INCLUSIVE LEARNING SUPPORT (ILS)

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Version: 1.0

Organisation: Inclusive Learning Support (ILS)
Registered Office: Aylesham, Kent
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Approved By: Director
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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Inclusive Learning Support (ILS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that safer recruitment is a vital part of creating a safe environment for everyone who accesses our services.

ILS is committed to recruiting and retaining employees, volunteers, freelance tutors, contractors, agency workers and other associates who share our commitment to safeguarding.

Every stage of our recruitment process is designed to deter, identify and reject unsuitable applicants and to ensure that individuals appointed to work with children and young people are suitable for their role.

ILS recognises its responsibility to comply with relevant legislation, statutory guidance and safeguarding expectations and to embed safeguarding throughout our recruitment practices.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote safe and robust recruitment practices.
- Prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people.

- Ensure fair, consistent and transparent recruitment.
- Protect children and young people from harm.
- Support compliance with safeguarding and employment requirements.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout recruitment.
- Ensure appropriate pre-employment checks are completed.
- Ensure safeguarding considerations remain central to recruitment decisions.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to individuals recruited or engaged by ILS, including:

- Permanent employees.
- Temporary employees.
- Sessional staff.
- Tutors.
- Freelance tutors and practitioners.
- Outreach practitioners.
- Volunteers.
- Apprentices.
- Students on placement.
- Agency workers.
- Contractors who may have contact with children.
- Directors and trustees, where applicable.

The level of checking and safeguarding requirements will depend on the role, duties and legal requirements applicable to that position.

4. LEGAL AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

ILS carries out recruitment with regard to relevant UK legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), where applicable to the services provided.**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.**
- **Children Act 1989.**
- **Children Act 2004.**
- **Equality Act 2010.**
- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and relevant Exceptions Orders.**
- **Data Protection Act 2018.**
- **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).**
- **Police Act 1997.**

- **Human Rights Act 1998.**
- **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.**

ILS will review its recruitment arrangements when relevant legislation or statutory guidance changes.

5. RECRUITMENT PRINCIPLES

ILS will ensure that recruitment is:

- Child-centred.
- Fair and transparent.
- Consistent.
- Non-discriminatory.
- Based upon merit, competence and suitability.
- Focused on safeguarding.
- Properly documented.
- Conducted with respect for applicants' privacy and data protection rights.

Safeguarding considerations will remain central throughout the recruitment process.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Director

The Director is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented.
- Ensuring recruitment follows safer recruitment requirements.
- Monitoring recruitment compliance.
- Ensuring appropriate recruitment records are maintained.
- Ensuring recruitment personnel receive appropriate guidance or training.
- Reviewing this policy annually.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- Advise recruitment panels on safeguarding matters.
- Support the assessment of safeguarding concerns arising during recruitment.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding considerations are incorporated into recruitment.
- Support appropriate safeguarding training.

- Escalate serious concerns where necessary.
- Maintain or oversee relevant safeguarding records.

Recruitment Panel

Recruitment panel members will:

- Follow safer recruitment procedures.
- Assess applicants consistently against the person specification.
- Explore safeguarding-related issues where appropriate.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Record recruitment decisions and reasons.
- Escalate concerns appropriately.

7. VACANCY PLANNING

Before advertising a vacancy, ILS will:

- Confirm the need for the role.
- Produce an up-to-date job description.
- Produce a person specification.
- Identify safeguarding responsibilities.
- Determine the appropriate level of DBS check based on the role and legal eligibility.
- Identify required qualifications and experience.
- Identify any professional registration requirements.
- Consider whether the role involves regulated activity.
- Identify any relevant risk-assessment requirements.

Job descriptions will clearly identify safeguarding responsibilities where appropriate.

8. ADVERTISING VACANCIES

ILS advertisements will clearly state our commitment to safeguarding.

Where appropriate, advertisements may include wording such as:

Inclusive Learning Support is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Successful applicants will be subject to safer recruitment checks appropriate to the role, which may include DBS clearance, reference checks, identity verification, right-to-work checks and qualification verification.

Job advertisements will encourage applications from individuals who share the values and safeguarding commitments of ILS.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

ILS will normally require applicants to complete an application form.

CVs may be accepted as supporting information but will not normally replace the required application information.

Applicants may be required to provide:

- Full employment history.
- Explanations for significant employment gaps.
- Qualifications.
- Relevant professional experience.
- Referee details.
- Relevant professional registrations.
- Declarations relating to suitability to work with children.
- Confirmation that the information provided is accurate.

Incomplete applications may not be progressed.

10. SHORTLISTING

Applications will be assessed against the published person specification.

The recruitment panel will consider:

- Relevant qualifications.
- Experience.
- Skills.
- Employment history.
- Career progression.
- Employment gaps.
- Inconsistencies.
- Relevant safeguarding information.
- Suitability for the role.

Shortlisting decisions will be documented.

Where concerns or inconsistencies arise, these may be explored further during the recruitment process.

11. ONLINE SEARCHES

Where appropriate, lawful and proportionate, ILS may undertake online searches of shortlisted candidates using publicly available information.

The purpose of such searches is to identify information that may raise legitimate safeguarding or suitability concerns.

Online searches will be conducted fairly and consistently and will not be used to discriminate against applicants or investigate information unrelated to the requirements of the role.

Applicants will be given appropriate information about such checks where required.

12. REFERENCES

ILS will normally seek at least two satisfactory references before confirming an appointment.

References should, where possible:

- Come directly from the referee or verified organisation.
- Include the applicant's current or most recent employer.
- Confirm dates of employment or engagement.
- Provide information relevant to the applicant's suitability for the role.
- Identify relevant disciplinary or safeguarding matters where appropriate and lawful.

Open testimonials will not normally be accepted as a substitute for appropriate references.

Any concerns arising from references will be investigated and considered before an appointment is confirmed.

13. INTERVIEW PROCESS

Shortlisted applicants will normally attend a structured interview.

The interview may explore:

- Motivation for working with children and young people.
- Safeguarding knowledge.
- Professional boundaries.
- Behaviour management.
- Communication skills.
- Values and attitudes.
- Previous safeguarding experience.

- Understanding of SEND and individual needs where relevant.
- Employment history.
- Suitability for the specific role.

Applicants should expect appropriate safeguarding-related questions.

Where concerns arise during interview, these will be recorded and considered before a recruitment decision is made.

14. PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS

No appointment will normally be confirmed until the checks required for the role have been completed satisfactorily.

Depending on the role, these may include:

- Identity verification.
- Right-to-work verification.
- Appropriate DBS check.
- Children's Barred List check where legally permitted and applicable.
- Qualification verification.
- Professional registration checks.
- Employment history verification.
- Reference checks.
- Overseas criminal-record or suitability checks where appropriate.
- Other checks required by law, contract or commissioning arrangements.

The checks required will depend on the duties and legal status of the role.

15. DBS CHECKS

Where a role is eligible for a DBS check, ILS will obtain the appropriate level of check in accordance with the requirements applicable to that role.

Where a role involves regulated activity with children, ILS will complete the relevant checks permitted or required by law, including a Children's Barred List check where applicable.

DBS information will be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection requirements.

Where information is disclosed on a DBS certificate, ILS will undertake an appropriate and proportionate assessment of the information before making a recruitment decision.

16. OVERSEAS APPLICANTS

Where an applicant has lived or worked overseas, ILS may seek additional information where appropriate and lawful.

This may include:

- Overseas criminal-record checks.
- Certificates of good conduct.
- Additional references.
- Verification of overseas qualifications.
- Other relevant suitability information.

The checks required will depend on the applicant's circumstances and the requirements of the role.

17. CONDITIONAL OFFERS

Where appropriate, employment or engagement offers will remain conditional upon satisfactory completion of all required recruitment checks.

If required checks identify information that raises safeguarding or suitability concerns, ILS will assess the information before deciding whether the appointment can proceed.

Where checks are unsatisfactory, an offer may be withdrawn.

18. STARTING WORK BEFORE ALL CHECKS ARE COMPLETE

ILS will seek to complete required pre-employment checks before an individual begins working with children.

In exceptional circumstances, where a person may need to begin work before all checks have been completed, this will only occur where legally permitted and where appropriate safeguards are in place.

Any such arrangement will be subject to appropriate management approval, risk assessment, supervision and restrictions on duties where necessary.

19. INDUCTION

Every new member of staff or relevant worker will complete an appropriate induction.

This will include, where relevant:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Safeguarding procedures.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Behaviour expectations.
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Health and Safety.
- Lone Working.
- Data Protection.
- Online Safety.
- Professional boundaries.
- Reporting concerns.
- Role-specific procedures.

Staff will be introduced to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and relevant reporting arrangements before working independently.

20. SAFER RECRUITMENT TRAINING

Individuals involved in recruiting staff who work with children should receive appropriate safer recruitment guidance or training.

ILS will ensure that those responsible for recruitment understand:

- Safeguarding responsibilities.
- Safer recruitment procedures.
- Appropriate interviewing techniques.
- Reference checking.
- DBS and suitability checks.
- Professional boundaries.
- Equality and non-discrimination requirements.
- Data protection and confidentiality.

21. PROBATION AND EARLY EMPLOYMENT

Where applicable, new employees will complete a probationary period.

During probation:

- Safeguarding practice will be monitored.
- Supervision meetings will take place.
- Performance will be reviewed.
- Concerns will be addressed promptly.
- Additional support or training may be provided.

Failure to meet safeguarding or professional standards may result in appropriate action, including termination of employment where applicable.

22. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be recruited using appropriate safer recruitment procedures.

Depending on their role and level of contact with children, volunteers may require:

- DBS checks.
- References.
- Identity verification.
- Safeguarding training.
- Induction.
- Supervision.
- Other checks appropriate to their role.

23. FREELANCE, CONTRACTED AND AGENCY STAFF

Where ILS engages freelance tutors, contractors, outreach practitioners or agency workers who may work with children, ILS will ensure that appropriate checks and safeguarding assurances are obtained before they undertake relevant duties.

Depending on the arrangement, ILS may require evidence of:

- Identity verification.
- Right-to-work status where applicable.
- Appropriate DBS clearance.
- References.
- Qualifications.
- Professional registration.

- Safeguarding training.
- Relevant insurance.
- Other checks required by law, contract or commissioning arrangements.

ILS will maintain appropriate records of checks and assurances.

24. RECORD KEEPING

Recruitment records will be stored securely and confidentially.

Records may include:

- Application forms.
- Shortlisting records.
- Interview notes.
- References.
- DBS information or status records.
- Identity checks.
- Qualification checks.
- Right-to-work verification.
- Employment history verification.
- Professional registration checks.
- Risk assessments where applicable.
- Recruitment decisions.

Records will be retained in accordance with applicable data protection requirements and the ILS Data Retention Schedule.

25. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Recruitment information will be handled confidentially.

ILS will process applicant and staff information in accordance with:

- UK GDPR.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- ILS GDPR & Data Protection Policy.
- ILS Privacy Notices.
- Relevant recruitment procedures.

Access to recruitment information will be restricted to individuals who have a legitimate reason to access it.

26. WHISTLEBLOWING

ILS encourages staff and applicants to raise genuine concerns about recruitment practices or safeguarding without fear of inappropriate retaliation.

Concerns may include:

- Failure to complete required checks.
- Unsafe recruitment practices.
- Falsification of recruitment records.
- Attempts to bypass safeguarding procedures.
- Concealment of relevant information.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Discrimination.
- Other serious recruitment concerns.

Concerns will be considered and investigated appropriately.

27. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

ILS is committed to equality of opportunity and fair recruitment.

Recruitment decisions will not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

ILS will make reasonable adjustments during recruitment where required.

All applicants will be assessed against the requirements of the role and the suitability criteria established by ILS.

28. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Director will monitor compliance with this policy through appropriate processes, which may include:

- Recruitment audits.
- Personnel file reviews.
- Safeguarding audits.
- DBS monitoring.
- Review of recruitment records.
- Training records.
- Annual policy review.

Lessons learned from incidents, audits, complaints and changes in legislation or statutory guidance will be considered when reviewing this policy.

29. RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- GDPR & Data Protection Policy.
- Privacy Notices.
- Lone Working Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Complaints Policy.
- Online Safety Policy.
- Individual Risk Assessment Procedures.
- Staff Induction Procedures.

APPROVAL

Approved by: Neo Matsoso-Ndlovu

Position: Director

Signature: NMN

Date: 09/09/2026

Next Review Date: September 2027