delegated responsibility to the School Leader (teaching staff) and (support staff) to lead in all appointments. Maple Haven School Governors may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the school Leader.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of the school will amount to "regulated activity" if it is carried out:

- Frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- satisfies the "period condition", meaning four times or more in a 30-day period; and
- provides the opportunity for contact with children.

Roles which are carried out on an unpaid / voluntary basis will only amount to regulated activity if, in addition to the above, they are carried out on an unsupervised basis.

The school is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". The school is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff, supply staff and critical friends who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, the School can also carry out an enhanced DBS check on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e., roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

Recruitment and selection procedure

- **Advertising**

To ensure equality of opportunity, the school will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement on Kent Teach.

- Any advertisement will make clear the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Application forms

- Maple Haven School uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history). Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted.
- The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. CVs will not be accepted.
- It is unlawful for the school to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the school. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being

rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or the DBS.

Job descriptions and job specifications

- A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.
- The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

References

- References for shortlisted applicants will be sent for immediately after shortlisting. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview.
- All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the school. One of the references must be from the applicants current or most recent employer. If the current / most recent employment does / did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective information to support appointment decisions.
- All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised so that they do not support terrorism or any form of "extremism".

- Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.
- The school does not accept open references, testimonials, or references from relatives.

Interviews

- There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).
- Any information regarding past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process, if it has not been disclosed on the application form.
- At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training or refresher training as applicable.
- All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address, and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted, and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed six months after the recruitment process.

Online Searches for Shortlisted Candidates

- In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, the school will carry out an online search of shortlisted candidates as part of its due diligence process.
- The purpose of the search is to identify any incidents, issues or publicly available information that may be relevant to a candidate's suitability to work with children.

- Any concerns identified during the online search process will be explored with the candidate during the interview process and recorded appropriately.

Offer of employment and new employee process

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the schools code of conduct and staff handbook.
- Verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified).
- The receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicants most recent employer) which the school considers to be satisfactory.
- The school being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), or any predecessor or successor body, or by a regulator of the teaching profession in any other European Economic Area country which prevents the applicant working at Maple Haven School or which, in the school's opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work at the school; and the school being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of any proceedings before a professional conduct panel or equivalent body in the UK or any other country for any reason which prevents the applicant working at the school or which, in the school's opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work at the school;
- Where the position amounts to "regulated activity" the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which the school considers to be satisfactory.
- Where the position amounts to "regulated activity" confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List*.
- Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which prohibits, disqualifies, or restricts them from providing education at a school, taking part in the management of an independent school or working in a position which involves regular contact with children.

- Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies, or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school.
- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role.
- Verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK.
- Any further checks which are necessary because of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK; and
- verification of professional qualifications which the school deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where they have not been previously verified).

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any position at Maple Haven School.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate *(formerly known as CRB Disclosure)*

The school applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) in respect of all positions at the school which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended). The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information.

It is the school's policy that the DBS disclosure must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee unless they have a current DBS or have enrolled on the update service.

It is the school's policy to re-check employees DBS Certificates every three years and in addition any employee that takes leave for more than three months (i.e.: maternity leave, career break etc) must be re-checked before they return to work.

Members of staff at Maple Haven School are aware of their obligation to inform the school Leader of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence.

Dealing with convictions

The school operates a formal procedure if a DBS certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and:

- The nature, seriousness, and relevance of the offence.
- How long ago the offence occurred.
- one-off or history of offences.
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the school Leader. A decision will be made following this meeting. If 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 Leader and Deputy Headteacher will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a

position were it not for the disputed information, the school may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

Employing those aged under 18 years old

Due to the care element involved in our school, including personal care and medication, it is advised that best practice is for all staff 'to be 'at least 18 years old, especially those who are given sole responsibility for children. Additional consideration should be given that an adequate age gap exists between the oldest student and youngest staff member to reinforce professional boundaries.' Volunteering for an under 18-year-old may be supported so long as they do not have 'sole responsibility for children.'

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status

All applicants invited to attend an interview at the school will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS identity checking guidelines. The school does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

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

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Fitness to work

The school is legally required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at the school, after an offer of employment has been made but before the appointment can be confirmed.

All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role.

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.

Overseas Checks

The School, in accordance with the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) will, if applicable, sponsor new foreign nationals (see Certificate of Sponsorship section).

In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a criminal record check from the relevant country the applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by the school.

Agency and Supply Staff

The school will obtain written confirmation from any employment agency or third-party provider that all required safeguarding checks have been completed before an individual commences work.

This must include verification of:

- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Enhanced DBS checks

- Barred List checks where appropriate
- Prohibition from teaching checks where appropriate
- Qualifications
- Overseas checks where applicable

The school will independently verify the identity of all agency staff on arrival and record these checks as required.

Safeguarding Culture

The school recognises that safer recruitment forms only one element of its wider safeguarding culture.

The school is committed to maintaining a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and where children are protected through:

- Safe recruitment and vetting procedures
- Effective induction
- Ongoing safeguarding training
- Strong leadership and management
- Staff supervision and support
- Whistleblowing procedures
- Professional conduct expectations
- Reporting and management of low-level concerns

Induction

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify the school policies and procedures, including the Child Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct, KCSIE, and make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Single central record

In addition to the various staff records kept in School and on individual personnel files, a single centralised record of recruitment and DBS checks is kept in accordance with the Education (Independent School Standards).

All employees who are employed to work at the school.

- All employees who are employed as supply staff to the school whether employed directly or through an agency.
- All others who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, Governors, peripatetic staff and people brought into the school to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members.
- A designated governor of Maple Haven School will be responsible for auditing the Single Centralised Register and reporting his/her findings to all of Maple Haven School's Governing Body and the School Leader during their meetings.

Low-Level Concerns

- The school recognises the importance of creating and maintaining a culture of openness and transparency.
- Any low-level concerns regarding the behaviour or conduct of staff, volunteers, agency workers or contractors will be managed in accordance with the School's Low-Level Concerns Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- All staff are expected to understand their responsibilities for reporting concerns and always maintaining professional boundaries.

Leaving Maple Haven School

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of serious misconduct or abuse against children and young people are raised. This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being

confirmed. Whilst these are pre-employment checks the school also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS in circumstances where an individual:

- has applied for a position at the school despite being barred from working with children; or
- has been removed by the school from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child.
- If the individual referred to the DBS is a teacher, the school may will make a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

External Providers

- Contractors engaged by the school must complete the same checks for their 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.
- Agencies who supply staff to the school must also complete the pre-employment checks which the school would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, the school requires confirmation that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work at the school.
- The school will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency in and will require the provision of the original DBS certificate before contractors or agency staff can commence work at the school.

Visitors

All visiting speakers will be subject to the school's usual visitors signing in protocol. This will include signing in and out at Reception, the wearing of a visitor badges always and being escorted by a DBS checked member of staff between appointments. Staff are aware of a lanyard system - those visitors that have known dbs checks will wear a

green lanyard – those that do not, wear a red lanyard and therefore must always be escorted on site and never left alone around the pupils.

The school will also obtain such formal or informal background information about a visiting speaker as is reasonable in the circumstances to decide whether to invite and/or permit a speaker to attend the school. In doing so, the school will always have regard to the Prevent Policy, the Prevent Duty

Guidance and the definition of "extremism" set out in KCSIE which states:

"'Extremism' is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations."

In fulfilling its Prevent Duty obligations, the school does not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex, or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability, or age.

A personal file checklist will be used to track, and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

Visitor Safeguarding Information

All visitors will receive safeguarding information upon arrival, including:

- The identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL
- Procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns
- Expectations regarding conduct whilst on site

- Information relating to child protection and visitor security arrangements

Visitors without an appropriate DBS clearance will continue to be supervised at all times whilst on school premises.