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Windrush Valley School

Policy Documents Annual Review Record

Citation	This document shall be cited as: **Safer Recruitment Policy** and linked to the following policies: Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Staff Discipline Policy Staff Code of Conduct Policy incl Low-level concerns Visiting Speaker Policy Related documents and sources: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework DBS Code of Practice and GOV.UK eligibility guidance Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 and departmental guidance.
Person responsible	Headteacher
Comments to	Headteacher
Last reviewed/updated	September 2026
To be reviewed/updated	September 2027
Reason for review/update	Regular review cycle and to be in line with updated safeguarding policy and KCSIE release
Person reviewing/updating	Headteacher
Source/author	Amanda Douglas
Implementation	Immediate and on-going
Approved by	T Mullins– September 2026



WINDRUSH VALLEY PREP SCHOOL AND NURSERY

1. Purpose and statutory framework

Windrush Valley Prep School and Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The School will operate robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment or volunteering opportunities.

2. Responsibilities and training

The Proprietor is responsible for ensuring that this policy and the School's recruitment procedures comply with statutory requirements. The Headteacher is responsible for day-to-day implementation and for ensuring the Single Central Record (SCR) is accurate and quality-assured.
Those involved in recruitment must receive appropriate safer recruitment training. The School will ensure that at least one person involved in each recruitment process has completed appropriate safer recruitment training. Wherever practicable, that person will sit on the appointment panel.
Panel members must declare actual or potential conflicts of interest and must not participate where impartiality may reasonably be questioned.

3. Planning, role definition and advertising

Before advertising, the School will define the role, its safeguarding responsibilities, whether it involves regulated activity, the checks required and the person specification.
All advertisements and recruitment information will state the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare and that the appointment is subject to appropriate safeguarding checks. Applicants will be told that an online search may be undertaken for shortlisted candidates.
The application pack will include the safeguarding policy or a link to it, the School's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, the selection process and the checks that will be undertaken.

4. Applications and shortlisting

Applicants must complete the School's application form. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted on its own. The application form will require a full employment and education history with explanations for gaps and reasons for leaving relevant roles.
Shortlisting will be carried out by at least two people where practicable, using consistent criteria derived from the person specification. Any gaps, inconsistencies, repeated changes of employment or unexplained reasons for leaving will be explored.
Shortlisted candidates must complete a self-declaration of their criminal record and any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. They must sign to confirm that the information supplied is true. Relevant matters will be discussed at interview.
Following shortlisting, a designated member of staff will consider a proportionate online search for publicly available information relevant to safeguarding suitability. Relevant findings will be recorded securely and discussed with the candidate before a decision is made.

5. References

Safeguarding concerns in references will be clarified with the referee and resolved before appointment. References must not include allegations found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious.
The School will obtain references before interview where possible, allowing concerns to be explored with the referee and candidate. References will be obtained directly from the referee; open references or testimonials addressed "to whom it may concern" will not be relied upon.

- For employed applicants, one reference must normally be from the current employer and, where the applicant is not currently working with children, a reference will also be sought from the most recent employer where they worked with children.
- References will request factual information about employment dates, role, suitability to work with children, substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations meeting the relevant threshold, disciplinary matters, and the reason for leaving.
- Electronic references will be verified as originating from a legitimate source. The School will contact referees using independently obtained contact details where verification is needed.
- Information will be compared with the application, and any discrepancy or concern will be resolved before appointment.

References are confidential recruitment records and will be handled in accordance with data-protection law and the School's retention schedule. A candidate does not have an automatic entitlement to receive a copy of a confidential employment reference.

6. Selection and interview

Candidates will be assessed consistently against the person specification. The selection process will include a face-to-face interview, which may be conducted using a live video link where appropriate, and may include role-relevant tasks.
The panel will test the candidate's motivation for working with children; attitudes to safeguarding; ability to maintain professional boundaries; response to concerns; and any gaps, discrepancies, online-search findings, self-declaration disclosures or reference issues.
Original identity and qualification documents will be checked. Copies will be signed, dated and retained only as permitted by law and the School's record-retention arrangements.

7. Conditional offer and pre-appointment checks

Any offer is conditional on satisfactory completion of all checks relevant to the role. The School will determine eligibility before requesting barred-list information and will never request barred-list information for a person who is not engaging in regulated activity.

- verify identity, preferably using current photographic identification and, where relevant, evidence of a change of name;
- obtain an enhanced DBS certificate and, where the role is regulated activity, children's barred-list information;
- verify the person's right to work in the United Kingdom;
- verify professional qualifications where required;
- for teaching work, check through DfE Check a teacher's record that the person is not subject to a prohibition order or relevant sanction/restriction;
- for management positions in an independent school, complete a section 128 direction check;
- where relevant, check that the person is not disqualified from childcare under the 2018 Regulations;

- make any further checks considered appropriate where the person has lived or worked outside the UK, taking account of the countries and periods involved;
- verify mental and physical fitness to carry out the responsibilities of the role, after conditional offer and subject to the Equality Act 2010; and
- obtain at least two satisfactory references and resolve all discrepancies and concerns.

The original DBS certificate must be seen before the person takes up post or as soon as practicable afterwards, subject to the stricter EYFS rule below. If the DBS Update Service is used, the School will see the original certificate, obtain the person's consent, verify identity and conduct and record the online status check. A new DBS check will be obtained if the certificate is unsuitable for the role, the personal details differ, the level/workforce is wrong, the status indicates change, or the certificate is not current for KCSIE purposes.
For EYFS roles, any exceptional start while an enhanced DBS certificate is pending must comply with the EYFS statutory framework and KCSIE: all other required checks must be completed, appropriate supervision and a written risk assessment must be in place, and the person must never be left alone with children until the relevant clearance requirements are satisfied.

8. Starting before the DBS certificate is received

An exceptional start pending a DBS certificate is permitted only where KCSIE and EYFS requirements allow it. All other checks must be complete, including a separate barred-list check where required for regulated activity. The Headteacher will authorise and document a risk assessment specifying supervision and restrictions, review it at least fortnightly, and retain it on file.

9. Regulated activity and volunteers

The School will assess regulated activity under the legislation in force, including the changes effective September 2026. Frequency, the nature of duties and statutory exceptions (including certain personal care and overnight activity) determine whether barred-list eligibility applies; supervision alone does not necessarily remove regulated-activity status.
A volunteer undertaking regulated activity must obtain an enhanced DBS certificate including children's barred-list information. A volunteer who is not in regulated activity but has the opportunity for regular contact with children may be asked to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate without barred-list information following a written risk assessment. No barred-list check will be sought where the person is not eligible.
The risk assessment will consider the nature, frequency and setting of the work; the ages and vulnerability of children; the level of contact; whether the role involves personal care; the volunteer's experience; and any other relevant safeguards. Existing volunteers will be re-checked if concerns arise, their role changes, or the School considers this necessary.

10. Agency and supply staff

Before an agency or third-party worker begins, the School will obtain written confirmation from the employer or agency that all checks the School would otherwise perform have been completed, including the date and level of the DBS check, barred-list information where required, identity, right to work, qualifications, prohibition and overseas checks as applicable. The School will verify the person's identity on arrival and record the relevant confirmation on the SCR.
The School will see the original DBS certificate where the agency's confirmation indicates that information is disclosed or where KCSIE otherwise requires it. Any discrepancy must be resolved before access to children is permitted.

11. Contractors and self-employed individuals

The School will ensure that any contractor, or employee of a contractor, has undergone the appropriate DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity require an enhanced DBS check including barred-list information; those with regular opportunity for contact but not in regulated activity require an enhanced DBS check without barred-list information. Contractors without the appropriate checks will not be allowed to engage in regulated activity and will be appropriately supervised where they have access to children.

For visiting peripatetic teachers, coaches and external activity providers (including WAVES360 partners), the School will establish who is responsible for the relevant checks, obtain written assurance where appropriate, verify identity on arrival, and assess regulated activity and supervision arrangements before work with pupils begins.

For a self-employed individual, the School will determine the role and eligibility and will arrange or require the appropriate check through an eligible body. The School will verify identity and the original certificate and will record the check. A contractor's own organisation or occupation shown on an existing certificate is not, by itself, assurance that the certificate is suitable for the School role.

12. Trainee teachers and placement students

For salaried trainee teachers, the School is responsible for the required checks. For fee-funded trainees, the initial teacher training provider must complete the checks and provide written confirmation; the School will verify identity. Other placement students will be checked according to their legal status, role and regulated-activity assessment, with written assurance obtained from the provider where it is responsible for checks.

13. Proprietors and governance

The School will obtain applicable proprietor-body checks and confirm Section 128 status for those taking part in independent-school management, including relevant senior and departmental leaders, recording the date and outcome on the SCR. Checks reserved to the Secretary of State will be evidenced by the appropriate confirmation.

14. Visitors, speakers and use of premises

The School will not routinely request DBS checks for visitors who are not engaging in regulated activity. Visitors will sign in, show identification where appropriate, wear identification and be supervised according to the purpose and circumstances of the visit. Visiting professionals whose organisations have completed checks may be admitted following appropriate assurance and identity verification.

External speakers will be subject to the School's Visiting Speaker Policy and Prevent-related procedures. Where school premises are used for non-school activities, safeguarding arrangements will be addressed through the lettings agreement and the School will act on concerns in accordance with KCSIE.

15. Work experience, alternative provision and children in other settings

Checks for adults supervising pupils on work experience will be determined under the statutory eligibility criteria and the current regulated-activity definition. The School will not request a barred-list check unless the adult is eligible and the activity is regulated.

Before placing a child with an alternative-provision provider, the School will obtain written safeguarding assurance, satisfy itself that appropriate checks have been carried out and keep the placement under review. The School remains responsible for the safeguarding of pupils it places elsewhere.

16. Childcare disqualification and fitness

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 apply to relevant early-years and later-years childcare roles and those directly concerned in managing that provision. The School will establish suitability for staff within scope and require prompt disclosure of relevant changes. Blanket annual declarations for staff outside scope are not required.

Fitness to carry out the role will be assessed following a conditional offer, consistently with the Equality Act 2010. Staff must report relevant changes affecting safe performance of duties; the School will consider occupational-health advice and reasonable adjustments as appropriate.

17. Single Central Record and personnel files

The School will maintain a Single Central Record (SCR) in accordance with KCSIE and the Independent School Standards, recording the required checks, dates and checkers for relevant staff, agency workers and management. An authorised senior leader will review it at least termly against underlying evidence and document discrepancies and corrective actions.

A separate recruitment file will contain the application, shortlisting record, interview notes, references, check evidence, risk assessments and the rationale for decisions. Criminal-record information will be stored and destroyed in accordance with the DBS Code of Practice and the School's retention schedule. Access will be restricted to those with a legitimate need.

18. Ongoing safeguarding and referrals

Safer recruitment is part of an ongoing safeguarding culture. Staff will receive induction, the staff code of conduct, safeguarding training and appropriate supervision. The School will respond to allegations and low-level concerns under its safeguarding procedures and will review checks where a concern, change of role or break in service makes this appropriate.

The School will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where the legal referral criteria are met, including where a person is removed from regulated activity because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child, or would have been removed had they not left. Where a teacher is dismissed or would have been dismissed for serious misconduct, the School will consider referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency. Referrals will be made promptly and will not be delayed by a settlement agreement.

19. Record of decision and quality assurance

The Headteacher or authorised senior leader will sign the pre-appointment checklist before an appointment is confirmed, recording any lawful exceptional-start arrangements. The Proprietor or nominated governor will periodically scrutinise the SCR and a sample of recruitment files; findings and actions will be documented.

Operational recruitment arrangements

The Proprietor delegates authority to offer employment to the Headteacher, who may involve other colleagues in selection. Recruitment will be fair and based on merit; vacancies may be advertised internally where appropriate, with the same safeguarding procedures applying to internal candidates.

Application packs will include a job description, person specification, application form, safeguarding information, selection arrangements and relevant employment terms. Recruitment records for unsuccessful candidates will be retained only for the period justified by the School's retention schedule.

New employees will receive induction covering safeguarding, child protection, whistleblowing, professional conduct and safe working practices. Checks for internal promotions will be revisited where the new responsibilities require them, including Section 128 checks for management positions.

Lucy Maudsley
Headteacher
October 2026