RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

V4 SEPTEMBER 2026

Author	Training and Quality Manager
Review Date	August 2027

Tilford House, Tilford Business Park, Weydon Lane, Farnham, Surrey. GU9 8QT
t. 01252 514999 **e.** info@overworld-amp.uk **w.** www.overworld-amp.uk

Version 2 Sept 24	Simplification of our processes.
Version 3 Sept 25	Two-year review date. Addition of legal framework and scope. Minor updates for KCSIE 2025 compliance
Version 4 Sep 26	Comprehensive review and simplification of the policy. Updated to reflect current recruitment practice and align with KCSiE 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and current safer recruitment guidance.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 3
2. SCOPE 3
3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE 3
4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 4
6. EMPLOYMENT OFFER 7
7. MONITORING AND REVIEW 9
APPENDIX 1. SELF DECLARATION FORM 10

1. INTRODUCTION

Overworld AMP Limited ("the Provision") is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects everyone working on its behalf to share this commitment.

The Provision is committed to safer recruitment practices that help deter, identify and reject unsuitable applicants, while recruiting, selecting and retaining staff, volunteers and contractors with the skills, experience and values required to provide high-quality alternative provision.

Recruitment decisions will be made fairly, consistently and transparently, based on merit, suitability for the role and the ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people. The Provision is committed to equality of opportunity throughout the recruitment and selection process and will make reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

This policy sets out the Provision's safer recruitment and selection procedures and should be read alongside the Provision's Safeguarding and Young Person Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Data Protection and GDPR Policy, and other relevant safeguarding policies and procedures.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals involved in the recruitment, selection, appointment and onboarding of staff working on behalf of the Provision.

It applies to the recruitment and engagement of:

- permanent and fixed-term employees;
- temporary and casual workers;
- agency workers;
- volunteers;
- contractors and self-employed individuals;
- governors, trustees or committee members, where applicable; and
- any other individual engaged to work with, or have regular access to, young people on behalf of the Provision.

This policy applies to all stages of the recruitment process, including workforce planning, advertising, application, shortlisting, interview, pre-employment checks, appointment, induction and probation.

All recruitment activity will be carried out in accordance with current legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements and the Provision's associated policies.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation, statutory guidance, and codes of practice:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- Childcare Act 2006 (where applicable);
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended);
- Equality Act 2010;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);

- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006;
- Immigration Act 2016;
- Police Act 1997;
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012;
- Employment Rights Act 1996;
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice;
- Disclosure and Barring Service guidance;
- Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) guidance (where applicable); and
- NSPCC Safer Recruitment guidance and resources

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. The Directors have overall responsibility for ensuring that recruitment and selection arrangements comply with current legislation, statutory guidance and this policy. They are responsible for:

- promoting a strong safeguarding culture throughout the recruitment process;
- ensuring appropriate safer recruitment procedures are implemented;
- approving appointments to senior roles where appropriate;
- ensuring adequate resources are available to complete pre-employment checks; and
- ensuring concerns relating to safer recruitment are addressed promptly.

4.2. The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and may be delegated responsibility by the Directors for preparing or reviewing job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment advertisements, and participating in recruitment activities where appropriate.

4.3. The Administration Hub is responsible for

- coordinating the recruitment process;
- obtaining references;
- completing pre-employment checks;
- processing DBS application;
- preparing contracts of employment;
- maintaining recruitment records; and
- supporting the onboarding process.

4.4 All staff involved in recruitment and selection must:

- act fairly, objectively and consistently;
- maintain confidentiality throughout the recruitment process;
- declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest;
- contribute to safeguarding-focused selection decisions; and
- comply with this policy and any relevant safer recruitment guidance.

5. PRE-RECRUITMENT PROCESS

5.1. Job Description and Person Specification

- Before a vacancy is advertised, an up-to-date Job Description and Person Specification must be prepared or reviewed to ensure they accurately reflect the duties, responsibilities and requirements of the role.

  5.1.1. A job description must clearly describe the purpose of the role, the principal duties and responsibilities, and the post holder's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people.

Where appropriate, the Job Description must also specify:

- whether the role involves regulated activity;
- that an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required;
- any essential qualifications, registrations or professional memberships; and
- any specific safeguarding responsibilities associated with the role.

5.1.2. **The person specification** must relate directly to the Job Description and identify the essential and desirable qualifications, knowledge, experience, skills, behaviours and personal qualities required to perform the role effectively.

The Person Specification should include the safeguarding competencies, values and behaviours expected of all staff working with young people and be used consistently throughout the recruitment and selection process.

- All Job Descriptions, Person Specifications and recruitment advertisements must include the following statement: *"Overworld AMP Limited is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff, volunteers and contractors to share this commitment. All appointments are subject to satisfactory safer recruitment checks, including an Enhanced DBS check and the receipt of satisfactory references."*
- Job Descriptions and Person Specifications must be finalised before the vacancy is advertised.

5.2. Advertising The Role

- Vacancies may be advertised internally, externally, or both, depending on the requirements of the role and the needs of the Provision. In exceptional circumstances, the Directors may approve an appointment without external advertisement where there is a clear operational justification.
- All recruitment advertisements will:
  - include a safeguarding statement confirming the Provision's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare young people;
  - state that successful applicants will be subject to appropriate safer recruitment and pre-employment checks, including an Enhanced DBS check;
  - identify the closing date and selection process; and
  - direct applicants to the Provision’s website.

5.3. The Application Process

- Vacancies will normally be advertised through an online recruitment platform, the Provision's website or other appropriate advertising methods.
- Applicants will be required to submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae (CV) and, where requested, a covering letter or supporting statement.
- Applications will be reviewed against the Job Description and Person Specification. During the shortlisting process, the Provision will consider the applicant's qualifications, experience, employment history and suitability for the role.
- Any gaps, inconsistencies or anomalies in an applicant's employment or education history will be explored during the selection process and, where appropriate, through references or other pre-employment checks.

- Where the role involves regulated activity with children, applicants will be informed that it is a criminal offence for a person who is barred from engaging in regulated activity with children to apply for the position.

5.4 Shortlisting

- Shortlisting will normally be undertaken using the recruitment platform through which applications are received. Applicants will be assessed objectively against the essential and desirable criteria set out in the advert.
- The Provision reserves the right to reject applications that do not demonstrate the required qualifications, experience or suitability for the role.

5.5 Selection Process

- Shortlisted applicants will normally be invited to attend an interview. Depending on the role, applicants may also be invited to complete a practical assessment, trial session or other selection activity designed to assess their knowledge, skills, experience and suitability for working with young people.
- Selection activities will include consideration of the applicant's commitment to safeguarding, professional values and ability to meet the requirements of the role.

5.6. Internal Applicants

- Internal applicants will be considered fairly and objectively. Where an internal applicant is appointed to a new role, the Provision will ensure any additional safeguarding or pre-employment checks required for that role are completed before the appointment is confirmed.

5.7. The Recruitment Panel

- Recruitment will normally be undertaken by a panel of at least three members of staff, at least one of whom has completed appropriate safer recruitment training, to promote fairness, consistency and objective decision-making. Wherever practicable, the same panel members will participate in both the shortlisting and interview stages.

5.8. Shortlisting

- Applications will be assessed against the Job Description and Person Specification using objective and consistent selection criteria.
- During shortlisting, the Provision will consider:
    - qualifications, experience and skills;
    - employment and education history;
    - any unexplained gaps or inconsistencies; and
    - the applicant's suitability to work with young people.
- Shortlisted applicants will be required to complete the Provision's Self-Declaration Form before interview. This enables applicants to disclose any information relevant to their suitability to work with young people and provides an opportunity for this information to be discussed during the interview.

5.9. Interviews

- Interviews will normally be conducted by a minimum of two members of staff, at least one of whom has completed appropriate safer recruitment training, and will be structured to assess the applicant's knowledge, skills, experience, values and suitability for the role.

- Depending on the position, applicants may also be invited to participate in a practical assessment or trial session to demonstrate their ability to undertake the role.
- During the interview, the panel will:
    - explore the applicant's experience and suitability for the role;
    - assess their understanding of safeguarding, professional boundaries and the welfare of young people;
    - discuss any gaps or inconsistencies in employment or education history;
    - discuss any information disclosed on the Self-Declaration Form;
    - verify identity, qualifications and other documentation where appropriate; and
    - ask safeguarding-related questions appropriate to the role.
    - Interview notes will be retained as part of the recruitment record.
- Appointment decisions will be based on the applicant's suitability, experience, qualifications and ability to meet the requirements of the role.
- The Directors will make the final appointment decision.

6. EMPLOYMENT OFFER

6.1 Conditional Offer of Employment

- Following the selection process, the successful applicant will normally be emailed and offered the position subject to the satisfactory completion of all required pre-employment checks. A formal offer of employment will remain conditional until all checks have been completed and found to be satisfactory.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be informed that they have not been appointed.

6.2 Pre-Employment Checks

- Employment is conditional upon satisfactory completion of all relevant pre-employment checks appropriate to the role. These may include:
    - verification of identity;
    - verification of the right to work in the UK;
    - verification of qualifications and professional registrations where relevant;
    - verification of employment history;
    - receipt and satisfactory verification of references;
    - an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including a Children's Barred List check where the role involves regulated activity;
    - overseas criminal record or other checks where appropriate;
    - prohibition from teaching checks where applicable;
    - childcare disqualification checks where applicable; and
    - any other checks required by legislation, statutory guidance or the nature of the role.
- Employment will not commence until all required pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed unless an appropriate risk assessment has been completed in accordance with this policy.

6.3 Online Searches

- The Provision may undertake proportionate online searches of shortlisted candidates. Any information identified that is relevant to the applicant's suitability to work with children will be considered fairly, lawfully and in accordance with data protection legislation.

6.4 Verification of Identity and Qualifications

- Applicants will be required to provide original documentation confirming their identity, right to work in the UK and any qualifications or professional registrations required for the role.
- Where an applicant has changed their name, appropriate documentary evidence must also be provided.

6.5 References

- The Provision will try to obtain at least two references before confirming an appointment.
- Where possible:
    - at least two references should be professional references that verify the applicant's employment, education or suitability to work with young people;
    - one professional reference should normally be obtained from the applicant's current or most recent employer. Where the applicant has recently left education or has limited employment history, a reference from a teacher, tutor or placement supervisor may be accepted; and
    - a third reference may be obtained from a person who knows the applicant in a personal capacity where required by a commissioning authority or where it assists the Provision in assessing the applicant's suitability.
- References will be obtained directly from referees where practicable and any discrepancies, concerns or insufficient information will be explored and resolved before employment is confirmed.
- References will be considered alongside all other information gathered during the recruitment and selection process.

6.6 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- All staff employed by the Provision will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as part of the safer recruitment process, regardless of their role.
- Where the role involves regulated activity with children, the Enhanced DBS check will include a Children's Barred List check in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance.
- Employment will remain conditional until the required DBS check has been completed and considered satisfactory. In exceptional circumstances, where employment commences before the DBS certificate has been received, appropriate supervision will be maintained, and the individual will not undertake unsupervised regulated activity until all required checks have been satisfactorily completed.
- A risk assessment will be completed where an applicant discloses information, or where safeguarding information is identified during the recruitment process, to determine whether the individual is suitable for the role. Any decision will take account of the nature of the information, the role, the relevance to safeguarding, and current legislation and statutory guidance.

6.7 Overseas Checks

- Applicants who have lived or worked outside the United Kingdom may be required to provide additional evidence of their suitability to work with young people, including overseas criminal record certificates, certificates of good conduct, professional standing or other equivalent documentation where available

6.8 Agency Staff, Contractors and Volunteers

- The Provision will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and pre-employment checks have been completed for agency workers, contractors and volunteers before they undertake work on behalf of the Provision.
- No individual who has not completed the required safeguarding checks will be permitted to work unsupervised with young people.

6.9 Records and Confidentiality

- Recruitment records, including DBS information, will be processed, retained and disposed of in accordance with data protection legislation, the DBS Code of Practice and the Provision's Data Protection and GDPR Policy.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- The Directors are responsible for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and ensuring that recruitment and selection practices remain compliant with current legislation, statutory guidance and safeguarding requirements.
- This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, organisational practice or following the identification of lessons learned from safeguarding incidents, complaints, audits or inspections.
- Any amendments to this policy will be approved by the Directors and communicated to all relevant staff.

APPENDIX 1. SELF DECLARATION FORM

Please disclose below any information that may be relevant to your suitability to work with children or young people. This information will be considered fairly and confidentially and does not necessarily prevent employment. Please include:

- Any criminal convictions, cautions or other relevant criminal history that you are legally required to disclose.
- Whether you are included on the Children's Barred List or subject to any prohibition or restriction that would prevent you from working with children.
- Whether you are subject to a Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) prohibition order or any other professional prohibition, restriction or sanction relevant to the role.
- Any ongoing criminal investigations or pending prosecutions (where legally disclosable).
- Any relevant overseas criminal record information or equivalent information from countries where you have lived or worked.

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(please write N/A if not applicable, rather than leaving it blank)

I declare that the information provided on this form is true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that providing false or misleading information, or failing to disclose relevant information, may result in my application being withdrawn or, if appointed, disciplinary action which could include dismissal.

Signature _____Date _____

Print name _____

Please scan and email back and bring the original copy to interview.

Information provided on this form will be handled confidentially and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.