

Herne Bay High School's Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy reviewed by	Jemma Lowry	July 2025	Date of next review	July 2026	Date of last ratification by Governors	August 2024
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POLICY STATEMENT

Herne Bay High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff, volunteers and visiting professionals to share this commitment. We recognise that the safe recruitment of staff is the foundation of effective safeguarding. We therefore operate robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that all individuals who work in our school are suitable, safe, and appropriately qualified.

This policy is fully compliant with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Education Act 2002 / 2011
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2018, updated 2019)
- DBS Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
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This policy applies to:

- All employees (teaching and support staff)
 - Casual Workers
 - Volunteers
 - Supply staff and agency workers
 - Contractors and third-party staff
 - Governors
 - Peripatetic staff and therapists
- All will be recorded on the Single Central Record where required.

PRINCIPLES OF SAFER RECRUITMENT

We will:

- Always consider the suitability of adults working with children.
- Apply safer recruitment practices to all appointments, at all levels.
- Ensure recruitment decisions are fair, transparent, and compliant with equality legislation.
- Ensure at least one panel member has current Safer Recruitment training.
- Maintain a culture of vigilance where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Advertising

All advertisements for roles involving regulated activity will include:

"Herne Bay High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All posts are subject to an enhanced DBS check with barred-list information, online checks, and satisfactory reference and identity checks."

Job adverts will include:

- Job Description
- Person Specification
- Link/access to this Safer Recruitment Policy & the Safeguarding Recruitment Statement

Mainstream job sites (e.g., Indeed) that do not accept attachments will direct candidates to download these documents from the school website or will send them post-application.

APPLICATION PROCESS**Application forms (mandatory)**

KCSIE requires that a full application form is completed and CVs alone will not be accepted.

A CV may accompany, but never replace, a fully completed application form. For mainstream job sites (e.g., indeed) who do not facilitate application forms, CVs will be accepted in the first instance to allow candidates to apply, once shortlisting from the platform has happened, candidates will be asked to complete a full application form before continuing the process, and this will be outlined in adverts on these sites.

The application form must include:

- Full employment history (month/year format)
- Explanation of any gaps
- Referee details (current/most recent employer mandatory)
- Qualifications
- Former names
- Legal declarations
- Right to work information

The completed and signed application form, which can be electronic, is required before interview unless otherwise agreed in writing due to candidate accessibility needs.

SHORTLISTING

Shortlisting is completed by the designated recruitment lead for the role—usually the relevant line manager or a member of SLT—strictly against the criteria set out in the Job Description and Person Specification. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), safer recruitment principles must be applied throughout this stage. This includes documenting the shortlisting decision-making process, scrutinising the application for any gaps or anomalies in employment history, inconsistencies in the information provided, or any safeguarding-related disclosures that may require clarification.

Once shortlisting has been completed, HR will begin the required pre-interview checks, including the mandatory online search for shortlisted candidates, as required by KCSIE. At this stage, the DSL will work alongside HR to scrutinise the shortlisted applications from a safeguarding perspective. This includes reviewing employment gaps, patterns of concern, or any information that may indicate a safeguarding risk, ensuring that concerns are identified early and properly recorded.

Following this joint review, candidates will be invited to interview. Any safeguarding concerns, inconsistencies, or queries arising from the application review - identified by HR or the DSL - will be shared appropriately with the interview panel. These are to be explored during the interview through safeguarding-appropriate questioning, in line with KCSIE and safer recruitment requirements.

Online Searches (KCSIE requirement)

We will complete an online search on all shortlisted candidates to identify potential safeguarding concerns that are publicly available.

To comply with data-protection law:

- Candidates are informed on the application form that online searches will take place.
- Searches are completed by a staff member not involved in final decision-making.
- Only relevant information is shared with the panel (e.g., safeguarding risks).
- Findings are recorded securely and retained in line with our Data Retention Policy.

REFERENCES

- Two references are required, including the current/most recent employer.
- At least one reference will be requested prior to interview.
- Open references and testimonials are not accepted.
- Referees will be asked specifically about:
 - Suitability to work with children
 - Safeguarding concerns or allegations
 - Disciplinary record (including expired warnings relating to safeguarding)
 - Employment dates and role responsibilities

Where concerns arise, additional references or verification checks will be undertaken.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Interview Structure

Depending on applicant numbers, interviews may occur as:

- One-stage interview — always face-to-face
- Two-stage interview — Stage 1 (Teams/group tasks), Stage 2 (face-to-face formal interview)

Interview Panel

- At least one member must have Safer Recruitment training.
- SLT or HR must sit on every panel.

Interview Requirements

Candidates must:

- Explain gaps in employment
- Clarify any anomalies found in references/online checks
- Discuss any disclosed criminal history
- Demonstrate understanding of safeguarding, professional boundaries, and Prevent
- Provide evidence of suitability for the role

PRE-APPOINTMENT CHECKS (MANDATORY)

No appointment is confirmed until all checks are completed.

We require:

Check	Required for
Identity verification	All staff/volunteers/ Casual/ Contractors
Enhanced DBS with barred list	All in regulated activity
Prohibition from teaching	Teachers, Unqualified Teacher, Cover Supervisors, HLTAs and LSAs
Section 128 check	Senior leadership, governors,
Qualifications verified	Where relevant
Right to work in the UK	All staff
Full employment history	All staff
Online search	All shortlisted
Medical/fitness check	Where appropriate
Overseas checks	Anyone who lived/worked abroad in the last 3 years
Disqualification Declaration (where applicable)	

OVERSEAS CHECKS

In line with KCSIE, the school will:

- Obtain a certificate of good conduct, police check or equivalent from the country concerned.
- Seek additional references or verification checks.
- Ensure this is completed before employment begins unless wholly unavoidable.

SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR)

The SCR will include ALL:

- Employees
- Casual Workers
- Volunteers
- Supply/agency staff
- Governors
- Contractors
- Third-party and peripatetic staff

SCR is reviewed:

- After every new starter
Weekly by HR
- Termly by DSL Lead
- Three times per Academic Year by HR, Lead DSL, Principal and Chair of Governors

CONDITIONAL OFFER & APPOINTMENT

A conditional offer is issued only when the panel agrees on a preferred candidate.

Employment will not commence until:

- All mandatory checks are completed
- Compliance file is 100% complete
- The HR Manager signs off clearance

If the DBS certificate is delayed:

- A separate barred-list check is completed
- A risk assessment is written
- Candidate remains fully supervised

DATA PROTECTION & RECORD RETENTION

We comply with UK GDPR and the DBS Code of Practice.

We:

- Do not retain DBS certificates beyond 6 months
- Retain only the DBS reference number, date, outcome and checker
- Store all recruitment documents securely in encrypted files
- Retain application forms, interview notes and online-search notes for 12 months (unless needed longer for legal purposes)

13. INDUCTION

All new staff, volunteers and supply staff receive before commencing employment:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
- KCSIE Part 1
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding training (including Prevent)

All new staff complete mandatory e-learning prior to start.

14. MONITORING, PROBATION & REVIEW

All new staff:

- Complete a six-month probationary period
- Attend scheduled meetings with their mentor and/ or line manager
- Are subject to ongoing safeguarding vigilance

The effectiveness of this policy is reviewed annually.

DUTY TO REFER

We will refer individuals to:

- DBS where conduct meets the legal threshold (harm, risk of harm, or working while barred)
- Teaching Regulation Agency for serious misconduct by teachers

Failure to refer is a criminal offence.