

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

The Haven – Safer Recruitment and Use of Volunteers Policy

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1. Policy Statement and Purpose

The Haven is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all learners. Safer recruitment is central to this duty. We ensure that all staff, contractors, volunteers, governors, and agency workers are suitable to work with children and that our recruitment practices deter, identify, and reject individuals who may pose a risk.

Our recruitment practices are designed to:

- Create a safe environment: fully meet the requirements of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**. The Haven is not a DfE-registered independent school, so the Independent School Standards do not apply to it; where this policy meets or exceeds that benchmark, it does so deliberately rather than as a matter of legal obligation.
> **
- Champion equity and neuro-affirmative practice: value diversity, accessibility, and inclusive recruitment processes.
- Ensure legal compliance: **Equality Act 2010, Immigration Act 2006, UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023** (preventive duty re sexual harassment, including by third parties).

- Protect personal data: apply our **Recruitment Privacy Notice and Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy v10.25.
> **

This policy should be read alongside:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy v01.26
> **
- **Staff Conduct Policy v10.25
> **
- **Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy v01.26
> **
- **Equal Opportunities, Equality & Diversity Policy v10.25
> **

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- recruitment of all permanent, fixed-term, sessional, and probationary staff;
- agency staff, contractors, volunteers, governors, and proprietors;
- all online and hybrid provision operated by The Haven. **
> **

3. Safer Recruitment Principles

- Child-first: safeguarding considerations override convenience or expediency.
- Transparency: decisions are fair, consistent, and fully documented.
- Inclusivity: recruitment is anti-discriminatory, neuro-affirmative, and accessible.
- Compliance: KCSIE 2026 is met in full.
- Competence: at least one panel member in every recruitment process holds current Safer Recruitment training (refreshed every 5 years). **
> **

4. Recruitment Process

4.1 Identifying Vacancies

Vacancies arise through staffing changes, service development, or curriculum need. All recruitment requires approval from Senior Leadership or the Proprietor/Trustees.

4.2 Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Each role has a clear job description and person specification, including:

- safeguarding responsibilities;
- required qualifications and experience;

- expectations around professional boundaries and online conduct.

Language is explicit, inclusive, and accessible.

4.3 Advertising

All advertisements:

- state The Haven's safeguarding and neuro-affirmative commitment;
- confirm that an enhanced DBS will be required;
- make clear that online searches will be undertaken for shortlisted candidates in line with KCSIE 2026.**
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4.4 Applications and Shortlisting

- CVs alone are not accepted.
- All applicants must complete The Haven Safer Recruitment Application Form.
- Applicants may submit a supporting statement; CVs may be provided as supplementary information only.**
> **

Shortlisting is carried out by a minimum of two panel members against the published criteria.

The process:

- explores gaps in employment at interview;
- offers reasonable adjustments at all stages;
- is conducted in line with The Haven's Equal Opportunities, Equality & Diversity Policy v10.25.**
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4.5 Qualifications (Including QTS)

- QTS is required for teaching roles, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the role description (e.g. specialist mentoring or therapeutic roles).
- Where QTS is not required, equivalent professional qualifications and experience must be evidenced and verified.**
> **

4.6 Selection and Interviews

- Interviews are conducted by a minimum of two panel members, one of whom is Safer Recruitment trained.
- Structured questions include safeguarding scenarios and values-based discussion.
- Scoring criteria are applied consistently and records retained.**
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4.7 Pre-Appointment Checks

All appointments are conditional upon satisfactory completion of:

- Enhanced DBS check with barred list (where relevant), on the Update Service

- Identity and right-to-work verification
- Professional qualification checks
- Two references, including the most recent employer, normally covering the preceding three years where practicable
- Overseas criminal record checks (where applicable)
- Prohibition from Teaching and/or Section 128 checks (as relevant)
- Declaration of suitability to work with children

Conditional offers remain in place until all checks are verified and logged on the Single Central Record (SCR).

4.8 DBS Update Service

Where an applicant is already registered with the DBS Update Service, this may be used with the applicant's consent.

The Haven retains responsibility for confirming the check is appropriate, current, and relevant to the role.

5. Induction and Probation

5.1 Induction

All new staff receive:

- Part 1 of KCSIE 2026;
 - safeguarding and whistleblowing briefing;
 - training on Staff Conduct, online safety, and professional boundaries. **
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5.2 Probationary Period

All new appointments are subject to a six-month probationary period.

During probation, staff receive:

- regular supervision and support;
 - proportionate quality assurance;
 - mandatory safeguarding and online safety training. **
- > **

5.3 Confirmation of Appointment

Confirmation of a permanent appointment is dependent upon:

- satisfactory performance and conduct;
- adherence to safeguarding expectations;
- completion of required training;
- successful probation review by the Head of Learning / Principal.

Probation may be extended where further support or monitoring is required.

6. Agency, Contractor and Third-Party Staff

Agency staff are used only where necessary.

Where agency staff are engaged:

- a Service Level Agreement (SLA) is required, confirming compliance with safer recruitment standards;
- written confirmation of completed checks and references are obtained;
- identity is verified on arrival;
- staff are inducted into safeguarding, online safety, and expected conduct;
- agency staff do not work unsupervised until suitability is confirmed.

Unchecked contractors are never permitted to work in regulated activity.

7. Volunteers

Volunteers are used rarely and only following a risk assessment.

- Volunteers in regulated activity require an enhanced DBS.
- All volunteers receive safeguarding induction and sign the Staff Conduct Policy v10.25. **
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8. Governors and Proprietors

All governors, trustees, and proprietors:

- undergo enhanced DBS and Section 128 checks (as applicable);
- provide identity and right-to-work evidence;
- are recorded on the Single Central Record. **
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9. Record Keeping and the Single Central Record (SCR)

The Haven maintains a Single Central Record in full compliance with KCSIE 2026.

- The SCR is stored securely within The Haven's Google Workspace with restricted access.
- It is updated promptly after appointments.
- Termly audits are undertaken by the DSL and Safeguarding Governor.

Recruitment records are retained securely in line with GDPR.

Unsuccessful applications are retained for 12 months and then destroyed.

10. Training

- At least one Safer Recruitment trained panel member for every recruitment process.
- Annual safeguarding and whistleblowing refreshers for all staff.
- DSL and senior administrative staff trained in SCR maintenance and audit. **
> **

11. Monitoring and Review

- Annual reporting to Proprietors on Safer Recruitment compliance.
- Termly SCR audits.
- Policy reviewed annually or following statutory updates.

This PDF was generated from the published policy at policies.thehavenonline.school on 26 August 2026. The website is the authoritative, most current version of this policy.