

Table of changes

Date	Version	Summary of Amendments	Author
05.08.2021	1	n/a	JC
04.10.2021	2	Changed stages 4,5 of recruitment process and ex-offender recruitment to reflect KCSIE 2021	JC
20 Sep 2022	3	KCSIE 2022; Change to CEE	JC
31 May 2023	4	Change to SEE, social media check for host families added	JC

This policy is to be read in conjunction with

- Safeguarding and child protection policy

Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been developed in accordance with

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023). Statutory guidance for schools and colleges

Statement

South England Exchange (SEE) is committed to safeguarding and protecting all children and young people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices.

Date: 7 May 2024

24h emergency phone line: +44 (0)7796 997780

Review by: 7 May 2025

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Eve Crow - Tel: 07795 842565 - email: eve@southenglandexchange.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Andrew Cliffin – Tel: 07850 332614 – andrew@southenglandexchange.org

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Recruitment Process

SEE will follow these steps when recruiting a new staff member:

Stage 1: Review of role definition.

Stage 2: Advertise to encourage wide selection of applicants. Adverts must contain a clear indication of high safeguarding requirements to encourage suitable applicants and deter unsuitable candidates. Each advert for a role in regulated activity must state that an enhanced DBS certificate with Barred List Checks and full disclosure will be required.

Stage 3: Send Job description, safeguarding policy and link to Employment application form to potential candidates who enquire.

Stage 4: Review applications checking skills and qualifications, employment gaps and motivation and create shortlist. Check shortlisted candidates online and on social media.

Stage 5: Invite candidates to interview with SEE's director and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Stage 6: Check ID, check mental and physical fitness for work, check right to work in the UK, collect and discuss self-declaration. Request DBS check, check references, check right to work if additional documents are required. Make offer (conditional to positive result to all checks).

Stage 7: Exchange contracts.

Stage 8: On the first day of employment, arrange online induction training and allocate mentor (if applicable).

Stage 9: Arrange a 1 to 1 supervision with director to take place 4 – 6 weeks after starting work.

Checks

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

All new staff and host families (members aged 16+) must undergo a DBS check. The level of disclosure depends on the proposed role this staff member is to fill. Checks are renewed every three years. Staff members are encouraged to join the DBS Update Service.

Checks are made using the website www.ukcrbs.co.uk. Every applicant agrees to undergo this check by clicking a consent tick box on this website.

Safer recruitment policy



Any staff or host family member whose role involves any of the following must undergo an enhanced check with barred list checks:

- teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children on a regular basis
- carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid work regularly where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- engaging in intimate or personal care, or overnight activity, even if this happens only once

Members of staff and external parties whose roles involve regular unsupervised work or contact with children without fulfilling the above conditions, will have to undergo an enhanced disclosure check without barred list checks.

Staff or host family members (aged 16+) who have lived outside the UK in the past 5 years must undergo an overseas criminal records check.

Staff must not start work and host families not start hosting before DBS clearance has been obtained. If it is unavoidable that new staff start work, they must be appropriately supervised until a DBS certificate can be shown.

A DBS check can be replaced by checking the DBS Updating Service if the applicant has joined this service in the past and SEE

- obtains consent from the applicant to do so
- confirms the certificate matches the individual's identity
- examines the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information.

A criminal record does not per se disqualify an applicant. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis. The assessment will take into account the seriousness and relevance of the conviction to the post applied for, how long ago the offence was committed, whether it was an isolated incident or a string of incidents, the circumstances around the incident, the resulting attitude of the applicant, any change in the applicant's personal circumstances since. BIS will document how a decision is reached despite / because of a conviction.

In addition, a self-declaration is requested from all new staff member or host family members (aged 16 or above).

Employment History

SEE expects every staff role applicant to submit full details of their employment history. This will be checked for consistency and completeness.

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References

SEE requests two references for each applicant invited to interview. The same applies for each main host family carer. Subsequently, SEE will contact the referees by telephone and cross-check that their testimony is genuine and accurate.

Neither referee must be related to the applicant.

For staff role applicants, one referee should be the current employer. If the applicant is not currently employed, SEE will verify their most recent period of employment and the reasons for leaving.

Mental and physical fitness for work

SEE will check the mental and physical fitness of any applicant for a position. Checks are usually carried out by requesting information from the candidate. Where doubt remains, SEE can request a letter from the candidate's GP or another suitable medical practitioner.

Right to work in the UK

Every applicant needs to demonstrate their right to work in the UK.

Online search

SEE will search the internet and social media for relevant entries about shortlisted staff role applicants and new host family (adults only) as an additional background check. The content of the search will not be retained, only whether issues were found and how they were dealt with.

Substantial change

Where an existing member of staff moves into a new position within the company which is substantially different from their previous role, or their personal circumstances change, SEE will initiate the same checks as are expected for a new member of staff. For example, if the new role involves regulated activity where the old one didn't, or a person's right to work may have expired.

Additional checks for new host families

All new host families will receive an initial visit from SEE staff. This will take place before the student arrives or as soon thereafter, but never more than 14 days after the arrival of the student. If an in-person check is not possible before the student arrives, a live video inspection of all rooms of the home must be conducted before the student's arrival and referees asked about the suitability of the property.

Safer recruitment policy



Qualifications

SEE will only employ suitably qualified staff. Evidence of qualifications may be requested.

Retention of records

DBS certificates are never kept on file.

The following copies of documents are kept on record for 10 years:

- ID documents
- Documents pertaining to an individual's right to work
- Documents about an individual's qualifications