



Moorland Junior School

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Links to other policies:

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy; Equal Opportunities Policy

1. Purpose and commitment

Moorland Junior School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and to creating a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The School recognises that safer recruitment is a fundamental part of this culture and is designed to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from securing employment, volunteering opportunities or other positions of trust.

This policy applies to recruitment and appointment processes and must be read alongside the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Equality Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and relevant data protection procedures.

The School will have regard to the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026), which is statutory guidance in England.

2. Principles

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is central to every recruitment decision.
- Recruitment will be fair, transparent, consistent and free from unlawful discrimination.
- The School will assess candidates on merit, qualifications, experience, suitability and safeguarding attitudes and behaviours.
- Safer recruitment is a process, not a single DBS check; pre-appointment checks form part of a wider safeguarding culture and ongoing employment arrangements.
- Recruitment decisions and the information relied upon will be recorded clearly and securely.
- The School will comply with data protection law and will only collect, use and retain personal information that is necessary and proportionate.

3. Responsibilities and safer recruitment training

The proprietor and Headteacher are responsible for ensuring that safer recruitment arrangements are implemented effectively. Those involved in recruiting and employing staff to work with children should receive appropriate safer recruitment training covering, at minimum, Part One of KCSIE 2026.

Where the school is a maintained school, at least one person conducting an interview must have completed safer recruitment training, in accordance with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009. The School will adopt the same standard as good practice for all recruitment panels.

4. Recruitment and selection process

4.1 Job descriptions, person specifications and adverts

- Job descriptions and person specifications will clearly identify the safeguarding responsibilities of the role and the extent of contact with children.
- The School will identify whether the role involves regulated activity relating to children.
- Job adverts will state the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of

children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken.

- Adverts will state the safeguarding responsibilities of the post and whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, where applicable.

4.2 Application forms

- Applicants will normally be required to complete the School's application form. A CV may be accepted only as supplementary information and will not replace the application form.
- Applicants will provide current and former names, contact details, employment history, education/qualifications, references and information demonstrating their suitability for the role.
- A full employment history since leaving school will be requested, including education, employment and voluntary work, with reasons for gaps.
- Where a role involves regulated activity relating to children, applicants will be informed that it is an offence for a barred person to apply for such a role.
- The application pack will include or provide a clear link to the School's child protection policy/practices and policy on the employment of ex-offenders.

4.3 Shortlisting and due diligence

- Shortlisting will normally be undertaken by at least two people.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration covering criminal record information and other matters that may make them unsuitable to work with children. This will be requested at shortlisting stage, not used to decide who is shortlisted.
- The School will examine employment gaps, inconsistencies and unexplained changes in employment or location and will explore concerns with candidates.
- The School will consider carrying out an online search of shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence. Candidates will be informed in advance that such searches may be undertaken.
- Online searches will be proportionate, based on publicly available information, recorded factually and handled in accordance with data protection and equality requirements. The School will give candidates an opportunity to respond to relevant concerns before a decision is made.

4.4 Interviews and selection

- Interview panels will use structured questions and record answers and decisions.
- Questions will explore motivation for working with children, relevant skills and experience, safeguarding understanding, professional boundaries and attitudes towards children.
- Panel members will probe employment gaps, frequent changes of employment/location and any concerns identified through references or due diligence.
- Potential safeguarding concerns include failure to recognise children's vulnerability, inappropriate attitudes towards children, inadequate understanding of adult/child boundaries and indicators of negative safeguarding behaviour.
- Where appropriate, shortlisted candidates may be observed interacting with pupils under suitable supervision.
- All information considered in reaching the appointment decision, including the rationale for the decision, will be recorded.

5. References

- The School will obtain and verify references as part of its safer recruitment process. Wherever possible, references should be obtained before interview so that concerns can be explored with the candidate.
- Open references, such as 'to whom it may concern', will not be accepted.
- References will be obtained directly from the referee and not supplied by the applicant.
- A reference will normally be sought from the current employer and completed by a senior person with appropriate authority. For a school/college referee, confirmation by the Headteacher/Principal will be sought regarding the accuracy of information about disciplinary investigations.
- Where the applicant is not currently employed, the School will seek verification of the most recent relevant employment.
- Where the applicant has previously worked with children but is not currently doing so, the School will seek a reference from the relevant employer from the last time they worked with children.

- The reason for leaving the current or most recent post will be established.
- References will be verified, including electronic references, which must originate from a legitimate source.
- Vague or insufficient references will be clarified directly with the referee.
- Application information will be compared with references and discrepancies will be investigated.
- References should confirm the referee's view of the applicant's suitability to work with children and include factual information about any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that meet the harm threshold.
- References should not include allegations or concerns that were found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious.

6. Conditional offer and pre-employment checks

All offers of appointment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks appropriate to the role. The School will not confirm an appointment until it is satisfied that the required checks have been completed or that a lawful, documented and appropriately controlled exception applies.

Check	Requirement	Recording
Identity	Identity must be verified, including awareness of previous names where relevant.	Record completion/date on SCR and retain required evidence on personnel file.
Enhanced DBS	Enhanced DBS check; include children's barred list information where the role is regulated activity.	Record required check and date on SCR. View original certificate.
Children's barred list	Separate check only where permitted and necessary, including certain cases where regulated activity begins before the DBS certificate is available.	Record check/date on SCR.
Mental/physical fitness	Verify fitness for the responsibilities of the role, where applicable.	Record outcome appropriately.
Right to work	Verify the candidate's right to work in the UK.	Record check/date and required evidence.
Overseas history	For anyone who has lived/worked outside the UK, undertake further appropriate checks so relevant overseas events are considered.	Record checks and any risk assessment.
Qualifications	Verify professional qualifications as appropriate; use DfE Check a teacher's record for QTS and teacher induction/probation where applicable.	Record required checks.

7. DBS and regulated activity

The School will determine the appropriate level of DBS check by reference to the actual duties of the role and the current legal definition of regulated activity. The School will not request children's barred list information unless the individual is engaging in or seeking to engage in regulated activity.

From 1 September 2026, the supervision exemption has been removed. Paid and unpaid work involving teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, can be regulated activity when undertaken frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight. Certain personal care and healthcare activities are regulated regardless of frequency.

- All staff employed by the School will require an enhanced DBS check including children's barred list information.
- Other contractors who have regular contact with children but are not engaging in regulated activity will generally require an enhanced DBS check without barred list information, where eligible.
- Barred list information must not be requested for people who are not engaging in or seeking regulated activity.
- The original DBS certificate must be viewed before the person takes up post or as soon as practicable afterwards.
- If an individual starts regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, the School will ensure all other checks are completed, appropriate supervision is in place and a separate children's barred list check is obtained where permitted and required.
- The School may use the DBS Update Service where the individual has consented and the original certificate has been checked and confirmed as appropriate for the role.

8. Overseas applicants and overseas history

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK will undergo the same UK pre-employment checks as other candidates, including an enhanced DBS check and children's barred list information where the role is regulated activity. The School will also make any further checks it considers appropriate to identify relevant events outside the UK.

- Where available, overseas criminal record checks will be obtained.
- For teaching roles, the School may obtain a letter from the relevant professional regulating authority confirming any sanctions/restrictions and any known reason the person may be unsuitable to teach.
- Where overseas information is unavailable, the School will seek alternative evidence and/or complete a documented risk assessment before deciding whether to proceed.

9. Teachers and management checks

- Before appointing someone to carry out teaching work, the School will check that they are not prohibited from teaching and will consider any relevant current sanctions or restrictions.
- DfE's Check a teacher's record will be used where appropriate to verify QTS, teacher induction/probation and prohibition, direction, restriction or sanction information.
- For an independent school, appropriate section 128 checks will be completed for individuals in management positions and for other persons where the law requires or the School considers it appropriate.

10. Childcare disqualification

As the School provides relevant childcare, including reception provision and wraparound care for children up to age 8, it will comply with the Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 and relevant DfE guidance. Appropriate checks will be undertaken for staff working in, or directly concerned with the management of, childcare provision.

11. Agency, supply and third-party staff

- The School will obtain written confirmation from an agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the checks the School would otherwise be required to undertake.
- For enhanced DBS checks, the written confirmation must confirm that the certificate has been obtained.
- Where an enhanced DBS certificate discloses information, the School will obtain a copy from the agency/organisation where KCSIE requires this.
- Where barred list information is required, the agency/third party must obtain the enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information before the individual is appointed to regulated activity.
- The School will check that the person presenting for work is the same person on whom the checks were made.

12. Contractors and self-employed workers

- Safeguarding requirements will be included in relevant contracts.

- Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS check including children's barred list information.
- Other contractors with an opportunity for regular contact with children will require an appropriate enhanced DBS check without barred list information where eligible.
- A contractor with no required checks must not work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity with children.
- The School will always check contractor identity on arrival.
- For self-employed individuals, the School will either obtain the DBS check or verify an appropriate existing certificate.

13. Trainee and student teachers

- For salaried trainees employed by the School, the School will complete all necessary checks, including an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
- For fee-funded trainees, the training provider is responsible for the checks. The School will obtain written confirmation that all checks required by KCSIE have been completed and that the trainee has been judged suitable to work with children.
- There is no requirement to record fee-funded trainees on the SCR, although the School may record them as non-statutory information.

14. Volunteers – important change from 1 September 2026

- The Crime and Policing Act 2026 changed the definition of regulated activity. From 1 September 2026, volunteers who teach, train, instruct or supervise children frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight are in regulated activity and require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
- Existing volunteers who became regulated activity volunteers on 1 September 2026 must have their children's barred list status checked.
- A standalone barred list check may be used in the circumstances permitted by KCSIE 2026.
- Occasional volunteers who are not in regulated activity will be subject to a written risk assessment and appropriate checks based on the role.
- No volunteer for whom required checks have not been obtained will be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.
- For volunteers not in regulated activity, the School may consider an enhanced DBS without barred list information or a basic DBS, depending on the circumstances.
- Risk assessments and the rationale for decisions about volunteer checks will be recorded.

15. Visitors

- The School will use professional judgement about whether visitors should be escorted or supervised.
- The School will not routinely request DBS or barred list checks from parents/carers and other ordinary visitors attending school events.
- Professional visitors will have their identity checked and the School will obtain assurance that appropriate checks have been completed by their employer, where applicable.
- External organisations and speakers will be assessed for suitability, safeguarding arrangements and age-appropriateness before engagement.

16. Single Central Record (SCR)

The School must maintain a Single Central Record of the required pre-appointment checks. For an independent school, this includes all staff, agency and third-party supply staff and members of the proprietor body as required by KCSIE 2026.

- Identity check.
- Standalone children's barred list check, where applicable.
- Enhanced DBS check, including children's barred list information where applicable.
- Prohibition from teaching check.
- Further checks undertaken because the individual has lived or worked outside the UK.

- Professional qualification checks where required.
- Right-to-work check.
- Section 128 checks for management positions in independent schools.
- For agency/third-party supply staff, written confirmation that the required checks have been completed, the date confirmation was received and relevant DBS certificate information where required.
- The SCR may also record non-statutory information such as volunteer/governor checks, safeguarding or safer recruitment training dates and the name of the person who completed each check.
- Individuals' details should be removed from the SCR once they no longer work at the School.

17. Retention, confidentiality and data protection

- Personnel and recruitment records will be stored securely with access restricted to those with a legitimate need to access them.
- Copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work and required qualifications will be retained on the personnel file in accordance with the School's retention schedule.
- The School does not need to retain DBS certificates to meet the SCR requirement.
- If a DBS certificate or criminal information is retained, there must be a valid reason and it should normally not be retained for longer than six months.
- The School will retain a record that vetting was completed, the result and the recruitment decision where appropriate.
- Records will be processed in accordance with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, as applicable.

18. Recruitment of ex-offenders

A criminal record will not automatically prevent appointment. The School will assess relevant information fairly and individually, taking account of the seriousness and relevance of the matter, how long ago it occurred, whether it forms part of a pattern, the circumstances and any explanation or evidence of changed circumstances. Any decision not to appoint because of criminal record information will be documented.

19. Safeguarding concerns identified during recruitment

Any safeguarding concern, allegation, discrepancy or information suggesting that a candidate may be unsuitable to work with children will be referred to the Headteacher and, where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The School will consider whether advice should be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), DBS, police, professional regulator or another relevant body.

Where the School decides not to appoint because a candidate is unsuitable to work with children, it will consider whether there is a legal duty to refer the individual to the DBS or another authority.

20. Records and audit

- Recruitment decisions, references, checks, risk assessments and relevant correspondence will be recorded and retained in accordance with the School's records management arrangements.
- The Headteacher or nominated senior leader will periodically audit the SCR and recruitment files to ensure that checks are complete, accurate and appropriately evidenced.
- Any missing or historic information will be addressed through a documented risk assessment and action plan rather than assumptions that the absence of a record means a check was completed.
- The School will review this policy at least annually and whenever statutory guidance or relevant legislation changes.

21. Key recruitment checklist

- Job description/person specification identifies safeguarding responsibilities and regulated activity.
- Advert states safeguarding commitment and checks.
- Application form and full employment history received.
- At least two-person shortlisting completed and recorded.
- Shortlisted candidate self-declaration completed.

- Online due-diligence search considered/completed and candidate informed.
- References obtained directly and verified.
- Structured interview completed with safeguarding questions.
- Conditional offer issued.
- Identity verified.
- Enhanced DBS / barred list check completed at the appropriate level.
- Right to work verified.
- Mental/physical fitness verified where applicable.
- Qualifications/QTS/induction verified where applicable.
- Overseas checks completed where applicable.
- Teaching prohibition and other relevant DfE checks completed.
- Section 128 check completed where applicable.
- Childcare disqualification check completed where applicable.
- Agency/third-party confirmations obtained where applicable.
- SCR updated before or as soon as practicable after appointment.
- Any risk assessment or exception documented and approved.

22. References and guidance

- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 – statutory guidance for schools and colleges, in force from 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended, including changes made by the Crime and Policing Act 2026.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, where applicable.
- School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, where applicable.
- Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2018 and relevant DfE guidance, where applicable.
- DBS guidance and Code of Practice.
- UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, as applicable.

Reviewed by Deborah Frost, September 2026