



IWYS

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROVISION

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Academic Year 2026/2027

Policy status	Statutory / Safeguarding
Effective from	1 September 2026
Review date	September 2027
Policy owner	Proprietor / Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Applies to	Employees, applicants, agency workers, supply staff, tutors, volunteers, contractors, governors/proprietors and other relevant adults

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

IWYS Alternative Education Provision is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

IWYS Alternative Education Provision is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

The organisation recognises that safer recruitment is an essential part of its safeguarding arrangements. Effective recruitment and selection procedures help prevent unsuitable individuals from gaining access to children and young people through employment, volunteering, contracting or other forms of association with the Provision.

IWYS will adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter unsuitable applicants; identify applicants who may present a safeguarding risk; verify identity, qualifications and employment history; undertake appropriate DBS and other checks; investigate gaps and discrepancies; assess safeguarding attitudes and values; undertake appropriate online searches of shortlisted candidates; obtain suitable references; and maintain accurate safeguarding recruitment records.

2. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is based on current statutory guidance and legislation, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026), Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Education Act 2002, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Childcare Act 2006, Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Equality Act 2010, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and relevant exceptions, Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, relevant DBS requirements, Prevent duty requirements where applicable, and relevant local safeguarding arrangements.

KCSIE 2026 is the current Department for Education statutory guidance for schools and colleges from 1 September 2026. IWYS will update this policy whenever statutory requirements change.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that recruitment decisions at IWYS are made with safeguarding as a fundamental consideration. DBS checks are one part of a wider safer recruitment process.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to permanent and temporary employees, teaching staff, tutors, vocational and peripatetic tutors, apprentices, agency and supply staff, volunteers, work experience personnel, contractors, governors/proprietors where applicable, consultants, self-employed workers, specialist instructors and any other adult whose work brings them into contact with students.

5. SAFER RECRUITMENT PRINCIPLES

IWYS will put safeguarding at the centre of recruitment; use clear job descriptions and person specifications; scrutinise applications; investigate gaps; obtain references; conduct structured interviews; include safeguarding questions; undertake appropriate online searches; complete required pre-employment checks; record checks accurately; and promote a culture of professional boundaries and vigilance.

6. JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Every position will have an appropriate job description and person specification identifying duties, qualifications, experience, safeguarding responsibilities, professional boundaries, supervision requirements, whether regulated activity is involved and required checks.

7. ADVERTISING VACANCIES

Recruitment advertisements will make the Provision's safeguarding commitment clear and will normally state that appointments are subject to satisfactory pre-employment safeguarding checks, including an appropriate DBS check. Shortlisted candidates may be subject to an online search as part of safeguarding due diligence.

8. APPLICATION FORMS

Applicants should normally complete an IWYS application form. Where CVs are accepted, they will not normally be relied upon as the sole source of recruitment information.

9. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY AND GAPS

Applicants will provide a complete employment history. IWYS will scrutinise gaps, unusual career movements, self-employment periods and inconsistencies and will explore any relevant safeguarding issues with the candidate.

10. SHORTLISTING

Shortlisting will be against objective criteria in the person specification. Decisions and any relevant safeguarding concerns will be recorded.

11. ONLINE SEARCHES

IWYS may conduct an online search as part of due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Candidates will be informed. Searches will focus on publicly available information relevant to safeguarding and suitability and will not routinely attempt to access private accounts or circumvent privacy controls. Candidates will have an opportunity to explain relevant information identified before a final decision where appropriate.

12. REFERENCES

References are a fundamental part of safer recruitment. IWYS will normally seek references directly from appropriate referees and, where practicable, from the current or most recent employer. Open or unverifiable references will not normally be accepted as the sole reference.

13. SAFEGUARDING REFERENCES

Where appropriate, references will address dates of employment, role, reason for leaving, disciplinary or capability concerns, safeguarding concerns and suitability to work with children.

14. INTERVIEWS

Interviews will be structured and based on the person specification. Panels will assess experience, motivation, professional conduct, safeguarding awareness, boundaries, confidentiality, attitudes to children, equality and inclusion, online safety and suitability for the role.

15. SAFEGUARDING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview panels should include safeguarding-focused questions. Candidates should demonstrate that safeguarding concerns are reported through the Provision's procedures and that professional boundaries are maintained.

No.	Safeguarding interview question
1	What would you do if a student told you something that made you concerned about their safety?
2	What would you do if a student asked you to keep a safeguarding concern secret?
3	What would you do if you witnessed a colleague behaving inappropriately towards a student?
4	What does maintaining professional boundaries with students mean to you?
5	How would you respond if a student contacted you through your personal social media account?
6	What would you do if you became concerned about a student's behaviour towards another student?

16. IDENTITY CHECK

Before appointment, IWYS will verify identity using appropriate original documentation or an approved digital verification process where applicable.

17. RIGHT TO WORK

IWYS will complete required right-to-work checks before employment begins, following current Home Office requirements.

18. DBS CHECKS

The appropriate level of DBS check will be determined by the duties of the role. Where regulated activity with children is involved, the appropriate children's barred-list check will be undertaken. A DBS check is not the sole evidence of suitability.

19. DBS DELAYS

IWYS will seek to complete DBS checks before work begins. If work begins before a certificate is received where permitted, all other checks will be completed, required barred-list checks undertaken, a documented risk assessment made, supervision provided and duties restricted where necessary.

20. BARRED LIST CHECKS

Where the role involves regulated activity with children, IWYS will undertake the appropriate children's barred-list check. A person known to be barred will not undertake regulated activity.

21. TEACHING AND PROFESSIONAL CHECKS

Where applicable, IWYS will undertake prohibition checks and verify professional registration, qualifications and licences relevant to the role.

22. SECTION 128 CHECKS

Where applicable, IWYS will undertake a Section 128 check for individuals who may be prohibited from participating in the management of an independent school.

23. OVERSEAS CHECKS

Applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK will be subject to appropriate additional checks where required, including overseas criminal-record checks or certificates of good conduct where available. Where information cannot reasonably be obtained, IWYS will document its risk assessment and consider appropriate alternative evidence where permitted.

24. QUALIFICATION CHECKS

Where qualifications are a requirement, IWYS will verify certificates, awarding bodies, teaching status and relevant vocational competence.

25. AGENCY AND SUPPLY STAFF

IWYS will obtain appropriate written confirmation from agencies that required checks have been completed and will verify relevant information where necessary. Agency status does not remove IWYS's safeguarding responsibilities.

26. VISITING TUTORS AND PERIPATETIC STAFF

Specialist visiting and peripatetic tutors will be subject to safeguarding due diligence appropriate to their role, including consideration of DBS status, identity, qualifications, supervision and professional boundaries. Self-employed status does not remove the need to assess safeguarding suitability.

27. CONTRACTORS

IWYS will establish who employs the contractor, whether regulated activity is involved, whether DBS checks are required, what access is permitted and whether supervision is necessary.

28. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be assessed individually according to the nature and frequency of contact with students and whether regulated activity is involved. Unsupervised regulated activity will not be permitted without appropriate checks.

29. WORK EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT PLACEMENTS

For external placements, IWYS will undertake appropriate safeguarding due diligence, considering workplace suitability, supervision, safeguarding arrangements, DBS requirements where applicable, health and safety and reporting arrangements.

30. SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD / SAFEGUARDING CHECKS RECORD

IWYS will maintain an accurate central record of required safeguarding and recruitment checks, including identity, DBS, barred-list, right-to-work, qualification, prohibition, Section 128 and overseas checks where applicable. Records will be secure and accessible only to authorised personnel.

31. PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

Before an individual starts work, IWYS will use the checklist in Appendix A and confirm that all checks appropriate to the role have been completed or any legally permitted outstanding check is subject to documented safeguards.

32. SAFEGUARDING INDUCTION

New staff, volunteers, tutors, contractors and other relevant adults will receive appropriate safeguarding induction covering the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, DSL arrangements, reporting concerns, allegations, low-level concerns, whistleblowing, professional boundaries, online safety, confidentiality and relevant emergency procedures.

33. CONTINUING SUITABILITY

Safer recruitment does not end at appointment. IWYS will remain alert to concerns arising through disclosures, complaints, observations, supervision, safeguarding incidents, low-level concerns, professional conduct issues or external information.

34. LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

IWYS will identify, report, record, review and monitor low-level concerns. Patterns may indicate a wider safeguarding issue and will be escalated where necessary.

35. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Where an allegation indicates that an adult has harmed or may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against a child, or behaved in a way indicating they may pose a risk of harm, IWYS will follow its safeguarding allegations procedures and consult the LADO, children's social care, police, DBS or other agencies where required.

36. DUTY TO REFER TO THE DBS

IWYS will comply with its legal duty to refer relevant individuals to the Disclosure and Barring Service where statutory conditions are met, including relevant circumstances involving removal from regulated activity due to harm or risk of harm.

37. RECRUITMENT OF FORMER EMPLOYEES

Former employees may be considered for re-employment but will be subject to the same appropriate safeguarding checks as other candidates.

38. CRIMINAL RECORD INFORMATION

A criminal record does not automatically make a person unsuitable. IWYS will consider the nature and seriousness of the offence, relevance to the role, circumstances, time elapsed, age at the time, rehabilitation and any pattern of offending, in accordance with applicable law.

39. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

IWYS is committed to fair and inclusive recruitment and will not unlawfully discriminate. Reasonable adjustments will be considered for candidates with disabilities.

40. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Recruitment and safeguarding information will be handled securely in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and DBS requirements. DBS information will be accessed only by authorised individuals and retained only where there is a lawful and appropriate reason.

41. RECORDING RECRUITMENT DECISIONS

IWYS will maintain appropriate records demonstrating that recruitment decisions have been made fairly and safely, including applications, shortlisting, interview notes, references, checks, risk assessments and decisions.

42. SAFEGUARDING-FOCUSED RECRUITMENT CULTURE

IWYS recognises that safer recruitment is not simply a compliance exercise. The Provision will promote a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, concerns are taken seriously, staff can challenge unsafe practice and professional boundaries are respected.

43. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION-SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING

IWYS recognises that Alternative Provision may support students with complex and varied needs. Recruitment will assess candidates' ability to establish safe professional relationships, maintain boundaries, manage challenging behaviour safely, recognise abuse, respond to disclosures, work with parents/carers and agencies, understand vulnerability and promote inclusion.

44. ONLINE SAFEGUARDING

Staff may access student information and online systems. They must not communicate with students through personal social media, share inappropriate material, circumvent school communication systems or disclose confidential information.

45. STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Successful candidates must comply with the IWYS Staff Code of Conduct covering professional boundaries, communication, social media, gifts, physical contact, confidentiality, safeguarding, technology and student relationships.

46. WHISTLEBLOWING

Staff will be informed of whistleblowing arrangements and encouraged to report concerns about unsafe safeguarding practice, recruitment, inappropriate behaviour or ignored concerns. Genuine concerns raised through the procedure will be treated appropriately.

47. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Proprietor/Management oversees the effectiveness of safer recruitment. The Headteacher/Senior Leader implements the policy. The DSL provides safeguarding advice. Recruitment/admin staff maintain records and checks. Interview panels assess candidates objectively and identify concerns.

48. SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

IWYS will ensure that those involved in recruitment have appropriate safer recruitment knowledge and training, with refreshers in line with safeguarding expectations and local arrangements.

49. FAILURE TO COMPLETE CHECKS

No person will normally start work with students until required checks are completed. Where legislation permits a start before a check is complete, IWYS will document the outstanding check, risk assessment, safeguards, supervision, restrictions and review arrangements.

50. RECRUITMENT OF UNDER-18S

Where an individual under 18 is employed, IWYS will undertake an appropriate safeguarding and employment risk assessment and ensure the role does not create inappropriate safeguarding risks.

51. APPRENTICES

Apprentices will receive appropriate identity, right-to-work, DBS and safeguarding checks, induction, supervision, professional-boundary training and reporting arrangements. Additional considerations apply where an apprentice is under 18.

52. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if KCSIE, Working Together, DBS requirements, safeguarding legislation, local procedures, inspection requirements or IWYS practice changes.

53. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

IWYS will use the checklist below to monitor implementation.

- ☐ Safer recruitment procedures documented
- ☐ Job descriptions identify safeguarding responsibilities
- ☐ Application forms used appropriately
- ☐ Employment gaps investigated
- ☐ References obtained
- ☐ Structured interviews undertaken
- ☐ Safeguarding questions used
- ☐ Online searches conducted for shortlisted candidates
- ☐ Identity verified
- ☐ Right to work checked
- ☐ Qualifications checked
- ☐ DBS checks completed
- ☐ Barred-list checks completed where required
- ☐ Prohibition checks completed where applicable
- ☐ Section 128 checks completed where applicable
- ☐ Overseas checks completed where applicable
- ☐ Agency/supply staff appropriately checked
- ☐ Contractors and visiting tutors appropriately checked
- ☐ Volunteers appropriately assessed
- ☐ Central safeguarding record maintained
- ☐ Safeguarding induction completed
- ☐ Low-level concerns process in place
- ☐ Allegations procedures in place
- ☐ DBS referral duties understood
- ☐ Data protection requirements followed
- ☐ Safer recruitment training maintained
- ☐ Policy reviewed annually

54. RELATED IWYS POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy, Low-Level Concerns Procedure, Whistleblowing Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Data Protection and Privacy Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy, Complaints Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Attendance Policy and Risk Assessment Policy.

55. POLICY APPROVAL

The policy is subject to approval by the Proprietor/Headteacher or other authorised governance arrangement.

Appendix A: Staff Safer Recruitment Checklist

Check	Completed	Date	Initials / Notes
Application form received	☐		
Complete employment history checked	☐		
Gaps/discrepancies explored	☐		
Shortlisting recorded	☐		
References obtained and verified	☐		
Safeguarding interview questions asked	☐		
Online search completed for shortlisted candidate	☐		
Identity verified	☐		
Right to work verified	☐		
Qualifications verified	☐		
DBS level determined	☐		
DBS check completed	☐		
Children's barred-list check, where required	☐		
Prohibition check, where applicable	☐		
Section 128 check, where applicable	☐		
Overseas checks, where applicable	☐		
Risk assessment for any permitted outstanding check	☐		
Central safeguarding record updated	☐		
Safeguarding induction arranged	☐		
Recruitment decision approved	☐		

Appendix B: Recruitment Panel Checklist

Area	Panel prompt / action	Complete
Safeguarding	Has the candidate demonstrated appropriate safeguarding understanding?	☐
Professional boundaries	Can the candidate explain appropriate adult/student boundaries?	☐
Disclosure	Would the candidate know how to respond to a student disclosure?	☐
Challenge	Would the candidate challenge unsafe practice appropriately?	☐
Online safety	Does the candidate understand appropriate online communication?	☐
Employment history	Have all gaps and discrepancies been explored?	☐
References	Are references satisfactory and consistent?	☐
Suitability	Is there any information requiring further safeguarding consideration?	☐
Decision	Is the final decision evidence-based and recorded?	☐

Appendix C: Online Search Record

Use this record only for appropriate safeguarding due diligence on shortlisted candidates. Record factual findings relevant to suitability; do not record irrelevant private information.

Candidate name	
Role	
Date of search	
Person completing search	
Public sources/platforms checked	
Relevant safeguarding information identified?	Yes / No
If yes, brief factual description	
Candidate given opportunity to explain?	Yes / No / N/A
Outcome / action	
Decision authorised by	
Date	

Appendix D: Pre-Employment Risk Assessment

Use where legislation permits a person to start work while a required check is outstanding. This assessment does not replace any statutory requirement.

Risk-assessment field	Details
Candidate / role	
Outstanding check	
Why the check is outstanding	
All other required checks completed?	Yes / No
Barred-list check completed where required?	Yes / No / N/A
Safeguarding risk identified	
Controls / supervision	
Restricted duties	
Who will supervise?	
Review date	
DSL / senior leader comments	
Decision: safe to commence under controls?	Yes / No
Authorised by / date	

Policy Approval and Version Control

Organisation	IWYS Alternative Education Provision
Policy	Safer Recruitment Policy
Academic Year	2026/2027
Effective date	1 September 2026
Date approved	
Approved by	
Position	
Signature	
Review date	September 2027

Version Control

Version	Date	Amendments	Author / Approver
1.0	September 2026	New policy incorporating KCSIE 2026 and Working Together 2026	IWYS Alternative Education Provision

Approved by	Charmaine Baines	Position	Proprietor
Date	September 2026		
Signed			