

2025/26

SHERLOCK
Pathways
**SAFER RECRUITMENT
POLICY**

CREATED

February 2026

REVIEW

February 2027



Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Policy Statement

Sherlock Pathways is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

As an Alternative Provision provider working with vulnerable learners, including those with trauma histories, SEMH needs, SEND, and safeguarding vulnerabilities, we recognise that safer recruitment is a critical safeguarding function.

This policy is written in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DBS Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- Non-School Alternative Provision National Standards

2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children
- Deter potential abusers from applying
- Identify and reject applicants who pose a safeguarding risk
- Embed a culture of vigilance and professional curiosity
- Ensure legal compliance and safer workforce governance

3. Safer Recruitment Principles

Sherlock Pathways will ensure:

- Safeguarding is embedded in all recruitment materials
- At least one trained safer recruitment panel member is involved in every interview
- A robust Single Central Record (SCR) is maintained
- All required pre-employment checks are completed before start date
- Risk assessments are completed where necessary
- No individual commences unsupervised work without appropriate checks

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Contract Managers / Proprietor

- Ensure robust safeguarding governance
- Ensure compliance with AP National Standards
- Monitor safer recruitment processes

Head of Centre

- Oversee recruitment compliance
- Ensure safer recruitment training is current
- Ensure SCR is maintained accurately

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Advise on safeguarding risk during recruitment
- Liaise with LADO where required
- Contribute to suitability decisions if concerns arise

Recruitment Panel

- Conduct shortlisting and interviews fairly and rigorously
- Explore gaps in employment
- Assess safeguarding understanding and attitudes
- Record decision-making clearly

All Staff

- Uphold safeguarding culture
- Report concerns about colleagues
- Adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct

5. Recruitment Procedures

5.1 Advertising

All adverts will clearly state:

“Sherlock Pathways is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments are subject to enhanced DBS checks and satisfactory references.”

Job descriptions will clearly outline safeguarding responsibilities.

5.2 Application Process

Applicants must:

- Complete a full application form (CVs alone will not be accepted)

- Provide full employment history with explanations for gaps
- Declare criminal convictions and cautions
- Provide two references (one from most recent employer)
- Confirm they are not disqualified from working with children

5.3 Shortlisting

The panel will:

- Scrutinise employment history
- Identify inconsistencies
- Assess safeguarding suitability
- Prepare targeted interview questions

5.4 Interview

The interview panel will:

- Include at least one safer recruitment trained member
- Assess safeguarding knowledge
- Explore attitudes toward vulnerable learners
- Test responses to safeguarding scenarios
- Explore motivation for working in Alternative Provision
- Probe professional boundaries and resilience

All safeguarding-related responses will be documented.

5.5 References

References will:

- Be obtained prior to appointment wherever possible
- Be verified directly with referees
- Specifically ask about:
 - Suitability to work with children
 - Disciplinary history
 - Safeguarding concerns
 - Allegations history (substantiated or otherwise)

Concerns will be followed up before appointment.

5.6 Pre-Employment Checks

The following checks are mandatory:

- Enhanced DBS with barred list
- Identity verification
- Right to work in the UK
- Qualification verification
- Prohibition from teaching check (where applicable)
- Section 128 check (where applicable)
- Online search (as per KCSIE guidance)
- Overseas checks (where relevant)

No staff member will start unsupervised work without completed checks.

6. Single Central Record (SCR)

Sherlock Pathways will maintain a compliant Single Central Record including:

- Identity checks
- DBS details
- Barred list checks
- Prohibition checks
- Right to work
- Qualification verification
- Date of check completion

The SCR will be reviewed regularly by SLT.

7. Induction

All new staff will receive safeguarding induction covering:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- KCSIE Part 1
- Role of the DSL
- Reporting procedures

Induction must be completed before unsupervised contact with learners.

8. Ongoing Monitoring

Sherlock Pathways will:

- Provide regular safeguarding updates (at least annually)
- Monitor staff conduct through supervision and appraisal
- Maintain a culture of openness and whistleblowing
- Take swift action where concerns arise

9. Managing Allegations Against Staff

Allegations will be managed in line with KCSIE and local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Where threshold is met:

- The LADO will be contacted within one working day.
- Internal investigation will not compromise external investigation.
- Appropriate risk management measures will be implemented.
- Confidentiality will be maintained appropriately.

Low-level concerns will be recorded and monitored in line with KCSIE expectations.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

Review will be conducted by:

- Head of Centre
- DSL
- Proprietor/Contract Manager