



Safer Recruitment Policy

Reviewed	Date of Next Review	Responsibility
July 2026	July 2027	Head of HR

Our Mission:

'To enable young people to live and work without barriers'

Our Values:

- **Teamwork** – we hold ourselves and each other to account and are better when we work together
- **Compassion** – we act with trust, honesty and kindness in everything we do
- **Inclusion** – we treat each other fairly and with respect
- **Innovation** – we encourage thoughtful, creative and aspirational ideas
- **Pride** – we encourage each other to be proud of who we are and what we do

Safer Staff Recruitment Procedures

- The Fairfield Trust (FT) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All members of staff and volunteers, regardless of their post, share in the responsibility for protecting young people, keeping them safe from harm whilst they are attending any area of the Trust and for reporting any concerns about a young person's welfare.
- The Trust undertakes strict procedures in the recruitment of new staff to any post to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with young people from applying for or securing employment or volunteer opportunities with the Trust. When a formal interview takes place, two managers will be in attendance and questions on safeguarding will be asked during all interviews to ensure that safeguarding is a key focus area from the earliest stage of employment.
- During interviews for senior posts, representative(s) from the Trust board or Senior Leaders will be in attendance.
- Managers with responsibility for recruitment will undertake Safer Recruitment training and this will be renewed 2 yearly.
- The Trust Application form is designed to capture a full employment history along with reasons for leaving the current post and motivations for working with young people. Application forms also contain a statement confirming that the Trust reserves the right to carry out online searches which includes social media checks.
- These recruitment procedures are intended to ensure the Trust's system is robust and it draws upon the advice set out in the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Shortlisting

- Applicants will be shortlisted by at least two recruiting managers and selection shall be made using a scoring matrix, according to criteria relating to the person specification for the post.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a Candidate Self Declaration Form (Criminal Convictions) and they shall be provided with the Trust's Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding & Child Protection policies in advance of interview. Any criminal conviction declaration shall be explored and considered at interview. The Trust reserves the right to withdraw offers of interview if this information is not received prior to interview.
- Online checks will be carried out on shortlisted candidates using specific and consistent search terms. Details of online searches will be retained, and any identified concerns will be escalated to the DSL prior to any interview.
- For Pathways candidates only: A member of the HR team will telephone all candidate's previous employers within the Care sector. Specific questions will be asked relating to the candidate's suitability to work with vulnerable young people along with details of any safeguarding or child protection concerns. This will be carried out prior to interview and a record will be retained of all conversations.

Interviews

- HR will carry out an identity check of all candidates on interview day. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to supply three forms of suitable identification for a DBS check and evidence their right to work in the UK. Candidates will be asked to provide a Birth Certificate for an identity check where possible.
- Right to work checks will be carried out in line with latest Government guidance and where a Birth Certificate is provided as right to work in the UK, evidence of name and National Insurance number shall also be required (IE official letter from HMRC/DWP).
- Qualification checks will be carried out by HR on interview day.
- Where an application form has been completed electronically, candidates will be asked to provide an 'in person' signature against their completed safeguarding declaration.
- The interview process will vary depending on department and role. All interviews will meet the requirements as set out in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

Education & Pathways Interviews

Candidates will be given a tour of the college site and may participate in an observed session, working directly with young people. A written element may also be required. Observers will provide a written record. A formal interview will follow with two managers. Specific safeguarding questions will be asked and the interviewing panel will explore candidate's motivation for working with young people. Any discrepancies arising from references will be explored during interview. Interviewing managers will provide a written record and grade for the formal interview.

Commercial Interviews

Candidates will attend a tour of the site and a formal interview will be held with two managers. Specific safeguarding questions will be asked and the interviewing panel will explore the candidate's motivation for working with young people. Any discrepancies arising from references will be explored during interview. Interviewing managers will provide a written record of the formal interview.

A summary of the terms and conditions of employment, including the Safer Recruitment process, are explained to all candidates at the formal interview.

It will be explained to all candidates that employment is dependent upon receipt of satisfactory clearances:

- Two satisfactory references, one of which will be verified. Both references will be verified for residential posts.
- An Enhanced DBS Check (including barring lists checks where applicable) which the Trust considers satisfactory.
- Sight of original identification and qualification certificates relevant for the post (if appropriate). Qualifications will be cross referenced with the application form and scanned copies of relevant qualifications will be retained on file.
- A written explanation of any gaps in the applicant's work history will be recorded at the interview and placed on the personnel file.
- Written records of the interview process will be retained in personnel files for successful applicants.

The decision making process will involve all staff who were part of the interviews and the decision to appoint will be based on interview performance and outcomes of the safer recruitment process.

The successful candidate will be asked to attend an induction to complete the following elements (this list is not exhaustive) which make up the routine recruitment procedure for all staff:

- The Staff Handbook including the Staff Code of Conduct will be issued and signed for.
- The Trust's Safeguarding process will be explained to all new employees, including the process for reporting low level concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will be identified, and their roles explained.
- All staff must read and sign Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One prior to starting in post.
- All new employees will complete compulsory training prior to their start date. (Level 1 Safeguarding, Allergens and Anaphylaxis and Prevent Duty Training).
- The staff Acceptable Use (of college IT equipment) will be issued and signed for.
- Any further information required e.g. any time spent living or working outside of the UK and proof of eligibility to work in the UK.
- A photograph of the new member of staff will be taken to retain on file and for the issue of a staff ID badge.

A robust HR tracking system will be used to ensure that all the above steps are completed in the recruitment of all staff regardless of role. Further policies and procedures specific to the individual role, will be issued and signed for.

New staff are permitted to begin induction training (off site) before DBS clearance has been received. When attending site for induction, new staff without a DBS result must be supervised at all times and will not have unrestricted access to young people or MIS systems in any event.

If a DBS result contains information or if applicants disclose a criminal conviction, applicants will be treated fairly and equally based on their skills and ability to fulfil the duties required. An appointment decision will be made based on all relevant information and where deemed necessary, a risk assessment will be carried out by at least two members of SLT to assess the potential risk to students. This will be shared with the DSL. The outcome of the risk assessment may result in the termination of employment, this will depend on the nature of the offence. If this is not the case, any risk assessment will be retained securely in the employee's file and indicated on the Single Central Record.

Should it come to light that an applicant has made a false statement in attempting to gain employment, this will be reported to the appropriate government agencies and the employee may be suspended from duty, until such time as the matter is resolved to the satisfaction of SLT who will seek advice from all relevant bodies.

Safer Recruitment Training

The Head of HR, HR Officer, HR Admin Support, managers and a Trustee will attend accredited Safer Recruitment Training to ensure the recruitment, selection procedures and processes help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse young people or who are unsuited to work with them as an essential part of creating a safe environment.

The training will:

- Give participants an awareness and understanding of offender behaviour.
- Identify the key features of staff recruitment that help deter or prevent the appointment of unsuitable people.
- Consider policies and practices that minimise opportunities for abuse or ensure its prompt reporting.
- Help participants begin to review their own processes and the Trust policies with a view to making them safer.

Advertising posts

All advertisements for vacancies will carry the safeguarding statement:

Fairfield Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and all staff are expected to share this commitment. You will be expected to report any concerns relating to the safeguarding of young people in accordance with agreed procedures. If your own conduct in relation to the safeguarding of young people gives cause for concern, Fairfield Trust agreed child and adult protection procedures will be followed.

All posts involving direct contact with young people, children and vulnerable groups are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Exception Order 1975 (2013 & 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected'. These are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be taken into account.

Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found on the [Ministry of Justice website](#):

For all roles that involve regulated activity, a DBS check will be required before appointment is confirmed.

Advertisements will notify potential applicants of the need to undertake pre-employment checks including a DBS Check at the appropriate level for roles which involve regulated activity.

Applications

Applications are accepted strictly by a fully completed application form only. Under no circumstances are CVs accepted.

Application forms are scrutinised for both paid and voluntary posts and any gaps in employment, study or training must be accounted for. Application forms must include a full and thorough personal & employment history, personal and qualification information. Application forms must be signed by the applicant.

Application forms with incomplete or missing information may not be accepted. HR will support applicants who may require additional help with completing application forms.

References

Two professional references will be requested for each candidate using the Trust's Safer Recruitment Reference Request Form. Reference contacts from colleagues/friends shall not be accepted. A covering letter will be included with each reference request. References will include a request for information regarding the suitability of the candidate to work with

vulnerable young people. Specific questions will be asked about the candidate's conduct whilst in post and the reason for leaving current (or most recent) employment will be sought and verified.

References are requested prior to interview, (one of which must be from the most recent employer). Where a candidate has not worked with children or young people for a period of time, a reference will be sought from the employer where the candidate most recently worked with young people. References will be scrutinised and cross referenced against information contained in the application form and will be considered as part of the interview process.

Where a candidate has been self-employed and/or if it is not possible to obtain references, enquiries may be made with the relevant bodies to verify information i.e. Companies House and HMRC. A comprehensive pre-employment risk assessment will be undertaken in order to determine whether it is safe to offer employment.

Following receipt of the references, HR will telephone the most recent employer, to check the validity of the reference, (both references in the event of appointment to a residential post).

When verifying references, HR will ask if there are any known issues with regards to the applicant working with vulnerable young people and whether there are any safeguarding concerns. A record of the conversation will be retained in the employee's file and the date of the conversation will be recorded on the Single Central Record.

Posts within the Pathways Team (Supported Living/Residential)

- Two references will be requested prior to interview (current and previous employers) and both references will be verified with a telephone call.
- The Registered Manager will check all references for staff who are successfully appointed.

Volunteers

- All volunteers will be subject to the full safer recruitment process (as set out within this policy).
- Any individual who wishes to work on a voluntary basis, within any area of the Trust, will complete a full application form in the first instance.
- A robust tracking system will be retained for each volunteer and under no circumstance will a volunteer, for whom no checks have been carried out, have unsupervised access to young people.
- The candidate will be invited to meet an appropriate manager to discuss their application in more detail and to explore the person's motivation for applying, their background and any relevant skills and experience.
- If the application is successful, the candidate shall complete Level 1 Safeguarding and Prevent Duty Training prior to their start date along with Allergens/Anaphylaxis Training.
- Two satisfactory professional references will be required, one of which will be verified with a telephone call to the referee to ask specific questions relating to the candidate's suitability to work with vulnerable young people.
- For roles that constitute regulated activity, a DBS application will be submitted at the appropriate level with barring list checks where applicable. Details of DBS results will be retained on the Single Central Register.

- HR will carry out an identity check and volunteers will attend an induction. The Trust's safeguarding process will be explained in full including low level concerns. Volunteers will be aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding young people.
- Safeguarding policies and relevant internal safeguarding processes will be shared with the volunteer and a signature required.
- Prior to confirming any volunteer placement, HR will carry out a safeguarding risk assessment which will explore the candidate's background and what is known about the individual both informally and formally. A copy will be retained in the volunteer electronic file.
- All volunteers ~~(and staff)~~ must read and sign the most up to date version of Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One along with the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Once all the above has been completed and recorded to file, the individual will be issued with a Trust lanyard and photo ID card which must be worn at all times when on Trust sites.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tamasin Jones
Head of HR
 July 2026