

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy Statement

Reviewed and Approved by Trust Board:	To be approved on 03.09.2026
Policy Owner:	Director of Safeguarding and School Operations (Trust DSL)
Policy Reviewed by:	Executive Team
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Location of website:	Trust Website / Staff SharePoint

This policy statement is prescribed by Inspire Learning Partnership and is statutory. All references to 'the Trust', includes all Trust schools and subsidiary organisations.

Legislation and statutory requirements

It is a legal requirement that all registered bodies and prospective employers must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. Registered Bodies and employers who are Regulated Activity Providers (including schools) are obliged to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is available to applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

Policy Statement

1. As an organisation using the [Disclosure and Barring Service](#) (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Inspire Learning Partnership complies fully with the [Code of Practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed. However, we reserve the right to withdraw an offer of employment if an applicant does not disclose relevant information, or if a DBS check reveals information which we reasonably believe would make an applicant unsuitable for the role.
2. The Trust is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of gender, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, culture, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, marital and civil partnership status, education, learning styles, caring responsibilities or offending background.
3. A summary of this policy statement is available to all DBS applicants on request and is published on the [Trust's website](#).

4. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, knowledge, and experience.

5. As a [Regulated Activity Provider](#) (RAP) most paid employees of the Trust are in [regulated activity](#) with children and therefore subject to checks of the DBS children's barred list, in addition to their enhanced DBS certificate. It should be noted that it is an offence for applicants to apply for such a role if they have been barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

6. [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2026) explains the type of DBS checks available and whether the DBS check is required with or without the barred list check. In respect of volunteers and contractors etc, schools will use this information to determine the appropriate level of check required for the role. It is noted that barred list information must not be requested on any person who is not engaging in or seeking to engage in regulated activity.

7. For those positions where a DBS check is required, recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

8. In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a self-declaration regarding criminal history, barred list status, prohibition from teaching, disqualification from childcare, relevant overseas information and any other information that may make them unsuitable to work with children.

The form contains explanatory notes that helps applicants to understand what they need to disclose. Applicants will be required to disclose criminal record information in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order and current DBS filtering rules. Protected convictions and cautions do not need to be disclosed and will not be taken into account.

Where applicants have lived or worked outside the United Kingdom, the Trust will undertake any additional checks considered appropriate, including criminal records checks and professional conduct checks where these are available.

The form should be returned via the online My New Term platform or in a confidential envelope, to the person who is named on the form, prior to any interview. Applicants should note that as part of the Trust's safer recruitment process, online searches may be undertaken on shortlisted candidates. The purpose of these searches is to identify any incidents or issues publicly available online that may need to be explored with the candidate at interview.

9. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Please note that this may include members of the Trust Education Support team. Where appropriate, and in accordance with local safeguarding procedures, advice may be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

10. The Trust will ensure that all staff involved in recruitment understand safer recruitment principles and that at least one member of every recruitment panel has completed recognised safer recruitment training. We also ensure that the recruitment panel have access to appropriate guidance on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its amendments and know how to access advice and support from our HR team, the LADO and if applicable, legal advisers.

11. At interview, or on a separate occasion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any relevant offences or other matter that may be relevant to the position. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with us. We will consider the circumstances and background of any offences and whether they are relevant to the position in question, balancing the rights and interests of the individual, our employees, pupils, parents, suppliers and the public.

When assessing disclosed criminal information, the Trust will consider:

- the nature and seriousness of the offence;
- relevance to the role applied for;

- the age of the individual when the offence occurred;
- the time elapsed since the offence;
- patterns of offending behaviour;
- mitigating circumstances;
- evidence of rehabilitation;
- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post.

12. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. This discussion and any subsequent risk assessment may be undertaken by our HR team or another Trust employee, in conjunction with the LADO. Any decision not to appoint an individual because of criminal record information will be made on a case-by-case basis and the rationale for the decision will be recorded.

13. There are charities who may be able to provide potential applicants with further advice. These include:

- Unlock: <https://www.unlock.org.uk>
- Nacro: <https://www.nacro.org.uk>

The Trust's approach to assessing criminal record information forms part of its wider safeguarding culture and safer recruitment procedures. Decisions will always be made in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, the DBS Code of Practice, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, safeguarding legislation and equality legislation.

Changes History Table

Version	Date	Amended by	Approved By	Summary of Changes
5	September 2026	Director of Safeguarding and School Operations (Trust DSL) and reviewed by the Executive Team	Trust Board	• Updated for KCSIE 2026. • Enhanced self-disclosure requirements for shortlisted candidates. • Introduction of online searches as part of safer recruitment checks. • Additional overseas criminal record and professional conduct checks. • Clearer guidance on protected convictions and cautions. • Stronger safer recruitment training expectations. • Introduction of a formal criminal record risk assessment framework. • Requirement to record rationale for recruitment decisions involving criminal record information. • Strengthened links to safeguarding and safer recruitment culture