

Guardians — UK —

Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction

Guardians UK is committed to providing the best possible care to its pupils and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The Company is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all its staff. The Company recognises that, to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The aims of the Company's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible people are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally, consistently and with due reference to The Equality Act 2010;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), *Keeping children safe in education (2025) (KCSIE)*, *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DUCA)*, the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2023 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS); and
- to ensure that the Company meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy and all other Guardians UK literature in particular:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

General Principles

Employees should only be involved in the recruitment and selection process if they understand the role they are undertaking and have successfully completed a recognised Safer Recruitment training course and hold a current certificate.

If an employee involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and not take a leading role in the recruitment and selection decision-making process to avoid any potential conflict of interest.

Guardians UK actively recruits, inducts and trains staff for 2 different types of roles:

1. Employees e.g. Regional Guardians, Administrator
2. Contractors e.g. Host Families & Drivers

Recruitment and selection procedure for employees

Potential posts will be advertised appropriately and interested applicants can request application forms, job descriptions, person specifications and all company policies.

After completing an application form, the applicant may then be invited to attend an interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. At least 2 closed references will be requested and, when possible, these will be collected prior to attending interview. All shortlisted applicants will be questioned at interview about their suitability to work with children and Guardians UK will conduct an online search of each shortlisted candidate.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on several factors including appropriate background, ID, Barred List, Enhanced DBS checks and online searches.

All successful applicants will receive a comprehensive induction programme including child protection training and regular updates.

New employees will take part in an organised appraisal programme enabling them to progress appropriately and Guardians UK to regularly assess the suitability of new candidates.

Each new employee will undergo a 6-month probationary period.

Recruitment and selection procedure for host families

Posts will be advertised appropriately and interested applicants encouraged to have an initial informal discussion about the role and their suitability for it.

Applicants can then request application forms, job descriptions, person specifications, host family handbook, health questionnaire and all company policies including staff code of conduct.

Upon receipt of completed application form (to include details of 2 referees), and assuming Guardians UK keen to continue with the application, the company may request an interview at the primary carer's (lead person in the host family) home at a mutually convenient date and time. Guardians UK to request references at this point and conduct an online search.

Once the interview has been confirmed, Guardians UK will email details of ID & household documents which will need to be checked at that interview, so the applicant is fully prepared along with the Health Questionnaire for the primary carer to complete. It is best practice to hold the

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interview at a time when all members of the regular household, especially those aged 16 and over, are present.

At the interview all pre-prepared questions (including key safeguarding ones) to be asked of the primary carer and detailed notes made of the answers. Time to be made available for discussion of any questions arising from the interview or from any of the literature.

The following points need to be covered at the initial interview:

- Ask interview questions & note responses
- Explain the role of a host family
- Focus upon and discuss the staff code of conduct
- Discuss appropriate use of host family vehicle to transport student
- Explain process of Enhanced DBS checks, registering for the Update Service and declaration forms
- Complete Declaration forms
- Take copies of original ID docs for all resident family members 16 years or over.
- Discuss any issues arising from the Health Questionnaire
- Check primary carer's right to work in UK
- Check if host family members have spent more than 3 months abroad in the past 5 years and, if so, explain the need for international police checks
- Carry out any outstanding H&S checks and ensure Guardians UK have copies of all relevant certificates, health & safety paperwork & insurance documents
- Explain how to claim payments and expenses
- Take a tour of the house and assess suitability of hosting and make any suggestions for improvements as necessary
- Explain who the Guardians UK Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is and explain their role. Reinforce the importance of contacting the DSL over any safeguarding concerns and work through key safeguarding points from the policy
- Ensure the primary carer is aware of the Guardians UK policies (Anti-Bullying & Cyberbullying, Child Protection & Safeguarding, Complaints, Emergency Contingency, Menatl Health Policy, Missing Students, Online Safety & Sexting, Prevent / Anti-Radicalisation, Safer Recruitment, Staff Conduct, Whistleblowing) and show them how to access those through www.guardiansuk.com

Assuming both the applicant and Guardians UK are keen to pursue the potential host family's application, the following steps need to be taken by Guardians UK in the days immediately following the interview:

- Forward DBS login details to primary carer and ask all householders 16 years or over to register themselves on the system and apply to the Update Service
- Initiate international police checks if needed
- Upload electronic copies of all documents to appropriate folders
- Add host family details to SCR & annual checklist
- Check receipt and upload references to host family folder and phone referees for further details, if necessary
- Conduct online searches

Once the Enhanced DBS certificates have been received by the host family, arrangements need to be made for Guardians UK staff to view and check the original certificates and if these and other checks raise no concerns then the following steps need to be taken:

- Email primary carer links to the online safeguarding course to complete before hosting starts
- Forward host family Contract to be completed, signed & returned
- Guardians UK to sign the Contract and return a copy to the host family
- Guardians UK to create host family profile & check it with the host family
- Check all documents completed and uploaded
- Organise a return visit to the host family home if needed
- Carry out annual visit and physical check of host family home
- Regular 3-monthly online checks to be made of DBS status

Recruitment and selection procedure for drivers

Posts will be advertised appropriately and interested applicants encouraged to have an initial informal discussion about the role and their suitability for it.

Applicants can then request application forms, job descriptions, person specifications and all company policies including staff code of conduct.

Upon receipt of completed application form (to include details of 2 referees), and assuming Guardians UK keen to continue with the application, the company may request an interview at the Guardians UK office. Guardians UK to request references at this point and conduct an online search.

Once the interview has been confirmed, Guardians UK will email details of ID & other documents which will need to be checked at that interview, so the applicant is fully prepared along with the Health Questionnaire.

At the interview all pre-prepared questions (including key safeguarding ones) to be asked and detailed notes made of the answers. Time to be made available for discussion of any questions arising from the interview or from any of the literature.

The following points need to be covered at the initial interview:

- Ask interview questions & note responses
- Explain the role of a driver
- Focus upon and discuss the staff code of conduct
- Discuss any issues arising from the Health questionnaire
- Explain process of Enhanced DBS checks and registering for the Update Service and declaration forms
- Complete Declaration forms
- Take copies of original ID docs
- Check candidate's right to work in UK
- Check if candidate has spent more than 3 months abroad in the past 5 years and, if so, explain the need for international police checks
- Ensure Guardians UK have copies of all relevant certificates & insurance documents
- Explain how to claim payments and expenses

- Explain who the Guardians UK Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is and explain their role. Reinforce the importance of contacting the DSL over any safeguarding concerns and work through key safeguarding points from the policy
- Ensure the candidate is aware of the Guardians UK policies (Anti-Bullying & Cyberbullying, Child Protection & Safeguarding, Complaints, Emergency Contingency, Menatl Health Policy, Missing Students, Online Safety & Sexting, Prevent / Anti-Radicalisation, Safer Recruitment, Staff Conduct, Whistleblowing) and show them how to access those through www.guardiansuk.com

Assuming both the applicant and Guardians UK are keen to pursue the driver's application, the following steps need to be taken by Guardians UK in the days immediately following the interview:

- Forward DBS login details to the candidate and ask them to register themselves on the system and apply to the Update Service
- Initiate international police checks if needed
- Book driving assessment
- Check status of driving licence
- Upload electronic copies of all documents to appropriate folders
- Add driver's details to SCR
- Check receipt and upload references to driver's folder and phone referees for further details, if necessary
- Conduct online searches

Once the Enhanced DBS certificates have been received by the driver, arrangements need to be made for Guardians UK staff to view and check the original certificate and if these and other checks raise no concerns then the following steps need to be taken:

- Email driver links to the online safeguarding course to complete
- Forward driver Contract to be completed, signed & returned
- Guardians UK to sign the Contract and return a copy to the driver
- Guardians UK to create driver profile & check it with the driver
- Check all documents completed and uploaded
- Check motor insurance includes journeys for business purposes
- Regular 3-monthly online checks to be made of driving licence & DBS status

Use of taxi companies

Guardians UK has established accounts with licensed taxi firms who invoice Guardians UK for journeys undertaken. These taxi firms provide written evidence to state that suitable checks including enhanced DBS checks have been conducted on the drivers who transport the students.

Ongoing management of staff

All successful applicants will receive a comprehensive induction programme including child protection training and regular updates.

If any of the steps in the recruitment of staff and contractors are incomplete or raise concern, then further checks will need to be made before the start of their employment. If these concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved, then the staff will not be appointed.

Where concerns are raised during the course of a member of staff's tenure with Guardians UK, the issue will be dealt with by the Guardians UK Director or another employee and appropriate action taken in the best interests of the individuals involved. Written records will be kept in the Guardians UK accident book (online) of any breaches in the Guardians UK staff code of conduct and shared with staff on a need to know basis.

Only those applicants who share Guardians UK ethos to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people and children in its care should apply for a post.