WINDERMERE SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1863

Recruitment Policy 2025-2026

Review period: Annual
Responsible staff: Head / Director of Operations / Head of Junior School (with EYFS responsibility)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Windermere School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. As an employer, Windermere Educational Trust Limited expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1.2 The School operates in accordance with the following statutory and regulatory guidance:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSIE, September 2024)
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children*
- *EYFS Statutory Framework (2024)*
- *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006: Statutory Guidance* (updated 2018)
- *Equality Act 2010*
- *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended)*
- *Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR*

1.3 We are committed to equality of opportunity and the fair treatment of all applicants and employees. Recruitment processes are conducted in a way that promotes diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity.

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2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that our recruitment procedures:

- deter, reject, or identify people who are unsuitable to work with children,
- comply with statutory safeguarding and equality requirements,

- ensure consistent, fair, and transparent processes, and
- secure the best possible staff for the benefit of our pupils.

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3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 **The Governing Body** is responsible for:

- ensuring effective policies and procedures are in place for recruitment,
- monitoring compliance with safer recruitment legislation.

3.2 **The Head and Director of Operations** are responsible for:

- ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed,
- confirming all pre-employment checks are completed,
- monitoring compliance of contractors and supply agencies,
- promoting a safeguarding culture throughout recruitment.

3.3 At least one member of every recruitment panel will have current Safer Recruitment training (refreshed at least every 5 years).

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4. Recruitment and Vetting Checks

4.1 The following checks are carried out for all employees, volunteers, contractors and supply staff before appointment, with details recorded on the **Single Central Record (SCR)**:

- Verification of identity
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (including children's barred list check where appropriate)
- Overseas criminal records checks (for individuals who have lived or worked abroad in the last 5 years)
- Right to work in the UK check
- Verification of professional qualifications and QTS status (where relevant)
- Check of prohibition orders (teachers)
- Check of Section 128 directions (management positions in independent schools)

- Verification of medical fitness (post-offer, with reasonable adjustments as required under the Equality Act 2010)
- References from at least two appropriate referees, including the most recent employer, commenting on suitability to work with children

4.2 CVs alone will not be accepted. All candidates must complete the School's application form in full.

4.3 Where a DBS certificate is delayed, a risk assessment will be completed before any individual begins work, and appropriate supervision arrangements put in place.

4.4 Staff are required to inform the Head/Director of Operations immediately of any cautions, convictions or changes in circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children.

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5. References

5.1 References will be sought for all shortlisted candidates prior to interview. Open references or testimonials will not be accepted.

5.2 Referees will be asked specifically about the candidate's suitability to work with children. Any discrepancies will be explored with both referee and candidate.

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6. Applications, Shortlisting and Interviews

6.1 Application packs will include:

- Job description
- Person specification (including safeguarding responsibilities)
- Application form
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement
- Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders
- Guidance notes for applicants

6.2 Shortlisting decisions will be made by at least two people. Any anomalies or gaps in employment will be explored during the recruitment process.

6.3 As part of due diligence, the School may carry out a proportionate **online search** for shortlisted candidates to identify publicly available information relevant to safeguarding suitability. This will be conducted in line with UK GDPR.

6.4 Interviews will always be conducted in person unless exceptional circumstances apply. Interview panels will assess:

- motivation and suitability to work with children,
- attitudes towards safeguarding and child protection,
- ability to fulfil the requirements of the role.

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7. Conditional Offers and Pre-Employment Checks

7.1 All offers of employment are conditional on satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks. Appointment letters will set out any outstanding requirements.

7.2 Contracts of employment will be issued before or on the first day of employment.

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8. Induction and Training

8.1 All new staff will complete induction training, including:

- safeguarding and child protection (with the DSL),
- whistleblowing and safer working practice,
- school policies and procedures.

8.2 Safeguarding training is refreshed annually, with updates provided as required.

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9. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

9.1 For staff working in the EYFS or childcare for children under 8, additional checks will be undertaken to ensure compliance with the **Childcare Act 2006** and **EYFS Statutory Framework**.

9.2 Ofsted will be informed of any changes to the person responsible for Early Years provision.

9.3 Annual “disqualification by association” declarations are no longer required. However, staff must disclose any circumstances that may impact their suitability under the disqualification criteria.

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10. Students on Placement

10.1 Students on placement will be subject to appropriate suitability checks, including a DBS where required.

10.2 Students are not included in staffing ratios and will always work under supervision.

10.3 Students receive induction in safeguarding, confidentiality, and health and safety before commencing placement.

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11. Data Protection

11.1 Recruitment data will be processed in line with the **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR**.

11.2 Information on unsuccessful candidates will be retained securely for no longer than 12 months, after which it will be securely destroyed.

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12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 The Head will review recruitment processes annually and inform the governing body to ensure compliance with statutory guidance and safer recruitment best practice.

Recruitment Summary – Safer Recruitment at Windermere School

Windermere School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post.

Our Commitments

- Recruitment processes comply with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2024)**, the **Equality Act 2010**, the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order)**, and **UK GDPR**.
- We treat all applicants fairly and make reasonable adjustments for candidates with disabilities.
- All appointments are made on merit, in line with our values of inclusion and safeguarding.

Pre-Employment Checks

Before appointment, all staff, volunteers and contractors must complete:

- Enhanced **DBS check** (with barred list check where appropriate)
- Verification of **identity** and **right to work in the UK**
- **References** from at least two referees, including the most recent employer, commenting on suitability to work with children
- Verification of **employment history** and explanation of any gaps
- Checks of **qualifications**, **teaching prohibition orders** (if relevant), and **Section 128 directions** (for management roles)
- Overseas checks where applicants have lived or worked abroad in the last 5 years
- Medical fitness declaration (post-offer, with adjustments made where needed)

Safer Recruitment Practices

- CVs alone are not accepted – applicants must complete the School's application form.
- References are sought before interview and verified.
- Interview panels test safeguarding knowledge, attitudes, and values.
- Online checks may be carried out on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence.
- Conditional offers are made subject to all checks being satisfactorily completed.

Induction and Training

- All new staff undertake safeguarding induction with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- Ongoing annual safeguarding training is provided to all staff.

Safeguarding Statement for Adverts

“Windermere School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.”