01 PLAN AND ADVERTISE

Safer recruitment checklist for schools

A working form for recruiting paid staff in England, with a separate route for supply staff, volunteers and other appointments.

School or trust _____

Vacancy and reference _____

Recruitment lead and panel chair _____

Tick each completed step in Word or on paper. For role-dependent checks, record N/A with the reason in the recruitment file. Keep candidate evidence in your approved HR system.

MUST identifies a legal duty for the setting or role stated. KCSIE SHOULD identifies an expectation in statutory guidance. ACAS PRACTICE identifies recommended practice. References to paragraphs are to KCSIE 2026.

Before the advert goes out

☐ **Confirm approval and trained panel** **MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 288 to 289**
Follow your recruitment policy and confirm the appointing authority. Maintained schools and PRUs must have at least one trained interviewer. Governors and proprietors should ensure everyone involved in recruiting staff to work with children is appropriately trained.

☐ **Define the work and checks** **KCSIE SHOULD 290 / ACAS PRACTICE**
Set job-related criteria, safeguarding responsibilities, contact with pupils and whether the post is regulated activity. Agree what evidence the panel will use. State pay, hours, contract and any flexible options you can offer.

☐ **Check the advert for fairness** **MUST / ACAS PRACTICE**
Use criteria related to the work. Check for direct or indirect discrimination and offer an accessible application route and reasonable adjustments where required. Keep equality monitoring separate from selection.

☐ **State the safeguarding requirements** **KCSIE SHOULD 291 to 292**
Include the school’s safeguarding commitment, checks and the post’s responsibilities. Say whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Explain the barred-person application offence for regulated activity in the application information.

☐ **Issue the application pack** **MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 293 to 295**
Provide or link to the child protection and employment of ex-offenders policies. Use an application form for names and contact details, NI number, full history with gaps, qualifications, referees and evidence against criteria. Accept CVs only alongside it. Tell applicants how their data will be used.

Advert approved by and date _____

02 SHORTLIST AND INTERVIEW

Selection and references

Complete this stage before confirming an appointment. Record why candidates meet the criteria and how you resolved concerns.

☐ **Shortlist against the person specification** KCSIE SHOULD 300 / ACAS PRACTICE
Use at least two people. Apply the same criteria, consider gaps and inconsistencies and record points to explore. Use the same people for shortlisting and interview where practicable.

☐ **Request declarations at the right stage** KCSIE SHOULD 296 to 299
Ask shortlisted candidates only for the relevant suitability and criminal record declaration, subject to filtering rules. Do not request protected convictions or cautions. Ask applicants to sign that their information is true. If signed electronically, ask shortlisted candidates to sign the hard copy at interview.

☐ **Decide whether to search online** KCSIE SHOULD 301 / MUST
Consider an online search for publicly available, role-relevant information on shortlisted candidates and tell them it may happen. Follow data protection and equality requirements. Give candidates a chance to explain relevant findings.

☐ **Request references directly** KCSIE SHOULD 302 to 304 / ACAS PRACTICE
Aim to receive them before interview under KCSIE, which differs from Acas's general offer-stage advice. Explain timing early and obtain permission before contacting a current employer. Use an authorised referee from the current employer, verify recent relevant employment if not currently employed and seek the last employer where the candidate worked with children if needed. Avoid open or applicant-supplied references.

☐ **Verify references and resolve discrepancies** KCSIE SHOULD 303 to 304
Verify the source and content, ask why the person left, compare the history with the application and clarify vague or inconsistent answers. Resolve concerns before confirming appointment. When providing school references, give the facts of substantiated safeguarding matters that meet the harm threshold. Apply Part four to low-level concerns.

☐ **Make the interview accessible and consistent** MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 305 to 307 / ACAS PRACTICE
Ask about adjustment needs and make reasonable adjustments where required. Use structured core questions and agreed criteria. Ask about motivation for working with children, relevant examples and gaps or frequent moves. Avoid pre-offer health or disability questions except where lawfully permitted.

☐ **Record the decision** KCSIE SHOULD 305 to 310 / ACAS PRACTICE
Use suitable selection methods and involve pupils meaningfully and appropriately. Record evidence, outcomes and reasons, including how safeguarding concerns were resolved. Tell candidates when they will hear and how to request feedback.

Panel decision recorded by and date _____

03 VERIFY BEFORE APPOINTMENT

Pre-employment checks

Use one copy per successful applicant or enter a candidate reference. Tick completed checks and record the date and evidence in the appropriate record.

Candidate reference _____ Target start _____

☐ **Issue a written conditional offer** KCSIE SHOULD 313 / ACAS PRACTICE
State checks and terms, proposed start date and how to accept. If a condition is not met, review the evidence and discrimination implications before withdrawing. Explain the outcome.

☐ **Verify identity and UK right to work** MUST / KCSIE 313
Verify the person's identity and previous names where relevant. Perform the prescribed right-to-work check before employment, record the date and keep evidence for employment plus two years. Schedule follow-up checks for time-limited permission where required.

☐ **Obtain the right DBS check** MUST / KCSIE 313 to 327
Obtain the applicable enhanced DBS certificate via the applicant, with children's barred list information for regulated activity. Never request barred list information for ineligible roles. Check the original certificate and consider disclosed information fairly and case by case. Verify any previous-post exception before relying on it.

☐ **Use the DBS Update Service only where eligible** MUST IF USED / KCSIE 328 to 331
Get consent, verify identity and examine the original certificate. Confirm the workforce, level and barred-list coverage match the role before making a status check.

☐ **Verify qualifications and teaching status** MUST WHERE APPLICABLE / KCSIE 313, 332 to 341
Verify required qualifications and, where applicable, QTS and induction using Check a teacher's record. For teaching work in schools, check prohibition, interim prohibition and any current GTCE sanction or restriction.

☐ **Check management and childcare eligibility** MUST WHERE APPLICABLE / KCSIE 335 to 346
In independent schools, academies and free schools, check section 128 for management posts within scope. Where childcare disqualification applies, including relevant reception or wraparound roles, check that the person is eligible.

☐ **Check overseas history** MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 359 to 363
Make appropriate additional checks for time lived or worked abroad, alongside domestic checks. Consider overseas criminal records and, for teachers, regulator information where available. Record alternatives or a risk assessment if evidence is unavailable.

☐ **Verify fitness for the role** MUST WHERE APPLICABLE / KCSIE 313 / ACAS
After a conditional offer, verify physical and mental fitness for relevant duties and consider reasonable adjustments. Limit who can see health information.

04 AUTHORISE AND INDUCT

Start clearance

The panel decision and permission to start are separate. Record who authorised the start and where the evidence is held.

☐ **Clear mandatory checks and outstanding concerns** MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 313, 326 to 327
Confirm all relevant checks are satisfactory and record how concerns or discrepancies were resolved. Where a DBS certificate is pending, default to delaying the start. Any lawful early start in regulated activity requires all other checks, an eligible separate barred list check and appropriate supervision. In EYFS-covered settings, wait for the enhanced DBS including barred list information.

☐ **Update the single central record** MUST / KCSIE 347 to 354
Record whether and when the required identity, DBS and applicable barred list, teaching prohibition, overseas, qualifications and right-to-work checks were completed. Record section 128 for in-scope management posts and agency confirmations as required. A MAT must be able to provide each academy's record separately.

☐ **File evidence securely** MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 355 to 357 / ACAS PRACTICE
Keep required evidence and limit access. Follow the retention schedule for applications and panel notes. A DBS certificate copy is unnecessary for the single central record. If retained for a valid reason, KCSIE advises keeping it for no more than six months.

☐ **Confirm employment terms** MUST / ACAS PRACTICE
Give the principal written statement on or before the first day, where required. Confirm induction, any probation arrangements and who will support the new starter.

☐ **Complete safeguarding induction** KCSIE PARTS ONE AND TWO
Arrange safeguarding and child protection training at induction. Ensure staff read KCSIE Part one in full and understand the school's safeguarding policy, reporting routes, staff code of conduct and who the DSL and deputies are.

☐ **Maintain safeguarding oversight** MUST WHERE TRIGGERED / KCSIE 421 to 433
Use Part four procedures for allegations or low-level concerns. Make a DBS referral where the removal or would-have-removed and conduct or harm conditions are met. For serious teacher misconduct, consider referral to the Secretary of State through the Teaching Regulation Agency as required.

Authorisation record

Decision ☐ Cleared ☐ Hold ☐ Lawful supervised start

Authorised by and date _____

Start date and evidence location _____

If held or supervised, record reason, controls and review date

_____

05 OTHER ROUTES AND SOURCES

Checks for other appointments

Use the relevant route before allowing work or access. Keep the role assessment and evidence with the school's recruitment records.

☐ **Supply staff and third-party providers** **MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 349, 364 to 367**
Get written confirmation of relevant checks and the required DBS certificate, including barred list coverage for regulated activity. Obtain a certificate copy where required because information was disclosed. Verify the person on arrival and record the notification and date on the single central record.

☐ **Contractors and trainees** **KCSIE 368 to 376**
Put safeguarding requirements in the contract. For contractors, establish DBS eligibility, verify identity and keep unchecked contractors supervised and outside regulated activity. For salaried trainees, the school carries out the necessary staff checks. For fee-funded trainees, obtain provider confirmation of checks and suitability.

☐ **Volunteers and the 2026 changes** **MUST / KCSIE SHOULD 313, 317, 383 to 390**
Assess duties, frequency and activity across settings under the updated rules. Supervision alone no longer removes qualifying regular teaching, training, instruction or supervision from regulated activity. Obtain the required enhanced DBS with barred list information. Review existing volunteers newly in scope. Record a risk assessment for volunteers outside regulated activity. Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised.

☐ **Governors, trustees and other settings** **KCSIE 391 to 420**
Use the distinct checks for governors, proprietors, trustees and delegates. For alternative provision, work experience or host families, use the relevant Part three route. Apply the November update to paragraphs 406 and 407 when arranging work experience.

Official sources

DfE | Keeping children safe in education 2026, updated 17 November 2026

Acas | Recruitment, discrimination, selection and offers

Acas | Recruitment checklist

Home Office | Checking a job applicant's right to work

DfE | Check a teacher's record

ICO | Recruitment and selection data protection

Acas | Job references and timing

This form supports your checks. Your governing body or proprietor should confirm the rules for the school type and post before approving an appointment.