



POLICY · SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

Safer Recruitment Policy

Reviewed 2024–2026

ABOUT THIS POLICY

How we recruit staff and volunteers safely, including DBS checks, references and probation. Required by Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The full policy follows from the next page.

We want every child to be curious, have big dreams and be prepared for an exciting future.

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Headteacher: Mrs Naomi Doble · Swiss Gardens Primary School, a maintained school in West Sussex

Swiss Gardens Primary School		
Policy:	Safer Recruitment	
Policy date:	October 2024	
Review date:	October 2026	
Person responsible	Headteacher & governing body	

This report was created by the school's Assistant Head for Inclusion and with the Safeguarding Governor in liaison with the school's Leadership Team and all staff.

Safeguarding: Safer Recruitment Policy

This Safer Recruitment policy forms an essential element of our safeguarding policies and procedures. In implementing this policy, staff must recognise the links between the Safer Recruitment Policy and other school policies and arrangements, including the Child Protection Policy and Complaints Policy.

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Recruitment, Vetting and Induction

Aims and Objectives

The Governing Body of Swiss Gardens Primary is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Safer Recruitment initiative is an essential part of the Every Child Matters Agenda. The latest government guidance emphasises that all organisations that work with children share a commitment to safeguard and promote their welfare and that all organisations that provide services or work with children should:

- Have a Leadership Team that is committed to children's well-being and safety;
- Be clear about people's responsibilities to safeguard and promote children's welfare;
- Have effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all new staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people;
- Have procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers;
- Make sure staff get training that helps them do their job well;
- Have procedures about how to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

Swiss Gardens Primary recognises that sometimes people who want to cause harm to children actively seek employment that provides them access to young people. Our recruitment, vetting and induction policy outlines Swiss Gardens Primary's procedures to protect pupils from coming into contact with people who may wish to cause them harm and should be read alongside other key safeguarding documents such as our child protection policy. The purposes of this policy are:

- To ensure Swiss Gardens Primary recruits and selects staff and volunteers of the
- highest calibre and quality;
- To have a clear and robust recruitment process that makes it clear that the
- To have comprehensive induction procedures for all adults who work in Swiss Gardens Primary, including safeguarding procedures;

Arrangements

Recruitment procedures:

The appointment of all employees at Swiss Gardens Primary will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, the Education Act 2002, Swiss Gardens Primary Staffing (England) Regulations 2003 and the statutory guidance, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Settings and Swiss Gardens Primary's equal opportunities policy.

The Governing Body will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential, regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or political belief or affiliation, trade union membership, age, gender, gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.

In the event that the Governing Body, in consultation with the Headteacher decide to make a new appointment of an Assistant or Senior member of staff the Staffing committee of the Governing Body will agree the job description and person specification for the post.

The Headteacher may decide to appoint internally for some posts after internal advertisement. In cases of internal advertisement the details will be posted, in writing, on the staff notice board giving at least 5 working days for applications to be made.

Inviting applications:

Recruitment exercise will be carefully planned to ensure sufficient time is allocated to the process so safeguarding processes are not overlooked.

The qualities, qualifications and experience needed for the post will be carefully considered but without making the selection criteria so tightly defined that exceptional candidates feel the post does not offer them the scope to further enhance their career.

Candidates' information packs will also highlight the Swiss Gardens Primary commitment to safeguarding children; they will be aimed at encouraging applications from those suitable for the post and deterring unsuitable candidates from applying. The pack should contain:

- Cover letter;
- Job description and person specification;

- Information about Swiss Gardens Primary;
- Child Protection policy;
- Equal opportunities statement;
- Guidance notes on completing the application;
- Standardised job application form;

This information will include details about the requirements for references and DBS check and a notice about the consequences of providing false information.

Application form

All applicants **MUST** complete the official application form - CV's will **NOT** be accepted in place of the application form. All applicants will be expected to provide, through the application process:

- Full details of names, former names, DOB, current address, NI number;
- Statement of academic/vocational qualifications;
- FULL history, in chronological order of education and employment;
- Details of referees (one of whom **MUST** be the current employer);
- Statement that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- A signed statement that the applicant is not on List 99;
- Have no convictions or cautions (if they do, details should be included in a sealed envelope).

Applicants for a teaching post must provide details of:

- DFE reference number;
- QTS status;

Shortlisting

All applications will be scrutinised and any gap will be noted. Incomplete application forms will be returned to the candidates for completion. Emailed application forms will be accepted but shortlisted applicants will be required to sign their application form at the interview. Any gaps or repeated changes in employment will be investigated.

Short-listing of candidates will be against the person specification for the post. All candidates will be assessed equally and short-listing will be a transparent process.

References

Wherever possible, references will be taken up before interview so any discrepancies can be probed during the interview. References must include one from the current employer if the applicant is currently working with children; if they are not currently working with children a reference should be obtained from previous employment involving children if these

are available. References or testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted. Candidates unwilling to agree to references from current employees will not normally be interviewed.

Referees will be sent with the job description and person specification in the post and references must be made on the standard Swiss Gardens Primary reference proforma which includes specific questions relating to any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving the safety and welfare of children or young people and any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant's suitability to work with children.

Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or email in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges. Where necessary previous employers who have not been named as referees will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. A detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Interview

Short-listed candidates will be called to invite them to interview and this will be followed up by a letter/email confirming:

- Date, time and location of the interview;
- Details of the interview panel;
- Details of any tasks needed as part of the process e.g. teaching.

Interviews will always be face-to-face. Telephone-interviews may be used at the short-listing stage where there is an exceptional overseas candidate but will be followed up by a face-to-face interview (which may be via visual electronic link in the last resort).

Candidates will always be required to:

- Explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information provided;
- To declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure;
- To demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

All applicants who are invited to interview will be asked to bring documentary proof of their identity and qualifications¹ in the letter inviting them to interview. This letter will also contain notice regarding the panel asking questions related to child protection matters during the interview. A copy of all documentation will be kept for the personnel file.

Involving Children and Young People

We are committed to involving children and young people in the recruitment and selection process where appropriate. This may be by lesson observation in school or group activities in school.

Conditional offer of Employment – pre-employment checks

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- The receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if those have not already been received – see below); the reference forms include specific questions to verify the suitability of candidates to work with children and vulnerable adults and to establish whether candidates have had any disciplinary offences relating to children. All references are verified by telephone.
- Verification of the candidate's identity (if that could not be verified at interview);
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS Disclosure Certificate;
- A separate barred list check for individuals who start work in regulated activity before the DBS Certificate is available (school based staff only);
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness;
- Verification of qualifications (if not verified at interview);
- Verification of professional status where required e.g. Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) (unless properly exempted);
- Verification of previous employment history and experience, including exploration of any gaps and anomalies;
- (For teaching posts) verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999);
- (For teaching posts) check the Prohibition Register (using Employer Access Online) and
- (For non-teaching posts) satisfactory completion of the probationary period.

NB In any case where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, the chair of the interview panel must ensure that it is received and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed.

All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing;
- Documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to relevant advice contained in the DBS Code of Practice and our own data protection arrangements); and
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies.

Post-Appointment: Induction

There is an induction programme for all staff newly appointed to our school, including teaching staff, regardless of previous experience. The purpose of induction is to:

- provide training and information about our policies and procedures;
- support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged;
- confirm the conduct expected of staff within the school;
- provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities; and
- enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.

The induction programme includes information and written statements of:

- policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare e.g. child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism, physical intervention or restraint, intimate care, internet safety and local child protection and safeguarding procedures – as referred to by the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB);
- safer working practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and children / young people at Swiss Gardens Primary school;
- how and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised; and
- other relevant personnel procedures e.g. disciplinary, capability and whistleblowing.

Child Protection induction training is provided by **Lawrence Caughlin who is Designated Lead for Child Protection.**

Vetting checks

All staff appointments to our school are subject to an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (a DBS certificate) in line with current legislation. This requirement also applies to all supply staff, volunteers and contractors (see 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' chapter 4.74 - 4.76 and the Protection of Freedoms act 2012 'regulated activity').

Additional checks are carried out for candidates who have lived outside the United Kingdom. Candidates are asked to provide the originals of Police or Judiciary documents showing that they do not have any convictions that would bar them from working with children and vulnerable adults.

We expect all staff to notify the Headteacher of any cautions or convictions accrued whilst in the employ of this school.

Types of checks

There are three types of DBS checks:

- **Standard:** this provides information about convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC), regardless or not of whether they are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The law allows for certain old and minor matters to be filtered out;
- **Enhanced:** This provides the same information as a standard check, plus any additional information held by the police which a chief officer reasonably believes to be relevant and considers ought to be disclosed; and
- **Enhanced with barred list check:** where people are working or seeking to work in regulated activity with children, this allows for an additional check to be made as to whether the person appears on the children's barred list.³⁴

When appointing new staff, schools must:

- verify a candidate's identity. Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website;
- obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity);
- obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available; verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
- verify the person's right to work in the UK. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then prospective employers, or volunteer managers, should follow advice on the GOV.UK website;
- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate;
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate; and
- Independent schools, including academies and free schools, check that a person taking up a management position as described at paragraph 99 is not subject to a section 128 direction made by the Secretary of State.

The Single Central Record

We keep a Single Central Record as described in DfE guidance. The Single Central Record includes all employees, supply staff, relevant consultants (those involved in regulated activity), trustees and volunteers. The central record must indicate whether or not the following have been completed:

- Identity checks;
- Barred list check (as relevant for those engaged in regulated activity);
- DBS certificate (previously an enhanced CRB disclosure);

- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the job, e.g. those posts where a person must have QTS;
- Prohibition from teaching check;
- Checks of permission to work in the United Kingdom and
- Further overseas criminal records checks where appropriate (see 'Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education' (DfES 2006) paragraphs 4.65 to 4.71 for advice on staff who have lived or worked outside the United Kingdom).

Reporting concerns

If any of the staff in school have concerns about safeguarding practices within the school they should:

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Appropriate whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably reflected in staff training and staff behaviour policies, are in place for such concerns to be raised with the school's senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

General guidance can be found at- Advice on whistleblowing

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email:

help@nspcc.org.uk

Supply Staff

We require supply agencies to comply with 'Safer Recruitment' practices and we seek written confirmation from each agency to this effect. We require the DBS certificate reference number for each agency worker in order that this can be recorded on the Single Central Record.

In addition, we seek to verify the identity of each agency worker when they arrive on site and these checks are also recorded.

Volunteers

We carry out DBS and pre-start vetting checks appropriate to the post (as above) and require regular volunteers to provide details of two referees. References are taken up, as detailed in this policy. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis (e.g. trips/PTA events) are supervised, in accordance with legislation.

Students on placement

When volunteers are working in school as part of a recognised training course (such as PGCE, NVQ etc.), references and completion of an application form will not be required. However, we will require proof of DBS enhanced clearance with barred list check and will carry out identity checks when the student arrives at school. We will also require students to complete the Staff Suitability Declaration if they are working within the EYFS.

Students on work experience

Students on work experience will always be supervised.

Contractors

We ensure that contractors, or any employee of the contractor, working at the school have been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check, if any such check is required. Contractors and contractors' employees for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children. If a contractor working at school is self-employed and will be in regulated activity, we will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account. We will check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

References and useful websites

Keeping Children Safe in Education, Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, DfE 2021

Disclosure & Barring service www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/
Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach of Teachers and Entrants to Initial Teacher Training, DfEE – Circular 4/99

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/guidanceonthelaw/6_99/circa148.htm

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DfES 2007)

Staffing Guidance Under Section 35(8) and 36(8) of the Education Act 2002:

www.governor.net.co.uk/linkAttachments/New%20Staffing%20Guidance.pdf

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Education (Independent School) Standards (England) Regulations, 2010

Safe Working Practice (DfES / AMA March 2009)

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

AMA	Allegations Management Advisers (no longer in existence)
CP	Child Protection
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau (2002-2012)
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
DBS	Disclosure and Disbarring Service (2012-present)
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007-2010)

DfE	Department for Education (2010-present)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (2001-2007)
HR	Human Resources
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SCB	Safeguarding Children Board
Regulated activity	Regulated activity includes: a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for (see (c) below) or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children, b) work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers; Work under (a) or (b) is regulated activity only if done regularly.²⁰ Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of their frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes: c) relevant personal care, or health care provided by or provided under the supervision of a health care professional: • personal care includes helping a child, for reasons of age, illness or disability, with eating or drinking, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing; • health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional. <i>Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE April 2014</i>

Appendix 1

Recruitment and Selection Checklist

Pre-Interview:	Initials	Date
PLANNING Timetable decided; job specification and description and other documents to be provided to candidate reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc. Establish the members of the recruitment panel and ensure they are involved in all stages of the recruitment process, including scrutinising application forms, shortlisting candidates, conducting the interviews and resolving any discrepancies and anomalies.		
VACANCY ADVERTISED Advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy, i.e. statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and need for successful applicant to be DBS checked.		
APPLICATIONS on receipt Scrutinised – any discrepancies/ anomalies/ gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for shortlisting.		
SHORTLIST PREPARED		

REFERENCES – seeking Sought directly from referee on short listed candidates: ask recommended specific questions: include statement about suitability of candidate for the post and of working with children and vulnerable adults.		
REFERENCES – on receipt Checked against information on application; scrutinised; any discrepancy/ issues of concern noted to take up with applicant (at interview if possible)/ referee.		
INVITATION TO INTERVIEW Includes all relevant information and instructions.		
INTERVIEW ARRANGEMENTS At least 2 interviewers: panel members have authority to appoint: have met and agreed issues and questions/ assessment criteria/ standards.		

INTERVIEW & POST-INTERVIEW: (Please refer to the Swiss Gardens Safer Recruitment Policy)	Initials	Date
SUITABILITY FOR THE POST Interview explores applicant's qualifications, knowledge and skills, aptitude and ability, as well as suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults.		
IDENTITY Identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents: copies of documents taken and placed on file; where appropriate, applicant completed application for DBS Disclosure.		
PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT AND EXPERIENCE Interview explores applicant's previous employment and experience in order to verify claims on application form.		
CONDITIONAL OFFER OF APPOINTMENT: PRE APPOINTMENT CHECKS Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks and for non-teaching posts a probationary period.		
REFERENCES (if not obtained and scrutinised previously).		
IDENTITY (if that could not be verified on the day of the interview).		

QUALIFICATIONS (if not verified on the day of interview)		
Permissions to work in UK, if appropriate		
Criminal check – satisfactory DBS certificate receive		
Prohibition Register – (for teachers).		
DBS Barred list check – (for regulated activity).		
HEALTH – the candidate is physically and mentally fit, as required by the post.		
QTS – (if required)		
INDUCTION – Child Protection training completed - basic awareness of H&S, e-safety, staff code of conduct, etc.		

Appendix 2

Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information

General Principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Swiss Gardens Primary complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1995 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and Access

Disclosure information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been

revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Appendix 3

Swiss Gardens Primary School Staff Suitability Declaration

This form is to be completed by all new staff when they commence employment AND by all staff when requested.

Name of employee:

Current Role in school:

Please answer the questions and sign the declaration on the reverse of this form. If there are any aspects of the declaration that you are not able to meet, please disclose this immediately to the Headteacher.

Please circle Yes or No against each question:

Have you ever been cautioned for, or convicted of, offences against children or adults?	Yes/No
Have your own children ever been taken into care or the subject of a Child Protection	
Do you have any medical conditions that could affect your ability to care for children?	
Are you taking any medication or any other substances on a regular basis?	

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If you have answered **YES** to any of these questions, please provide further information below:

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(Please note that you may be required to provide further information).

I understand my responsibility to safeguard children and am aware that I must notify the Headteacher of anything that may affect my suitability.

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, I do not live in the same household as an individual who has been barred or disqualified from working with children. I also confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, I do not live in a household which employs someone who is barred or disqualified from working with children.

I will notify the Headteacher immediately of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings I may receive.

I am aware that if I am taking medication on a regular basis I must notify the Headteacher and must keep the medication in a safe place, out of the reach of children.

I will notify the Headteacher immediately if I experience any health concerns which could impact upon my ability to work with children.

Where necessary, I give my permission for you to contact any previous settings, Local Authority staff, the police, the DBS or any medical professionals to share information about my suitability to care for children.

Signed: Date:

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FOR HEADTEACHER'S USE

Record of any follow-on action taken, where relevant:

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Headteacher's signature: Date: