

West
London
School of
Dance

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Introduction

In line with the School's statutory duties under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Crime and Policing Act 2026, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026), the Prevent duty, and data protection laws (the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025), the School carries out the required checks on staff, supply staff, trainee teachers, contractors, volunteers and others working in or on behalf of the School.

This policy does not form part of any employee's terms and conditions of employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. It is provided for guidance to all members of staff at the school who are required to familiarise themselves and comply with its contents. The school reserves the right to amend its content at any time.

Aims of this Policy

The aims of the School's Safeguarding in Recruitment Policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is an integral factor at each stage of the recruitment and selection process;
- to adopt a safer recruitment process, which helps to promote a safe culture and complements other 'safety' elements such as health and safety and School security;
- to attract and recruit suitably skilled and motivated staff to help raise standards and reduce the risk to children and young people;
- to ensure that those that are responsible for each stage of the recruitment process demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all applicants;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant statutory requirements and guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice;
- to ensure that the School meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Those involved in recruiting and employing people to work with children must receive appropriate safer recruitment training. Its substance must, as a minimum, cover Part Three of KCSIE 2026. At least one member of every interview panel will have completed appropriate safer recruitment training.

The measures in this policy apply to all staff employed or engaged by the School and, as relevant to their role, to supply staff, trainee teachers, contractors and their employees, self-employed people, volunteers, trustees and professional visitors.

Personal Data – Single Central Record

The School maintains a single central record (SCR) of the required recruitment and vetting checks for all staff, including teacher trainees on salaried routes, and the required written confirmations for agency and third-party staff.

The SCR records whether each required check has been carried out or certificate obtained and the date completed, including identity, enhanced DBS and children's barred list information where applicable, , further overseas checks, professional qualifications, right to work in the UK. For supply staff, it records the date written confirmation of checks was received and whether enhanced DBS certificate information was provided.

Equal Opportunities

Fairness in how we recruit and select our staff plays a significant part in creating an equal opportunities environment. Our aim is that every internal and external applicant who applies for a position within the School is considered against criteria, which relates only to the requirements of the job. The school has an equal opportunities and Equal and Diversity policy that supports fair practice.

The Recruitment and Selection Procedure - Prior to the Recruitment Process

Documents confirming Identification

In accordance with KCSIE 2026, the School carries out the appropriate pre-employment checks on all prospective employees and obtains the required assurances and checks for other adults working in or on behalf of the School.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity:

- Passport or if unavailable a current driving licence (including photograph) and birth certificate;
 - two utility bills or statements (from different sources) less than three months old showing their name and home address;
 - documentation confirming their National Insurance number (P45, P60 or National Insurance card); and
 - documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their Application Form.
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK.

These identification documents will also be sufficient to enable a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be carried out (see below).

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change. In all cases original documents (not photocopies) must be provided.

Original documentation in respect of any specific qualifications relevant to the post (e.g. academic qualifications, vocational qualification such as the QTS or in relation to a specific subject field, First Aid or Food Hygiene) that has been entered on the application will also be required.

In the case of teaching staff and many support staff roles, references will have been sought prior to an interview and in other cases shortly thereafter. This applies to all internal applicants as well as external applicants.

School appointments are always subject to receipt of satisfactory references and satisfactory screening and vetting.

Advertising

Adverts for vacancies will demonstrate the School's commitment to safeguarding in recruitment and vetting procedures, protecting every potential applicant from unfair practice and ultimately safeguarding children as much as possible. Promoting commitment to safeguarding and child protection can act as a deterrent to would-be abusers. Thought will be given to wording, pictures and images used to ensure that they could not be considered discriminatory.

The following information will usually be included in the advert:

- name of School
- post title
- hours of work
- grade or scale
- salary (actual salary for part time)
- permanent or fixed term (starting duration if fixed term).
- brief details of the role, the skills, abilities, experience, attitude and behaviours required, and the safeguarding responsibilities, including the extent of contact with children and whether the role involves regulated activity;
- confirmation that safeguarding checks will be undertaken, the appropriate level of DBS check, including children's barred list information where the role is regulated activity, and whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- contact details
- closing date

Job Descriptions & Person Specification

Job descriptions and person specifications will define the purpose, duties and responsibilities of the post and the skills, abilities, experience, attitude, behaviours and qualifications required. They will identify the safeguarding responsibilities, the extent of contact with children and whether the role involves regulated activity.

The level of DBS check will be determined by the duties of the role. Most School staff will be in regulated activity and will require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. Other adults with an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS check without barred list information. Barred list information will not be requested unless the individual is engaging in, or seeking to engage in, regulated activity.

Application Pack

The importance of safeguarding and protecting children at the School will be promoted throughout the recruitment process in order to deter unsuitable candidates.

The School's application pack will include or link to the application form, job description and person specification, information about the School, the Equal Opportunities Policy, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and practices, the policy on employing ex-offenders, information about the appropriate DBS check and data privacy information. Where a role involves regulated activity,

applicants will be told that it is an offence for a barred person to apply. A curriculum vitae will be accepted only alongside a completed application form. The application form will require current and former names, address and National Insurance number; present or last employment and reason for leaving; a full history since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work with reasons for gaps; qualifications; referees; and evidence of suitability for the post.

During the Recruitment Process

Interview

The interview will assess each candidate against the job requirements and explore their suitability to work with children. Interviews will normally be face to face; video conferencing may be used only in exceptional circumstances. Structured questions will explore motivation for working with children, relevant skills and experience, employment gaps or frequent changes, understanding of children's vulnerability and professional boundaries, and any indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours. All information considered and decisions made will be clearly recorded.

Interviews Conducted by Video Conference:

In exceptional circumstances, interviews via video conferencing may take place. Such interviews should not be recorded or stored. The interviewee should be informed of this in the invitation to interview. Candidates will be sent a request for ID (including photo ID) prior to the video interview to ensure that the person who is applying is the person who is interviewed.

English Fluency

Employees working in any role that requires them to communicate with students, parents, guardians, staff and / or members of the community, must be able to speak fluent English to enable the effective performance of the role and to ensure that they are able to abide by their safeguarding responsibilities. The fluency duty does not create a higher standard than already required for Teachers at the School who are already annually appraised against the Teachers Standards.

Conditional Offer of Employment

All offers of appointment will remain conditional until the School has satisfactorily completed all mandatory pre-employment checks appropriate to the role, including:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references;
- an enhanced DBS certificate obtained via the applicant, including children's barred list information where the role is regulated activity; where an appointee has lived or worked outside the UK, any further checks the School considers appropriate so that relevant events occurring outside the UK can be considered;
- where the individual will start regulated activity before the enhanced DBS certificate is available, a separate children's barred list check, together with completion of all other relevant checks and a written risk assessment;
- Overseas checks if applicable
- verification, after a conditional offer, of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out the responsibilities of the role, with reasonable adjustments considered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010;

any additional check the School considers appropriate for a person who has lived or worked outside the UK, including, where relevant, a criminal records check or certificate of good conduct and a letter of professional standing from the overseas professional regulating authority;

verification of the candidate's identity;

verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK.

The School will record the checks required by KCSIE 2026 on the SCR and retain supporting documents in accordance with statutory requirements, the DBS Code of Practice and data protection laws.

The School will make referrals to the police, DBS, Teaching Regulation Agency and/or other relevant bodies where the applicable legal threshold or reporting duty is met, including where:

the DBS disclosure shows that an applicant has been disqualified from working with children;

an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, their application; or

there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children gained from other legitimate information sources (e.g. references).

Pre-employment Checks

References

The purpose of obtaining references is to secure objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. References should be obtained before interview where possible so that concerns can be explored with the referee and candidate.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which the School deems satisfactory, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

References must be obtained directly from the referee, verified with the person who provided them and, where electronic, checked as originating from a legitimate source. A reference from a school or college must be completed by a senior person with appropriate authority and confirmed by the headteacher or principal as accurate in respect of disciplinary investigations. Referees will be asked whether they are satisfied that the applicant is suitable to work with children and to provide factual information relevant to the post.

the applicant's dates of employment, job title and duties, performance, reason for leaving and any matters relevant to their suitability for the role;

the facts of any substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations that met the harm threshold, including relevant disciplinary findings;

References must not include safeguarding concerns or allegations that were unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, or low-level concerns unless they relate to matters that would normally be included in an employment reference.

The School will not accept open references, references addressed 'to whom it may concern', references or testimonials supplied by the applicant, or a reference from a person without appropriate authority.

The School will compare references with the application form, verify information with the referee, clarify vague or insufficient content, establish the reason for leaving the current or most recent post, and resolve discrepancies or concerns satisfactorily before confirming appointment.

As part of shortlisting due diligence, the School will consider carrying out an online search-engine search for publicly available information about shortlisted candidates that may need to be explored at interview. Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be undertaken. Searches will be proportionate, relevant to safeguarding and conducted in accordance with data protection laws, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010; the School will not routinely demand access to private social-media accounts or apply an arbitrary two-year search period.

Criminal Record Check

The School will obtain the level of criminal record certificate permitted and required for the role. Where a person will engage in regulated activity with children, this will be an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. For other eligible roles with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check without barred list information will be appropriate.

Regulated activity includes paid or unpaid work involving teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, providing advice or guidance on their physical, emotional or educational wellbeing, or driving a vehicle only for children, where it is carried out frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period or overnight. It also includes other frequent work in a specified establishment, such as a school, that provides an opportunity for contact with children, and specified personal care or healthcare even if carried out only once. The former supervision exemption has been removed: supervision does not prevent otherwise qualifying teaching, training, instructing or supervising activity from being regulated activity.

An enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information will reveal whether the individual is barred from regulated activity with children. The School will not request barred list information for a person who is not engaging in, or seeking to engage in, regulated activity.

For applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK, the School will make any further checks it considers appropriate so that relevant events occurring outside the UK can be considered. These may include overseas criminal record information and, for teaching roles, a letter of professional standing from the relevant overseas authority. The absence of overseas information will not prevent the School from making a documented, evidence-based risk decision.

An Enhanced Check may also contain non-conviction information from local police records and/or protected information (as defined above) which the police consider may be relevant to the work the individual will be undertaking.

If an enhanced DBS certificate is delayed, a person may start regulated activity only where the School has obtained a separate children's barred list check, completed all other relevant checks and undertaken a written risk assessment. Any safeguards, including the level of supervision, will be specified in the risk assessment and reviewed at least every two weeks until the certificate is received. This provision must not be used to treat supervised activity as outside regulated activity.

Supply Staff, Contractors, Trainee Teachers, Professional Visitors and Volunteers

For agency, supply and third-party staff, the School must receive written notification before the person starts that the organisation has completed the checks the School would otherwise carry out, has obtained the appropriate certificates, and has obtained an enhanced DBS certificate with children's barred list information where the role is regulated activity. The confirmation and its date will be recorded on the SCR. If the written notification states that the enhanced DBS certificate disclosed information, the School will obtain a copy from the agency. The School will check that the person presenting for work is the person on whom the checks were made.

Contractual arrangements will state the School's safeguarding requirements. Every contractor or contractor's employee will have the DBS check appropriate to the work: an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information for regulated activity; an enhanced DBS check without barred list information where the work is not regulated activity but provides an opportunity for regular contact with children; or, where there is no opportunity for regular contact, a basic DBS check where the School decides this is appropriate. A contractor without the required checks must never work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity. For a self-employed person, the School will obtain the appropriate check or inspect an eligible certificate and ensure that it is at the required level. Identity will always be checked on arrival.

Professional visitors and visiting practitioners will have their identity checked and the School will be assured that they have had the DBS check appropriate to the activity, either directly or through written confirmation from their employer; the School should not ask to see the certificate where the employer has provided that assurance. A professional visitor undertaking teaching, training, instructing or supervising children frequently, on more than three days in a 30-day period or overnight is in regulated activity and requires an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information; supervision cannot be used as an exemption. Salaried trainee teachers will undergo all relevant checks, including the enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. For fee-funded trainees, the School will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that all required checks have been completed and the trainee is suitable to work with children. Regular or overnight volunteers whose role meets the regulated-activity conditions require an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information. Existing volunteers who become regulated activity from 1 September 2026 must have their barred-list status checked. For volunteers not in regulated activity, the School will complete and record a written risk assessment to decide whether an enhanced DBS check without barred list information, a basic DBS check or no DBS check is appropriate. A volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained must never be left unsupervised or allowed to undertake regulated activity.

Suitability declaration form (disqualification)

Where the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 apply, including relevant childcare for children aged five and under and wraparound care for children under eight, the School will ensure that staff working in, or directly concerned with managing, that provision are not disqualified. Staff will be informed of their duty to disclose relevant information.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure

The School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically debar him/her from

employment within the School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria.

Where a role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check, applicants must disclose convictions and cautions that are not protected under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, as amended. Protected convictions and cautions must not be disclosed or taken into account. Failure to disclose information that the applicant is legally required to disclose may result in withdrawal of an offer or disciplinary action.

The School must not permit a person who is barred from regulated activity with children to engage in that activity. A person subject to a teaching prohibition must not be appointed to teaching work, and a person subject to a section 128 direction must not take part in management of the independent School.

It is a criminal offence for a barred person to seek to engage in regulated activity from which they are barred. If:

- the School receives an application from a disqualified person;
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- the School has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, it will consider and make any required referral to the police, DBS, Teaching Regulation Agency and/or other relevant body.

Assessment Criteria

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the School will consider the following factors before reaching a recruitment decision:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question;
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed;
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred;
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters;
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters; and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

If the post involves regular contact with children, it is the School's normal policy to consider it high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of any the following offences:

- against adults: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm or other serious acts of violence;
- against children or adults: serious class A drug-related offences, robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves access to money or budget responsibility, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted at any time of robbery, burglary, theft, deception or fraud.

If the post involves some driving responsibilities, it is the School's normal policy to consider it a high risk to employ anyone who has been convicted of drink driving within the last 10 years.

Assessment Procedure

Where relevant information is disclosed by an applicant or obtained through checks, the School will complete a documented risk assessment against the criteria above. The recruitment decision and its rationale must be approved by the Directors before appointment and recorded clearly.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a Disclosure, they can do so by contacting the DBS directly. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the School will, where practicable, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the Disclosure information.

Retention and Security of Disclosure Information

The School will comply with the DBS Code of Practice and data protection laws when using, storing, retaining and destroying DBS information.

In particular, the School will:

- store any retained DBS certificate or criminal record information securely, with access limited to those who need it for their duties;
- retain a copy of a DBS certificate only where there is a valid reason and normally for no longer than six months. The School may retain a record that the check was carried out, its result and the recruitment decision, together with the information required on the SCR;
- ensure that any Disclosure information is destroyed by suitably secure means such as shredding; and
- destroy DBS information securely when it is no longer required and prevent unauthorised copying, scanning, use or disclosure;

The School complies with the provisions of the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on request.

Retention of Records

If an applicant is appointed, the School will retain any relevant information provided on their application form (together with any attachments) on their personnel file. This file will be stored by the School for up to 6 years following termination of employment.

If the application is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will normally be confidentially destroyed after 6 months, unless the applicant specifically requests the School to keep their details on file.

Revised date: September 2026
Review Schedule: 1 year
Next review date: September 2027