

Safer Recruitment Policy

For Move the Mind Learning – Alternative Provision on the Farm and The Curious Cabin

1. Introduction

At **Move the Mind Learning**, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. This includes ensuring that our recruitment practices deter, reject, and identify anyone who might pose a risk to the safety or wellbeing of children.

Our provision operates in a unique environment – a working farm and a specialist teaching space known as **The Curious Cabin** – where therapeutic and educational experiences are closely connected with nature, animals, and practical skills. This context requires robust and careful recruitment procedures to ensure that all staff and volunteers are suitable and safe to work with children in both indoor and outdoor settings.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To ensure a consistent and thorough recruitment process that attracts the best and safest candidates.
- To meet statutory safeguarding requirements (e.g. *Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children*).
- To reflect the specific risks associated with an alternative provision setting, including lone working, outdoor work, use of tools or equipment, and interactions with animals.

3. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working or volunteering at **Move the Mind Learning** including:

- Teachers and tutors working in **The Curious Cabin**
- Farm-based activity leaders

- Therapists or external professionals
- Volunteers and students on placement
- Administrative and support staff
- Contractors and sessional workers

4. Safer Recruitment Principles

We adhere to the following key principles:

- **Commitment to safeguarding:** Every recruitment decision must prioritise the welfare of children.
- **Rigorous vetting:** All staff and volunteers are subject to thorough checks.
- **Transparency:** Recruitment processes are open, fair, and based on merit.
- **Proportionality:** Safeguarding procedures reflect the level of responsibility and contact with children in each role.

5. Recruitment Procedures

a. Planning and Role Definition

- Every vacancy has a clear and up-to-date job description and person specification.
- All job adverts include our commitment to safeguarding.
- Risk assessments are in place and consider specific tasks (e.g., handling animals, outdoor supervision, lone working).

b. Advertising and Shortlisting

- All roles are advertised with a clear safeguarding statement.
- Applications are made using a standard application form – CVs are **not accepted alone**.
- Shortlisting is conducted by at least two staff members, and reasons for selection/non-selection are recorded.

c. Interviewing

- Interviews explore:

- Motivation to work with children
- Understanding of safeguarding and child protection
- Ability to maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- At least one panel member has completed safer recruitment training.
- Identity is verified at the interview.

d. Pre-Appointment Checks

No-one begins unsupervised work with children until all the following checks are completed:

- **Enhanced DBS check** with Children's Barred List
- **Two verified references**, including most recent employer
- **Right to work in the UK**
- **Prohibition from teaching** check (for teaching roles)
- **Qualifications and professional registration** verified (where applicable)
- **Medical fitness** declaration

Where relevant:

- Overseas checks (for those who lived or worked abroad)
- Driving licence check (if transporting pupils)

6. Volunteers and Visitors

- Volunteers undergo a risk-based assessment and, where in regulated activity, receive an Enhanced DBS check.
- Supervised volunteers must never be left alone with children.
- All visitors sign in and are supervised unless a full vetting process has been completed.

7. Induction and Training

- All new staff and volunteers complete a structured induction, including:
 - Safeguarding and child protection policies
 - Code of conduct

- Health and safety, including farm-specific risks
- Emergency procedures
- All staff complete safeguarding training and refresh this regularly.

8. Ongoing Monitoring and Supervision

- Performance management includes safeguarding competence.
- Concerns about staff conduct are managed in line with safeguarding and disciplinary policies.
- Whistleblowing procedures are in place and promoted.

9. Record Keeping

- A **Single Central Record (SCR)** is maintained and regularly audited.
- All recruitment documents are securely stored and retained in line with data protection legislation.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually** or sooner if there are changes to statutory guidance or local safeguarding procedures.

Policy Approval

Approved by: N Gillard

Position: Director

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027