

South West Learning- Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory updates require, by the Directors and DSL.

Date Approved: September 2025

Date for Review: September 2026

Introduction and Purpose

The safe recruitment of staff, tutors, and contractors into South West Learning (SWL) is the first and most essential step in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people in our care. This policy applies to all SWL staff, contractors, volunteers, and agency workers, and should be read in conjunction with:

- The *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (2025)*
- The *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy*
- The *Children Acts 1989 and 2004*
- The *Care Act 2014*
- The *Equality Act 2010*.
- The statutory guidance: *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*

Statement of Intent

South West Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff, tutors, contractors, and volunteers to share this commitment.

We recognise that this can only be achieved through:

- Sound recruitment and vetting procedures
- Ongoing safeguarding and safer recruitment training
- Rigorous review and updating of our systems
- The selection and retention of competent, motivated, and trustworthy individuals

SWL values diversity and inclusion and actively seeks to employ individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. All recruitment and selection activities will be conducted in a manner that is systematic, transparent, and compliant with equality and safeguarding legislation.

Procedures

SWL will uphold its obligations under the *Equality Act 2010* to ensure that no applicant is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

This policy aligns with and complements SWL's Safeguarding, and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policies.

All staff and contractors are exempt from the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974* (Exceptions Order 1975) and are therefore required to declare both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, or bind-overs that are not protected under filtering rules.

All staff and contractors must hold a current Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate with barred list information.

SWL is committed to ensuring that people with previous convictions are treated fairly and are given the opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for work, in accordance with our safer recruitment principles. Having a criminal record will not automatically prevent an individual from being appointed; decisions are made on a case-by-case basis following a risk assessment.

Where concerns arise, SWL will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and statutory agencies as appropriate. The organisation has a legal duty to refer individuals to the DBS where they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child or vulnerable adult.

Safer Recruitment Training

All SWL staff involved in recruitment must complete:

- Level 2 Safeguarding Training (minimum)
- Safer Recruitment in Education Training (refreshed every 2 years)

Recruitment procedures and vetting checks will be implemented robustly to ensure that no person who is unsuitable, disqualified, or unqualified is appointed to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Recruitment and Vetting Procedures

South West Learning maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) of all recruitment and vetting checks in accordance with DfE and KCSIE requirements.

Only original or certified documents are accepted during the vetting process.

The following documents and evidence will be required as part of the recruitment process:

- A completed application form and/or up-to-date CV must be submitted.
- Applicants must explain any gaps or inconsistencies in employment or education history.
- Providing false or misleading information may result in rejection, dismissal, and/or referral to the police or relevant professional bodies.
- A minimum of two references must be obtained, covering at least the last two years (or twelve months for short-term contractors).

- One reference must be from the most recent employer or education provider.
- Where possible, at least one referee must comment on the applicant's experience working with children or vulnerable adults.
- References will be verified and followed up verbally and in writing.
- Photo identification and proof of address will be checked and copied.
- Right to Work documentation (e.g. passport, visa, or Home Office correspondence) will be verified in line with the *Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006*.
- All individuals must hold an Enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information.
- DBS certificates must be issued within the last 12 months or registered with the DBS Update Service.
- Online Update Service checks will be carried out before each engagement.
- Individuals who have lived or worked abroad for 6 months or more within the last five years must provide an overseas police check or certificate of good conduct.
- Where applicable, a letter of professional standing will be obtained from the relevant regulatory authority in the country of employment.
- All relevant qualifications will be verified (e.g. GCSEs, degrees, QTS, etc.).
- International qualifications will be compared using UK ENIC (formerly NARIC) where necessary.
- Where applicable, registration will be confirmed with relevant professional bodies (e.g. DfE, TRA, SET, EWC).
- Checks will be made to ensure teachers are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.
- Online checks are carried out for all shortlisted candidates in accordance with *KCSIE 2025* to identify any information that could pose a safeguarding or reputational risk.
- All staff and contractors are required to complete a medical fitness declaration to confirm their ability to perform the role safely.
- All individuals must confirm in writing that they are not disqualified from working with children as defined by the *Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018*.

Copies of all documentation are taken and securely stored on the individual's digital file. A photograph of the candidate will be taken for identification. Files will undergo a two-tier internal checking process by both directors before clearance for work. Periodic re-checks are carried out.

Induction and Ongoing Suitability

All staff, tutors, and volunteers must complete a full induction programme before commencing work. This includes:

- A face-to-face or virtual interview with a trained SWL representative.
- A safeguarding knowledge assessment, which must be passed to proceed with work.
- A full briefing on SWL policies including:
 - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2025
 - Safer Recruitment
 - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Code of Conduct

- Cyber Safety
- Whistleblowing and Complaints

All individuals must confirm they have read and understood Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025).

Monitoring and Feedback on Suitability

Once a tutor or staff member begins work, SWL obtains feedback from schools, local authorities, or parents after the first session and periodically thereafter.

If any concerns arise regarding conduct, competence, or safeguarding, these are addressed immediately by the DSL and Directors.

If a placement or engagement is ended due to unsuitability, or new information indicates that an individual poses a risk of harm, SWL will:

- End the engagement immediately
- Notify the client or placement provider
- Refer to the LADO and/or DBS as required

Vetting Summary Document

Upon request, schools, local authorities, or parents will be provided with a Vetting Summary Document confirming completion of all relevant recruitment and safeguarding checks for SWL staff or tutors.

Communicating this Policy

This policy is:

- Shared with all new staff, contractors, and tutors during induction.
- Circulated to partner schools, local authorities, and parents on request.
- Reviewed annually and reissued whenever statutory guidance changes.
- Available on request via info@southwestlearning.co.uk

Contact Details:

- South West Learning
- Email: info@southwestlearning.co.uk
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Emma Radford
- Deputy DSL: Eleanor Hoggett

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