

MINDS LEAD ALTERNATIVE PROVISION – SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Authors:

Katie Leivers (Head of Provision, DSL)

Policy Created: January 2026

Policy Review: January 2027

Statement of Intent

Minds Lead recognises that safeguarding and child protection are at the core of all educational provision. Recruiting the right staff is fundamental to maintaining a safe environment where students can learn, grow, and achieve.

This policy outlines the framework through which we ensure that all recruitment and selection practices reflect our duty to safeguard young people.

Our commitment is to:

- Recruit and retain staff who share our values and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Apply rigorous vetting and checking processes to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with young people.
- Provide training and supervision so that all staff understand their safeguarding duties.
- Ensure compliance with current legislation and statutory guidance in relation to safer recruitment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**, the **Staff Code of Conduct**, and relevant statutory guidance.

1. Introduction

Minds Lead is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people and expects all staff, volunteers, and external agencies to share this commitment.

This Safer Recruitment and Staff Selection Policy ensures that our recruitment procedures meet the highest safeguarding standards to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with students in our provision.

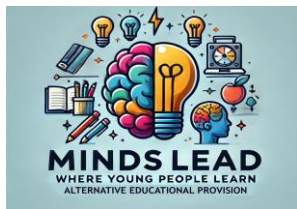
Our recruitment processes are aligned with safer recruitment practices, ensuring all staff are appropriately vetted, trained, and monitored.

This policy is in strict accordance with statutory legislation and safeguarding guidance, ensuring compliance with UK employment laws and safeguarding requirements.

Minds Lead leaders, including the Head of Provision, Katie Leivers, and other provision leaders, have completed the National College Safer Recruitment Training and are committed to renewing this training annually to maintain the highest safeguarding standards.

2. Legal Framework and Statutory Guidance

Minds Lead fully complies with the following legislation and guidance on safer recruitment:



- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018 & GDPR (updated 2022)
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Prevent Duty (2015)

Outcome:

Minds Lead ensures all recruitment and vetting processes protect young people and prevent unsuitable individuals from gaining access to children.

3. Safer Recruitment Process

Minds Lead follows a robust seven-stage recruitment process to ensure the highest safeguarding standards.

Stage 1: Pre-Recruitment Checks and Job Advertisement

- Job descriptions clearly outline safeguarding responsibilities.
- All advertisements include our commitment to safer recruitment.
- All applicants must complete a Safer Recruitment Application Form (CVs alone are not accepted).

Stage 2: Application Stage

Candidates must provide:

- Full employment history with explanations for any gaps.
- Relevant qualifications and training certificates.
- Two professional references, one from the most recent employer.
- A declaration of any past convictions, cautions, or disciplinary actions.

Stage 3: Shortlisting and Interview Process

- Candidates are shortlisted against essential safeguarding criteria.
- Shortlisted candidates must provide:
 - Photographic ID (passport or driving licence).
 - Proof of right to work in the UK.
 - Original copies of qualifications and training.

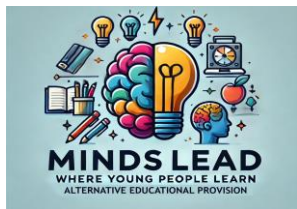
Minds Lead leaders have conducted Safer Recruitment training and will lead throughout the recruitment process.

- Interview questions assess safeguarding knowledge, professional competence, and values.
- Young people may be involved in the selection process through student-led discussions or observation.
- Gaps in employment and anomalies in references are explored.

Stage 4: Reference Checks

- A minimum of two references are obtained, including one from the most recent employer.
- References must confirm:





- The candidate's suitability to work with young people.
- Any safeguarding concerns or disciplinary issues.
- Verbal follow-ups are conducted for all references.

Stage 5: Enhanced DBS and Vetting Checks

- Enhanced DBS Checks are required for all staff.
- Checks include the Children's Barred List for any disqualifications from working with children.
- If a candidate has lived outside the UK, overseas police checks are required.
- A DBS update service is used to monitor ongoing staff suitability.
- Staff cannot start work without a satisfactory DBS check unless supervised at all times.

Stage 6: Conditional Offer and Pre-Employment Checks

A formal offer of employment is made subject to:

- Satisfactory DBS clearance.
 - Verified references.
 - Medical fitness confirmation.
 - Signed staff declaration of safeguarding responsibilities.
- New staff are on probation for six months, with performance reviews at three and six months.

Stage 7: Induction and Ongoing Training

New staff receive safeguarding and safer working practice training before starting.

Mandatory training includes:

- Level 3 Safeguarding Training (KCSIE 2025).
 - CSE/CCE and FGM awareness
 - Lone Working and Student Supervision Training.
 - Health and Safety, Fire Safety, and First Aid Procedures.
 - Prevent Duty and Online Safety Training.
 - Annual Safer Recruitment Training for all senior leaders.
- All staff receive ongoing safeguarding updates and supervision throughout employment.

4. Use of Agency Staff and External Contractors

Agency Workers

Agencies must provide written confirmation of:

- Enhanced DBS Check (including Children's Barred List check).
- Safeguarding Training (KCSIE 2025).
- Right to work in the UK.

Agency staff must present ID and proof of vetting checks before starting.

External Contractors and Visitors

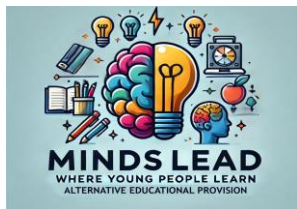
- Contractors working on-site must be supervised at all times.
- Visitors and maintenance workers do not require DBS checks but will never be left alone with students.

5. Lone Working and Staff Ratios

Staff-to-Student Ratios

- Two staff members must always support a group of students.





- Small ratios: Maximum of five students per staff member.

Lone Working Policy

If a staff member must work alone (e.g., early opening or late closing):

- Doors must remain open where possible.
- Staff must remain under CCTV coverage at all times.
- A designated senior leader must be aware of their presence.
No staff member should ever be alone with a student without another staff member nearby.

6. Monitoring and Continuous Quality Assurance

To maintain the highest recruitment and safeguarding standards, Minds Lead conducts:

- Annual Safeguarding Audits – ensuring full compliance with safer recruitment and staff supervision requirements.
- Regular Review of DBS and Staff Records – ensuring all vetting documentation remains up to date.
- Commissioner and External Feedback – incorporating feedback from commissioning schools and safeguarding partners.
- Safer Recruitment Training – mandatory for all hiring managers and senior leaders, including the Head of Provision.

7. Managing Positive DBS Disclosures and Allegations Against Staff

Positive DBS Disclosures


Minds Lead recognises that a positive DBS disclosure does not automatically prevent an individual from employment. Each disclosure will be carefully and sensitively assessed in line with safeguarding guidance and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exceptions) Order 1975.

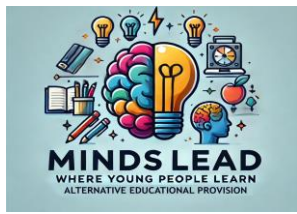
Process:

- The Head of Provision and DSL will review all positive disclosures in confidence before any employment decision is made.
- Consideration will be given to:
 - The nature, seriousness, and relevance of the offence or information disclosed.
 - The time elapsed since the offence occurred.
 - Whether the offence was isolated or part of a pattern of behaviour.
 - The individual's age at the time of the offence.
 - Any mitigating circumstances or evidence of rehabilitation.
- Where necessary, additional information may be sought from the applicant, the DBS, or relevant authorities.
- A written risk assessment will be completed and recorded by the DSL and retained securely on the individual's personnel file.
- Decisions regarding employment following a positive DBS will be made jointly by the Head of Provision, DSL, and Director.
- If the offence indicates potential risk to children or young people, the application will be withdrawn immediately.

8. Review and Policy Updates

Minds Lead reviews and updates this policy annually to reflect changes in:





- Legislation and statutory guidance.
 - DBS and safeguarding requirements.
 - Best practice recommendations from Ofsted and local safeguarding partnerships.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Director and the Safeguarding Lead to ensure continued compliance with safer recruitment requirements.

9. Conclusion

Minds Lead is committed to ensuring a robust safer recruitment process that protects students and staff. By applying thorough vetting, supervision, and training measures, we maintain a safe and supportive learning environment.

This policy is aligned with national safeguarding standards and statutory requirements and will be reviewed annually

