



Woodland Pathways

Safer Recruitment & Selection Policy

Date created or revised: 0925

Date of next review: 0926

1. Policy Statement

Woodland Pathways is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable individuals.

We ensure that all staff, practitioners, volunteers, and contractors are recruited safely and are suitable to work with children.

Our safer recruitment procedures aim to:

- Deter, identify, and reject unsuitable candidates
- Maintain a culture of vigilance and safeguarding
- Comply fully with statutory guidance and Local Authority expectations

All recruitment is conducted in line with:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Norfolk & Suffolk Safeguarding Procedures**
- **Equality Act 2010**

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees (permanent, temporary, and fixed-term)
- Freelance practitioners and sessional staff
- Volunteers and contractors
- Any adult working with learners

3. Key Principles

Woodland Pathways ensures that:

- Safeguarding is central to all recruitment decisions
- All candidates are treated fairly and equitably
- Recruitment decisions are evidence-based
- Safer recruitment practices are consistently applied
- Commissioners are assured of safeguarding compliance

4. Safer Recruitment Training

- At least one member of every interview panel holds **accredited Safer Recruitment training**
- Directors maintain oversight of recruitment compliance
- Staff involved in recruitment receive regular safeguarding updates

5. Recruitment Process

5.1 Planning and Advertising

- Job descriptions and person specifications clearly outline safeguarding responsibilities
- All adverts include a safeguarding commitment and requirement for:
 - Enhanced DBS with barred list check
- It is stated that:
 - It is an offence to apply if barred from working with children

5.2 Application Process

- All candidates must complete a full application form (CVs alone are not accepted)
- Full employment history is required
- Any gaps or inconsistencies are explored

Applicants must declare:

- Criminal history
- Safeguarding concerns

5.3 Shortlisting

- Conducted by at least two staff members
- Based on clear criteria
- References are requested prior to interview wherever possible

Any safeguarding concerns identified:

- Will be investigated and may involve contact with the LADO

5.4 References

- Minimum of two references required, including:
 - Most recent employer
- References are:
 - Verified by direct contact
 - Checked for:
 - Suitability to work with children
 - Integrity and character
 - Reason for leaving

Any discrepancies are fully investigated.

5.5 Interview Process

- Conducted by at least two interviewers
- Includes:
 - Structured questions
 - Safeguarding-specific questions
 - Scenario-based questions

Interviews assess:

- Attitudes towards safeguarding
- Experience with children and vulnerable learners
- Understanding of professional boundaries
- Motivation for working in this sector

Additional checks:

- Gaps in employment explored
- Any concerns or inconsistencies clarified

5.6 Candidate Verification (Pre-Employment Checks)

All appointments are conditional upon:

- Enhanced DBS check (with barred list where applicable)
- Identity verification
- Right to work in the UK
- Qualification verification
- Health/fitness to work (where appropriate)
- Overseas checks where relevant

No staff member will commence work until all checks are complete

6. Regulated Activity

Woodland Pathways recognises the statutory definition of regulated activity.

- All staff delivering provision are considered to be in regulated activity
- Therefore Enhanced DBS with barred list check is mandatory

Visitors and volunteers:

- Are risk assessed
- Subject to proportionate checks
- Supervised at all times

7. Single Central Record (SCR)

Woodland Pathways maintains a Single Central Record in line with KCSIE.

The SCR includes:

- Identity checks
- DBS and barred list checks
- Right-to-work checks
- Qualifications
- References
- Employment history

The SCR is:

- Regularly reviewed
- Audited by leadership

8. Use of Agency Staff

Where agency staff are used:

- Written confirmation is obtained that all checks have been completed
- Agencies must confirm:
 - DBS clearance
 - Safeguarding compliance
- Woodland Pathways retains responsibility for ensuring suitability

9. Induction and Ongoing Safeguarding Culture

All staff receive induction covering:

- Safeguarding and child protection
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour and expectations
- Emergency procedures

Ongoing safeguarding includes:

- Regular training updates
- Supervision and monitoring
- Annual policy sign-off

10. Managing Concerns and Allegations

Any concerns about staff:

- Are managed in line with the Safeguarding Policy
- Follow **KCSIE Part 4 (Allegations Management)**

Where required:

- Referral to **LADO** within 1 working day
- Referral to **DBS** and/or Teaching Regulation Agency

11. Information for Commissioners

Woodland Pathways will provide written assurance to commissioning schools and Local Authorities that:

- All safer recruitment checks have been completed
- Staff are suitable to work with children
- Safeguarding procedures are in place

We will:

- Maintain transparency with Norfolk & Suffolk commissioners
- Notify commissioners of staffing changes
- Provide confirmation prior to delivery commencing

12. Secure Handling of DBS Information

Woodland Pathways complies with the **DBS Code of Practice:**

- Disclosure information is stored securely
- Access is restricted
- Information is used only for its intended purpose
- Records are retained only as necessary
- Disposal is secure (e.g. shredding)

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- Following legislative updates
- After any safeguarding incident

14. Related Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- GDPR/Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy

15. Contact Details

Woodland Pathways

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