



UNICORN SCHOOL

SAFER RECRUITMENT IN EDUCATION INCLUDING EARLY YEARS (EYFS) POLICY

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Policy.

This policy is on the public section of the website.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is David Gladstone (Deputy Head)

RESPONSIBILITY

Staff Member:

Head / Bursar

Last Reviewed:

November 2025

Approved by Governors:

November 2025

Next Review:

September 2026

SAFER RECRUITMENT IN EDUCATION POLICY

Unicorn School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The School is a 'Safer Recruitment' employer and seeks to minimise the risk of appointing someone unsuitable through thorough recruitment procedures and pre-employment vetting, in accordance with the following:

- DfE's Statutory Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2025);
- Safer Recruitment Training
- Revised Prevent Duty (April 2021 update)
- DfE's Prohibition from Management (s.128) (August 2015)
- Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 – TUPE

All SLT members have completed Safer Recruitment Training and do so every 2 years.

In accordance with the Equal Opportunities/Equality Act 2010, the School does not discriminate between candidates on the basis of race, disability, gender, religion and beliefs, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, marital status, civil partnerships or sexual orientation. Unicorn School is mindful of the requirements relating to the recruitment of ex-offenders.

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE – ALL STAFF (Including Peripatetic Staff)

The School seeks to protect and safeguard children. Every stage of the recruitment process is designed to ensure a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information about all applicants.

1. Advertisements have a statement that the School is a "Safer Recruitment" employer. The "Vacancies" page on the School website also displays this statement.
2. The Recruitment Pack, which is available on the School website in downloadable form, contains:
 - Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy;
 - Safer Recruitment Policy;
 - Recruitment Process;
 - Advertisement;
 - Job Description;
 - Person Specification;
 - Application Form, which indicates that the School is a "Safer Recruitment" employer, and has training & full employment history and dates as a Child Protection measure. This helps the School search for gaps in training and/or

employment, and flags up questions to ask at interview to establish the reason for any gaps which may be entirely reasonable.

Incomplete application forms will not be accepted. Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form under any circumstances.

3. Candidates shortlisted for interview are:

- invited to interview using a “Safer Recruitment” letter;
- requested to provide the following: proof of identity (e.g. photo driving licence or passport), plus birth certificate as best practice, proof of address, and certificates confirming higher education qualifications & QTS, or as appropriate for the post.

4. Two references are sought using a “Safer Recruitment” form which includes verification of authenticity and specific safeguarding reference content.

5. In keeping with advice from KCSIE 2025, an online search will be carried out on shortlisted candidates to help identify any publicly available incidents that could be further explored at interview.

6. Interviews are conducted using a panel, with at least one member who is “Safer Recruitment” trained, including:

- the use of pre-agreed interview questions (including “Safer Recruitment” questions and questions to check any gaps in the candidate’s application). The School must record a satisfactory explanation for any gaps in the candidate’s service history;
- a requirement for interviewers to assess the candidate’s attitude towards children & young people, and his/her ability to support the School’s Safeguarding Policy;
- that any concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee are addressed.

7. An offer of appointment to a successful applicant must be made conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks:

- receipt of two satisfactory written professional/character references that have, where possible, been confirmed by telephone. Open references are not accepted (i.e. addressed To Whom it May Concern);
- references received must be signed or countersigned by the headteacher (or a nominated senior leader in the headteacher’s absence)
- verification of identity and right to work in the UK, with copy of passport taken & retained on file;

- appropriate qualifications checked, copied & retained on file;
- verification of mental and physical fitness to carry out the role as per Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 which state that, as long as the School is not discriminating against a disabled applicant unfairly, then it can ensure that the applicant has the health & physical capacity to teach;
- It is an offence for barred persons to apply for any role;
- a certificate for an Enhanced DBS check (with barred list information where the person will be engaging in a regulated activity);
- a separate barred list check if an individual is to start work in a regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;
- confirmation that an individual to be employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State, using the Employer Access Online service;
- verify disqualification under the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 or those working with children Under 8 years of age, through completion of self-declaration on the application form or separate self-declaration form;
- confirmation that the candidate is not subject to a s.128 direction (barring order from the management of schools) (if appropriate)

Individuals Who Have Lived or Worked Outside the UK

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK

In accordance with KCSIE 2025, individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK undergo the same checks as all other staff. In addition, Unicorn will make any further checks **we think appropriate** so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered.

Following the UK's exit from the EU, we will employ the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

These checks could include, where available:

- Criminal records checks for overseas applicants - Home Office guidance can be found on GOV.UK;
- For teaching positions - obtaining a letter (via the applicant) from the professional regulating authority (this is often the Department/Ministry of Education but varies across the world) in the country (or countries) in which the applicant has worked confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach. Applicants can find contact details of regulatory

bodies in the EU/EEA and Switzerland on the Regulated Professions database.

Where this information is not available Unicorn will seek alternative methods of checking suitability and or undertake a risk assessment that supports informed decision making on whether to proceed with the appointment.

DBS CHECKS – ALL STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, GOVERNORS, CONTRACTORS & VISITORS

No member of Staff, Volunteer, Governor, Contractor or Visitor on the School premises is to be left unsupervised with children until a satisfactory level of Enhanced DBS Check has been obtained and seen.

All Staff (including Peripatetic Staff & Work Experience Students)

Due to the small size of the School, it is highly likely that any member of Staff will find themselves unsupervised with a child from time to time, even if their Job Description does not specify a role which is classified as a “Regulated Activity”. Therefore, an Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List Information is requested for all Staff at the time of appointment.

Staff appointed to management positions from August 2015 will be subject to a s.128 direction. (See DBS application form 61. Position applied for ‘Child Workforce Independent School’.) At Unicorn this will apply to the Head, members of the SLT, SENCo and the Head of Music.

There is a legal duty to make a barring referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if the dismissal was due to harm or risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

The retention of DBS certificates or copies are not required however it must be noted on the SCR the date the certificate was sighted and who saw it. Verification must be done and the SCR must be kept up to date.

TUPE

If staff are transferred under TUPE (gap of three months or less and information complete) information will be passed to the new employer and a note made on the register that details have been accepted under TUPE.

Volunteers

The School encourages all parents to volunteer to assist with class activities and trips, and also to run a Thursday Club.

Most volunteering is on an ad-hoc basis and does not fall under the definition of a “Regulated Activity”, however, running a Thursday Club does qualify. Therefore the School obtains an Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List Information for all

volunteers. Volunteers who wish to run a club or extra-curricular activity will be required to complete an application form.

The following details are also required before a parent or carer is allowed to act as an unsupervised volunteer on School premises:

- an informal interview (undertaken as part of the DBS check);
- no contrary indications from anyone in the School;
- where a carer does not have sufficient residency for a DBS check, the School requires a minimum of six months service with a Unicorn family – and that the family provides a detailed reference in support of them, including reference to “Safer Recruitment” issues.

Teachers are provided with lists of parents who have undergone these checks so that they know who has been cleared appropriately when seeking volunteers.

Governors

Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors is registered with the DFE as being responsible for the management of the school.

Parent Governors

The School ensures that all Parent Governors are subject to an Enhanced DBS Check at the time of their appointment. Those parents who are appointed as Governors and have already undergone an Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List Information in order to be able to act as a volunteer (as detailed in the previous section) are asked to repeat the process.

Non-Parent Governors

A valid Enhanced DBS Check is required as part of the appointment process for all Non-Parent Governors. Non-Parent Governors will never be left unsupervised with children.

All governors appointed since August 2015 are subject to a s.128 direction so require a prohibition from management check.

Associate members

Associate members are appointed by the governing body to serve on one or more governing body committees. The School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 made enhanced DBS checks mandatory for school governors but not associate members. Unicorn School does not have any associate members.

Supply Staff

. If using agency supply staff, the School will:

- obtain written confirmation from the Supply Agency that all appropriate “Safer Recruitment” checks have been carried out, including the results of the Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List Information;
- date of receipt is recorded or DBS certificate details recorded
- check the identity of the teacher upon arrival at the School as well as their Enhanced DBS Check with Barred List Information.

Visitors and Professionals

Please see the Visiting Speakers and Professionals Policy

The arrangements for visiting speakers are in accordance with the Prevent Duty - they must be suitable and supervised.

The School will undertake due diligence to ensure that any visiting speakers or professionals are appropriate:

- Staff must not invite speakers into school without first obtaining permission from the Head.
- There will be an internet check on the visiting speaker or professional before the visit is confirmed.
- The identity of visiting speakers will be checked on arrival and they will be escorted/supervised as appropriate. DBS check with Barred List Information is required to be checked before any visitor can be alone with a child.

SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR)

The School maintains a central record of:

- all Staff
- all others who work in regular contact with children within the School, including trainees, agency and volunteers;
- all Governors.

The information recorded is whether or not the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which the checks were completed:

- an identity check;
- a barred list check;
- an Enhanced DBS check;
- a prohibition from teaching check;
- a prohibition from management check. S.128.
- further checks on people living or working outside the UK;
- a check of professional qualifications;
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the UK;
- a medical check;

- two references.

Staff are removed from SCR when they leave

SAMPLE DOCUMENTATION

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location of Master</u>
Safer Recruitment Checklist	<i>S:/WORD/Safer Recruitment/Master Safer Recruitment Checklist Mar 16.docx</i>
Application Form	<i>S:/WORD/Safer Recruitment/Unicorn School Staff Application Form.docx</i>
Request From	<i>S:/WORD/Safer Recruitment/Reference Requests</i>
Interview Forms etc	<i>S:/WORD/STAFF/Recruitment/Interview Questions</i>
Offer Letters	<i>S:/WORD/STAFF/Recruitment/Offer Letters</i>
Medical Forms	<i>S:/WORD/Safer Recruitment/Medical Form .docx</i>