



Safer Recruitment Policy

Approved by: Board of Directors

Policy Owner: Storyy Education

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Policy Statement

Storyy Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students and expects every member of staff, volunteer, contractor, agency worker and visitor to share this commitment.

We recognise that safer recruitment is an essential part of creating a safe culture and plays a vital role in protecting students from harm. Our recruitment procedures are designed to deter, identify and reject individuals who may pose a risk to children or who are otherwise unsuitable to work with them. Storyy Education is committed to ensuring that safeguarding is embedded throughout every stage of the recruitment and selection process.

All appointments will be made fairly, consistently and in accordance with current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order), the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and any other relevant safeguarding guidance.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, agency workers, contractors, self-employed professionals, work experience students, visitors undertaking regulated activity and any individual working on behalf of Storyy Education.

Aims of the Policy

Storyy Education aims to recruit and retain individuals who are committed to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

We will achieve this by:

- placing safeguarding and student welfare at the centre of every recruitment decision;
- ensuring recruitment processes are fair, transparent and robust;
- attracting high-quality candidates who share Storyy Education's values;
- carrying out all required pre-employment checks before employment commences, unless an authorised risk assessment permits otherwise;
- complying with all statutory safeguarding and employment requirements;
- promoting equality of opportunity whilst ensuring appropriate safeguarding checks are completed; and
- maintaining accurate recruitment records and a compliant Single Central Record.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring that Storyy Education operates effective safer recruitment procedures and complies with all statutory safeguarding requirements.

The Managing Director is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, ensuring recruitment processes remain compliant with current legislation and statutory guidance, monitoring safer recruitment practices across the organisation, and ensuring all required pre-employment checks are completed before employment commences.

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Provision Managers and recruiting managers are responsible for ensuring recruitment processes are followed consistently, participating in recruitment activities where authorised, identifying safeguarding risks throughout the recruitment process, and ensuring no individual undertakes regulated activity until appropriate checks have been completed or an approved risk assessment has been authorised.

All staff involved in recruitment are responsible for promoting safer recruitment practices, maintaining confidentiality throughout the recruitment process and reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately.

Storyy Education will ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has successfully completed appropriate safer recruitment training and maintains up-to-date knowledge of current safer recruitment guidance.

Recruitment Planning

Before advertising any vacancy, Storyy Education will consider the requirements of the role, the level of safeguarding responsibility and the checks required before appointment.

A clear Job Description and Person Specification will be prepared for every vacancy. These will accurately describe the duties, responsibilities, qualifications, experience and personal qualities required, including the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.

All recruitment documentation will reflect Storyy Education's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students.

Advertising Vacancies

All advertisements for roles involving regulated activity will clearly state Storyy Education's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and explain that successful applicants will be subject to appropriate pre-employment checks, including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with Barred List information where appropriate.

Advertisements will also make clear that Storyy Education is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from suitably qualified individuals.

Applicants will be informed that online searches may be undertaken as part of the recruitment process in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Application Process

All applicants are required to complete a Storyy Education application form. Curriculum Vitae (CVs) will not be accepted in place of a completed application form, although they may be submitted alongside an application where requested.

Application forms must be completed in full and include a complete employment history with explanations for any gaps in employment or education.

Applicants will be required to declare any convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings that are not protected under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order).

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Storyy Education reserves the right to reject incomplete application forms or request further information where clarification is required.

Shortlisting and Online Searches

Applications will be assessed against the Person Specification using a fair and consistent process.

Shortlisted candidates will be selected based on their skills, experience, qualifications and suitability for the role.

Before interview, Storyy Education may carry out an online search of shortlisted candidates to identify any publicly available information that may be relevant to the candidate's suitability to work with children.

Online searches will only consider information that is publicly available and will be undertaken in a fair, proportionate and non-discriminatory manner.

Any information identified during the online search that is relevant to the recruitment process will be explored with the candidate during interview, allowing them the opportunity to provide context or clarification.

References

Storyy Education will obtain a minimum of two professional references before confirming an appointment wherever possible.

One reference should normally be from the applicant's current or most recent employer and should be completed by an appropriate senior manager who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children.

References will be obtained directly from the referee and will not be accepted if supplied solely by the applicant.

Reference requests will seek confirmation of:

- the applicant's employment history;
- their suitability to work with children;
- any disciplinary action relating to the safety or welfare of children;
- any substantiated safeguarding allegations;
- attendance and conduct where appropriate; and
- whether the referee is aware of any reason why the applicant should not be employed to work with children.

References will be scrutinised carefully, and any discrepancies, anomalies or concerns will be discussed with the referee and explored with the candidate before any appointment is confirmed.

Where appropriate, Storyy Education reserves the right to contact previous employers to verify employment history or clarify information provided during the recruitment process.

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No offer of employment will be confirmed until satisfactory references have been received and considered.

Selection and Interview Process

Storyy Education is committed to ensuring that the selection process is robust, transparent and places safeguarding at the centre of every recruitment decision.

All shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a face-to-face interview unless exceptional circumstances prevent this. Depending on the role, the recruitment process may also include practical tasks, observations, presentations or written exercises to assess the candidate's suitability and competence.

During the interview, candidates will be expected to demonstrate their experience, knowledge and values, as well as their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students. The interview panel will explore any gaps in employment, inconsistencies in the application, information identified through references or online searches, and any other matters relevant to the candidate's suitability for the role.

Candidates will also be asked questions designed to assess their understanding of safeguarding, professional boundaries, child protection responsibilities and their ability to contribute positively to Storyy Education's safeguarding culture.

No appointment will be made unless the panel is satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and young people.

Conditional Offers of Employment

Any offer of employment made by Storyy Education is conditional upon the satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks.

No individual will commence employment until all required checks have been completed unless an authorised risk assessment has been completed, approved by the Managing Director and appropriate safeguarding arrangements have been implemented.

Where employment commences before a DBS certificate has been received, this will only occur where:

- an Enhanced DBS application has been submitted;
- identity, right to work and qualification checks have been completed;
- satisfactory references have been received;
- a documented DBS Risk Assessment has been completed and approved;
- appropriate supervision arrangements are in place; and
- the individual does not undertake regulated activity unsupervised until permitted to do so.

Pre-Employment Checks

Before employment commences, Storyy Education will complete all relevant pre-employment checks appropriate to the role.

These may include:

- Verification of identity.
- Verification of the right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including Barred List information where required.
- Verification of qualifications and professional status.
- Verification of employment history.
- Two satisfactory professional references.
- Health declaration where appropriate.
- Overseas criminal record or additional suitability checks where applicable.
- Prohibition from teaching checks where required.
- Section 128 direction checks where applicable.
- Childcare Disqualification checks where required by legislation.

All pre-employment checks will be recorded and retained in accordance with data protection legislation.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Storyy Education requires all employees, agency staff, contractors, self-employed professionals and volunteers engaged in regulated activity to hold an appropriate Enhanced DBS check before undertaking unsupervised work with students.

Where an individual subscribes to the DBS Update Service, Storyy Education will complete an online status check before employment commences and periodically thereafter where appropriate.

Where an Enhanced DBS certificate contains information, or where a certificate has not yet been received, a documented risk assessment will be completed before any decision is made regarding employment.

Risk assessments will consider:

- the nature of the role;
- the relevance of any disclosed information;
- safeguarding risks;

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- supervision arrangements;
- the individual's experience and references; and
- any other relevant information.

The safety and welfare of students will always remain the overriding consideration.

Overseas Checks

Where an applicant has lived or worked outside the United Kingdom, Storyy Education will undertake additional checks in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

These checks may include overseas criminal record certificates, certificates of good conduct, professional references or any other appropriate evidence to establish the individual's suitability to work with children.

Where overseas checks cannot reasonably be obtained, Storyy Education will undertake and document additional risk assessments and alternative safeguarding measures.

Agency Staff, Contractors and Self-Employed Professionals

Storyy Education recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend to all adults working with students, regardless of their employment status.

Before agency workers, contractors or self-employed professionals commence work, Storyy Education will obtain written confirmation that all required safeguarding and pre-employment checks have been completed by the supplying organisation or individual, as appropriate.

Identity will always be verified on arrival, and all visitors will be appropriately supervised unless safeguarding checks have been confirmed.

Where responsibility for checks rests with Storyy Education, these will be completed before work commences.

Volunteers and Work Experience

Storyy Education recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers and work experience students can make while ensuring that safeguarding remains the highest priority.

Before any volunteer or work experience student commences their placement, Storyy Education will complete a suitable risk assessment to determine the level of supervision required, the nature of the activities they will undertake, whether they will engage in regulated activity, and the safeguarding checks required for their role.

Where an individual will be undertaking regulated activity or will have regular, unsupervised contact with students, all appropriate pre-placement checks, including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where required, will be completed before they begin.

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Volunteers and work experience students will receive an appropriate induction, including safeguarding procedures, professional boundaries, health and safety, emergency procedures and the expectations outlined within the Staff Code of Conduct. They will be appropriately supervised throughout their placement and must comply with all Storyy Education policies and procedures at all times.

Risk assessments will be reviewed where circumstances change to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements remain in place throughout the placement.

Induction and Probation

All new employees, agency workers and long-term contractors will complete an induction programme appropriate to their role.

The induction process will include:

- safeguarding and child protection;
- staff code of conduct;
- behaviour management;
- health and safety;
- whistleblowing;
- professional boundaries;
- key organisational policies and procedures;
- emergency procedures; and
- role-specific training.

All new employees will complete a probationary period during which their performance, conduct and suitability to work with students will be regularly reviewed.

Single Central Record

Storyy Education will maintain an accurate and up-to-date Single Central Record in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Single Central Record will record all required safeguarding and recruitment checks for employees, agency workers, contractors, volunteers and others working in regulated activity where applicable.

The record will be monitored regularly to ensure ongoing compliance.

Ongoing Suitability

Safeguarding responsibilities do not end once employment has commenced. Storyy Education is committed to ensuring that all employees, volunteers, agency staff, contractors and self-employed professionals remain suitable to work with students throughout their employment.

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All staff are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and must immediately inform the Managing Director of any matter that may affect their suitability to work with children or their ability to carry out their role safely and effectively.

To support ongoing safeguarding and safer recruitment, Storyy Education will carry out regular suitability monitoring. This includes:

- Requiring staff to complete regular suitability declarations confirming whether there have been any changes to their health, professional registration, criminal record, right to work status or any other circumstance that may affect their suitability to work with students.
- Requiring staff to immediately declare any arrests, police investigations, cautions, convictions, charges, professional sanctions or other relevant matters that occur after their DBS certificate has been issued.
- Undertaking DBS Update Service status checks at least twice each academic year for staff subscribed to the DBS Update Service, with additional checks completed where concerns arise or where deemed necessary.
- Carrying out regular supervision, appraisal and performance management meetings to review ongoing suitability, safeguarding practice and professional conduct.
- Providing regular safeguarding training and statutory updates to ensure staff remain aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Where any information is identified that may affect an individual's suitability to work with students, Storyy Education will carry out an appropriate risk assessment and take any necessary action in accordance with safeguarding procedures, employment legislation and organisational policies. Where required, referrals will be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) or other relevant professional body..

Allegations, Duty to Refer and Whistleblowing

Storyy Education takes all safeguarding concerns seriously.

Where concerns arise regarding the behaviour or conduct of a member of staff, volunteer or contractor, these will be managed in accordance with Storyy Education's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Allegations Against Staff Procedure and Whistleblowing Policy.

Where appropriate, Storyy Education will make referrals to:

- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA); or
- any other relevant professional or regulatory body.

Referrals will be made promptly where statutory thresholds are met.

Monitoring and Review

Storyy Education is committed to continually reviewing and improving its safer recruitment practices.

Compliance with this policy will be monitored through:

- recruitment audits;
- Single Central Record audits;
- personnel file audits;
- safeguarding audits;
- supervision and appraisal;
- staff training records;
- external inspections; and
- quality assurance processes.

Lessons learned from recruitment activities, safeguarding concerns or audits will be used to strengthen recruitment procedures and improve organisational practice.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes;
- recommendations arise from safeguarding reviews or inspections;
- changes occur to recruitment procedures; or
- improvements are identified through quality assurance activities.

Storyy Education is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safer recruitment to ensure that every adult working within the organisation is suitable to work with students and shares our commitment to safeguarding and promoting their welfare.