

Safer Recruitment Policy



Implementation Date	September 2026
Review Date	September 2027
Reviewer	Liam Donovan/Alison Lapihuska

Policy

Longwood School & Nursery are vigilant in our recruitment procedures aiming to ensure that all people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role. We are committed to ensuring that all staff, including students, volunteers and any agency or supply staff are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role in order to work with, or be in regular contact with, children.

Longwood School & Nursery have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with children are suitable, as part of the recruitment process as well as monitoring continued suitability, as part of regular staff and/or student supervision.

Every time we recruit a new member of staff to join our team, we follow these procedures:

Legal requirements

- We abide by all legal requirements relating to safer recruitment set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and accompanying regulations, including our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
- We also follow any requirements or guidance given by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in relation to carrying out checks. We abide by the employer's responsibilities by informing the DBS of any changes to the suitability of our staff, whether this member of staff has left the nursery or is still under investigation. Please refer to the Safeguarding children and child protection policy for further information.

Job description / Person specification:

Each position will have a clearly defined job description and person specification. The person specification will outline the key criteria for assessing a candidate's suitability for the role. Both documents will include a statement emphasising the staff member's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Criteria for selection:

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Prior to the recruitment process commencing, interviewers will agree the shortlisting criteria, using the person specification. Secondly, pre-agree the interview questions based on the post to be used to conduct the interview and the template to be used for responses.

Advertising:

- We use our website and Indeed.co.uk to advertise for any vacancies
- We ensure that all recruitment literature includes details of our equal opportunities policy and our safer recruitment procedures, including an enhanced DBS check and at least two independent references for every new employee. We also include the requirement for an additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.

Applications:

Candidates will be asked to complete an application form and provide an explanation for any gaps in their employment history.

All candidates will be invited to review the status of any prior cautions, convictions or reprimands, and informed should they be successfully shortlisted – they will be required to self-disclose at interview. Further information can be found: <http://hub.unlock.org.uk/contact/>

Please note this role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all criminal convictions (including spent ones) must be disclosed unless they are protected.

When using recruitment agencies settings must ensure that they are using our application form and recruitment documents to ensure that the requirements of the Safer recruitment policy is adhered to.

Shortlisting:

Candidates will be shortlisted according to the criteria set out in the person specification on review of the application form.

Pre-interview:

Candidates who are successfully shortlisted will be informed of the documents they will need to provide as evidence at interview. Additionally, they will be sent a 'self-declaration' form. This form will enable candidates to share any information regarding un-spent criminal convictions, reprimands, warnings or cautions at the point of interview. Candidates will be asked to bring the self-disclosure to interview and will provide it to the interviewer. Where necessary we are able to conduct media searches on candidates to explore any criminal activity within the public domain.

Interviews:

Interviews will be undertaken by at least two people, both of whom must have completed Safer Recruitment training.

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The interviewers will check the candidate's suitability by ensuring they:

- Have seen the original qualification certificates and verified the copy.
- Have verified the qualification is valid and relevant to the role by referencing the DfE approved qualifications list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eyfs-staffchild-ratios-dfe-approved-qualifications> (Do not download this document as it is regularly updated).
- All staff qualified at level 3, holding an Early Years Educator qualification also have achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in English as defined by the Department for Education.
- Have checked right to work, copied and validated identity documents including any change of name documents such as marriage certificate and Deed poll letters.
- If confirmed on the update service, have seen the original DBS certificate and recorded the relevant details from the certificate.
- Within the interview process, have probed candidate's values and attitudes to working with children.
- For practitioners, additional assessment methods will be undertaken, including practical exercises which are supervised by staff at all times.
- Checked any gaps / inconsistencies / clarifications highlighted on the application form.
- Have ensured the self-declaration form has been provided and fully completed.

Decision to appoint:

Successful candidates will be sent an employment offer letter clearly stating that the position is subject to all pre-appointment checks being completed, including DBS check and satisfactory references.

References:

- Candidates must provide their two most recent employment or education references. Whenever possible, these references should cover a five-year period, and additional references may be requested to cover this timeframe.
- The first reference must be from the candidate's current or most recent employer.
- The second reference must be from the next most recent employer.
- If both references are from roles outside of early years, the candidate's employment history should be reviewed to obtain an appropriate early year's reference.
- References from personal email accounts should generally be avoided. If this is the only option, additional verification must be sought.
- References must confirm the position held by the candidate and the employment dates. They should also indicate if the candidate was subject to any disciplinary action and whether there are any known reasons why the candidate should not work with children.
- Every effort must be made to obtain work references and cover any employment gaps. For example, if a workplace from the last five years has closed, moved, or changed names, the candidate can provide an HMRC statement showing dates worked and salary earned, which can serve as proof of employment. However, this does not cover the safeguarding aspect of a reference, which is why a DBS check is essential.
- Candidates will be asked to provide evidence for any gaps in their employment or education.

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- At least one reference must be obtained prior to interview and all must be received prior to employment begins.

All recruitment and vetting records, including DBS results and self-declarations, are handled and stored securely in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

DBS checks:

All candidates must undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at the appropriate level. The following procedures will be followed in relation to the DBS process:

Update Service: If a candidate is subscribed to the DBS Update Service, the previous role listed, and the level of the check must be verified to ensure it is suitable for the role they are applying for. The details from the original DBS certificate must be recorded, the update service status checked, and the date and outcome of the check must be noted in the staff file.

New DBS Check: All candidates not registered with the Update Service will be required to complete a new Enhanced DBS check.

DBS Update Service

All new staff are required to subscribe to and maintain membership of the DBS Update Service as a condition of employment. The annual subscription fee is the responsibility of the employee unless otherwise agreed by the school/nursery.

Overseas checks:

Overseas checks are required if a candidate has lived outside the UK for six months or more over a five-year period, or for 12 months or more over a 10-year period since turning 18. For more details, visit: [Criminal Records Checks for Overseas Applicants](#).

Volunteer Suitability and DBS Checks

The nursery will ensure that all volunteer arrangements comply with current safeguarding and EYFS requirements.

Volunteers undertaking regulated activity, including those carrying out activities frequently, on more than three days within a thirty-day period, or overnight, will be subject to the appropriate enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and barred list checks.

No individual will be permitted to commence volunteering within the nursery until all required suitability and safeguarding checks have been completed and reviewed, except where permitted under statutory guidance for occasional supervised volunteers.

All volunteer arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure ongoing compliance with safeguarding, recruitment, and regulated activity requirements.

Information declared on self-disclosure / DBS certificate:

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When the original certificate is seen and there is information disclosed within it, the following steps must be taken:

- Review the self-declaration form and compare the information shared by the candidate, and what is now on the DBS certificate.
- The Disclosure DBS Risk Assessment form must be completed to establish if the candidate is suitable.

Please note that roles within early years settings are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore, all convictions, cautions, reprimands, and warnings, including those that are spent (unless protected), must be disclosed.

Commencement of employment

- Prior to employment but after the job has been offered, a health check questionnaire will be given to the employee and its results will be taken into account in making an overall decision about suitability. The nursery reserves the right to take any further advice necessary in relation to a person's physical and mental fitness to carry out their role. Please see the ABSENCE procedure for more details about how the nursery manages health problems including access to medical records.
- All new members of staff will undergo a robust induction period during which time they will read and discuss the school/nursery policies and procedures and be assigned a mentor or buddy who will introduce them to the way in which the school/nursery operates.
- During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Policy.
- New staff members will have a probationary period for the first three months of work during which suitability for the position to which they have been appointed will be assessed. The nursery/school reserves the right to extend the probationary period if necessary.
- The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager and their mentor or buddy during their induction period to discuss their progress, support required and/or further training and professional development opportunities.

We are committed to complying with the Equality Act 2010 and ensuring that no person is discriminated against based on mental or physical health. Reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary to support staff.

Ongoing support and checks

All staff are required to disclose immediately any matter that may affect their suitability to work with children, including arrests, charges, cautions, convictions, court orders, investigations, disqualification, safeguarding concerns, or any other circumstance that may impact their ability to carry out their role safely and effectively.

- Failure to disclose relevant information that may affect suitability to work with children may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, notification to relevant authorities.

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- We act on any information that comes to our attention that suggests someone may no longer be suitable for their role
- All members of staff will update a health questionnaire on an annual basis to ensure management have a good knowledge of any changes that may require support or additional resources to aid them to carry out their day-to-day duties. This will also be discussed at staff supervisions. Management may require this more regularly where health circumstances change. There are more details about how the school/nursery deals with any health problems in the Absence Management Procedure.
- The school/nursery manages health-related absence in accordance with its Absence Management Procedure, which includes the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure and the Long-Term Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure.
- The manager will review any significant changes to an individual's circumstances that may suggest they are no longer suitable to work with children and take appropriate action to ensure any unsuitable or potentially unsuitable employee does not have unsupervised contact with children until the matter is resolved. Please see the Disciplinary procedure for further details
- Every member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager throughout the year. This will provide an opportunity for the manager and member of staff to discuss training needs, as well as evaluate and discuss their performance.
- The manager, deputy and room leaders will be responsible for any support the staff team may have between these meetings. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, ongoing supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback.
- We will ensure staff receive continuous support, training and supervision from management in order to provide a safe, secure and healthy environment for all children in the school/nursery.
- The school/nursery will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.

Students and agency/supply staff

- All students will receive an interview to ensure they are suitable for the school/nursery and an induction process to ensure they fully understand and are able to implement the nursery procedures, working practices and values
- All students will be fully supervised to ensure they receive the appropriate support, training and information they may require
- We request confirmation that all necessary checks have been completed by the agency before using any supply or agency staff. Once checks are obtained, we record the DBS check reference number, the date the check was obtained and details of who obtained it.
- We have a short induction prior to agency staff working with the children. It is our policy that all agency and supply staff are fully supervised and not left alone with children.
- Students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios at the level below their level of study, if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.

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The decision to include them in ratios is based on a documented judgment of their competence, maturity, supervision, and role-specific training.

Single Central Record (SCR)

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment, Longwood School & Nursery maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) to ensure compliance with statutory safeguarding requirements. The SCR contains essential vetting and recruitment information for all staff, volunteers, and individuals working in regulated activity within the setting.

The SCR includes, but is not limited to:

- Identity verification
- Enhanced DBS checks and update service status
- Right to work in the UK checks
- Qualifications and professional status verification
- Prohibition from teaching and childcare disqualification checks (where applicable)
- References and employment history verification
- Prohibition from teaching checks (via the Teaching Regulation Agency)
- Section 128 checks for management roles (where applicable)

The SCR is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any new appointments, changes in staff roles, or updates to safeguarding legislation. It is monitored by the manager and is accessible only to authorised personnel.

This ensures that all individuals working within Longwood School & Nursery have undergone rigorous safeguarding checks, reinforcing our commitment to maintaining a safe and secure environment for children.

The Nursery Manager is responsible for maintaining and overseeing the Single Central Record (SCR), ensuring it is accessible to managers and authorised personnel. All supporting documents will be securely stored in individual personnel files at each nursery.

All recruitment and vetting records, including DBS results and self-declarations, are handled and stored securely in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further guidance

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- Equality Act 2010: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
- gov.uk and DBS guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-checking-service-guidance--2>
- ACAS guidance on recruitment: <https://www.acas.org.uk/recruitment>
- Gov.uk DBS guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check>
- EYFS Statutory Framework (Sept 2026): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundational-stage-framework--2>

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Linked Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Code of Conduct

Managing allegations against staff Policy