North London Collegiate School Kobe

Safer Recruitment Policy
- August 2026 -

Policy Lead	Edward Baker
Reviewed By	Founding Principal
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AI summary
NLCS Kobe's Safer Recruitment Policy establishes a comprehensive, dynamic framework to prioritize child welfare throughout the entire recruitment and employment cycle, complying with international safeguarding standards and Japanese law.

The policy applies to all teaching, associate, and managerial staff, as well as volunteers and contractors who have regular contact with children.

Four Core Safeguarding Stages

- Discourage: Publicly promoting the school's safeguarding commitment to deter unsuitable candidates.
- Reject: Identifying and excluding applicants who do not meet safeguarding requirements.
- Prevent: Conducting rigorous pre-employment screening, including identity verification, right-to-work checks, criminal/police record checks (via third-party providers like Avvanz), teaching prohibition checks, and professional reference verification.
- Observe and Supervise: Maintaining ongoing vigilance through structured induction, a 3-month probation period, consistent supervision by senior colleagues, and regular performance appraisals.

Key Procedures and Requirements

- Recruitment Planning: Vacancy postings must include a mandatory safeguarding statement, clear reporting lines, and disclosure expectations. Candidates are screened by at least two trained staff members.
- Interviews: Must involve at least two trained staff (one with safer recruitment training) and include at least one safeguarding-focused question based on actual experience.
- Documentation: All checks are documented in the Single Central Record (SCR), reviewed termly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Ongoing Conduct: Staff must adhere to a strict Code of Conduct. Any allegations or low-level concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal or DSL.
- Governance: The policy is reviewed every two years, and relevant staff must complete refresher training in safer recruitment via TES or similar bodies at the same frequency.

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Purpose
NLCS Kobe is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. Our highest priority is ensuring that every student learns in an environment that is safe, secure and free from harm. Recruitment decisions at our school must therefore balance two essential obligations:

1. To attract and select the best professionals for our community
2. To embed safeguarding and child protection principles at every stage of the recruitment process

This policy outlines our safer recruitment procedures in line with international best practice, the International Task Force on Child Protection (ITFCP) standards and UK safer recruitment guidance, while respecting the requirements of Japanese labour, employment and data protection laws. All members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Human Resources and anyone involved in recruitment are required to understand and follow this policy.

Scope
This policy applies to the recruitment of:
1. Teaching staff, associate staff and managerial staff
2. Volunteers and independent contractors who work regularly with children

It covers all stages of recruitment: pre-recruitment planning, advertising, application, interview and assessment, pre-employment checks, induction and ongoing supervision.

Principles of Safer Recruitment
Safer recruitment practices are not intended to be a checklist or static set of processes that end at the time of hire. Instead, safer recruitment at NLCS should be viewed as a dynamic and ongoing set of processes that continually improve, evolve and maximise our efforts to ensure that only those suitable for working with children should be employed.

Our recruitment process is guided by four key safeguarding stages:
1. **Discourage:** Promote the school's safeguarding commitment publicly to deter unsuitable applicants
2. **Reject**: Identify and reject applicants who do not meet safeguarding expectations
3. **Prevent**: Conduct robust checks to minimise the risk of employing someone unsuitable to work with children
4. **Observe and Supervise**: Monitor staff behaviours post-appointment, ensuring vigilance continues throughout employment

Recruitment Planning
All job descriptions, advertisements, application materials and the school website must include the following safeguarding statement:

"The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and all staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment. This post is subject to satisfactory background and police checks. Full details are available in the School's Recruitment, Selection & Disclosure Policy and Procedure and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy."

In addition to any other required information, every vacancy posting must include:
- Job title and reporting lines
- Duties, responsibilities, job scope and safeguarding expectations
- Salary range and probationary period
- Statement of responsibility for safeguarding children

Person specifications must highlight the qualifications, skills, and personal qualities required for working with children safely and responsibly.

Applicants must complete an application form via School Recruiter in addition to any other submissions. The form requires:

- Full name
- Complete employment and education history with explanations for any gaps
- Disclosure of convictions, cautions or disciplinary action
- Signed declaration that the applicant is not barred from working with children
- Names and contact details of at least two professional referees, including the most recent employer

All advertisements, whether direct or through agencies, must include the school's safeguarding statement and the expectation that applicants will undergo rigorous checks. An applicant information pack must be provided, containing:

- Job description
- Person specification
- Safeguarding policy summary

During the candidate screening and shortlisting stage, the follow guidelines will be adhered to:

- At least two trained staff must review applications to ensure consistency
- Applications are checked for safeguarding evidence, unexplained gaps, or anomalies
- References are sought prior to hire and must comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children
- In compliance with Japanese law, online searches may be conducted to identify publicly available concerns or indication of criminal activity

Interviews and Assessments

Interview Process

- Interviews must be conducted by at least two trained staff - one of which is safer recruitment trained
- Video interviews may be used with consent and clear explanation of how recordings are stored
- Applicants must present original identity documents, proof of right to work in Japan and qualifications

Interview Content

Interview questions will include at least one safeguarding awareness question. Interview questions should also focus on actual previous experience rather than hypothetical scenarios. Applicants may also be asked to complete role-specific tasks, such as lesson planning, presentations or supervised group activities. Candidates who demonstrate unsafe attitudes, lack of safeguarding knowledge, or provide unclear responses regarding employment history will not be appointed.

Pre-Employment Checks

Before confirming an appointment, the school will carry out the following checks:

1. Identity Verification: Birth Certificate plus secondary ID, such as passport, driver's licence or national ID card (those born in countries that do not issue birth certificates, must provide two pieces of secondary identification)
2. Right to Work in Japan: Valid visa / status of residence / Japanese national
3. Background Checks:
    - All applicants must undergo police checks and/or criminal checks and social media checks via Avvanz Background Screening or similar third party

provider, where possible covering all countries of residence from 18 years of age
    - Those who have resided in the UK at any point for 6 months or longer are required to obtain an International Child Protection Certificate (ICPC) via ACRO
4. Prohibition Check: For teachers, check through COBIS or equivalent to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching
5. Professional Qualifications Verification: Cross-check with awarding bodies
6. Employment References: Minimum of two professional references, one from the most recent employer and one verified by phone. For employees that have previously worked in a school, a verbal check with the most recent Head of School is required.
7. Self-Disclosure: Signed declaration of suitability

All checks must be documented in the Single Central Record (SCR) maintained by the school. The school's DSL and the person responsible for maintaining the SCR will meet at least once per term to review the SCR and supporting documentation, as well as strategize for any practical challenges that may occasionally arise.

The school will periodically require employees to update or renew certain background checks. Such timing and requirements are at the school's discretion.

If any part of the background screening process is incomplete at the intended time of hire, the Principal and Director of People & Operations must conduct a comprehensive Risk Assessment to determine whether or not the person can be permitted to work in the school in any capacity, including under direct supervision. The outcome of this Risk Assessment will be communicated to the SLT and the DSL.

Induction and Training
All new staff and volunteers will undergo a structured induction that includes:
- Safeguarding and child protection training
- Introduction to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Review of the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, and Whistleblowing Policy
- Clear explanation of professional boundaries, safe practices, and reporting procedures

All new employees will undergo a 3-month probationary period where their conduct with children and overall performance will be monitored.

Observation, Supervision, and Appraisal
Beyond the recruitment phase, the school will:
- Monitor staff behaviour throughout the induction period, probationary period and beyond
- Ensure all staff are supervised by a senior colleague
- Operate regular performance appraisals that include safeguarding practice
- Encourage staff to raise safeguarding concerns through a clear whistleblowing procedure

Volunteers, contractors, onsite vendors and visitors must always be given red lanyards and supervised while in the school. It is ***always*** assumed that anyone not directly employed by the school should not have unsupervised access to children, unless specifically cleared by the Principal and Director of People & Operations.

Code of Conduct
All staff must agree and adhere to the school's Code of Conduct, which includes:
- Maintaining professional boundaries

- Prohibiting inappropriate relationships with students
- Respecting confidentiality while recognising duty to report safeguarding concerns
- Using technology responsibly
- Treating all children with dignity and respect

Allegations and Low-Level Concerns
All allegations against staff must be reported immediately to the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Allegations include:

- Harm or risk of harm to a child
- Possible criminal offence against a child
- Behaviour indicating risk of harm

Staff must also report low-level concerns (e.g., inappropriate language, boundary concerns, unnecessary physical contact). These will be recorded and addressed as part of the school's safeguarding culture.

Legal Compliance in Japan
This policy is implemented in compliance with:

- Japanese Labour Standards: ensuring non-discriminatory practices and adherence to privacy laws
- Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI): Data collected during recruitment will be securely stored, used only for recruitment purposes, and destroyed when no longer required.
- Immigration Control Act – ensuring all employees have legal right to work in Japan

Governance and Monitoring

- Policy will be reviewed every two years
- Recruitment panels must always include at least one member trained in safer recruitment
- Safeguarding must be a standing agenda item in governor and trustee meetings
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will oversee compliance with this policy

Safeguarding Concerns
In accordance with international safeguarding best practice, any suspicion, disclosure or evidence of child abuse or neglect by and adult must be reported immediately to the Principal and by a child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. These cases will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and may require referral to external child protection authorities.

Training and Communication
This policy will be made available to all employees and those involved in recruiting will receive appropriate training and support. All those working in Human Resource functions and members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be required to undertake Safer Recruitment training via TES, or a similar body, at least once every two years. As part of our safeguarding culture, those same staff will be encouraged to pursue regular safer recruitment training via seminars, short courses and workshops to keep appraised of current best practice.