



Richmond House

Social Care Services CIC

**Recruitment and Selection
Policy 2026**



Recruitment and Selection Policy

2026 – 2027

Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy

Policy Number: HR-SR

Version: 8.0

Effective Date: 1 September 2026

Review Date: 1 September 2027

Scope

This policy sets out the principles which underpin recruitment and selection at Richmond House Social Care Services. It is designed to meet the necessary recruitment outcomes in accordance with:

- **Regulation 19: Fit and Proper Persons Employed** of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
 - **Regulation 18: Staffing** – requiring providers to deploy enough suitably qualified, competent, and experienced staff
 - **The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026** – coming into force on **7 September 2026** for certain purposes, with full implementation by **6 December 2027**
 - **The CQC Single Assessment Framework and sector-based approach to regulation** – CQC is moving forward with sector-specific frameworks following consultation in early 2026
 - **The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (September 2026)** – with strengthened requirements for recruitment and suitability
 - **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026** – the statutory safeguarding guidance effective from 1 September 2026
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Aim and Values

- To demonstrate Richmond House Social Care Services' commitment to the protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults and to promoting their welfare.
- To ensure that all legal and regulatory requirements, including those updated in 2026, are met in relation to safer recruitment.
- To robustly determine the suitability of the candidate for the post advertised and ensure that the candidate is safe to practice.
- To align with CQC expectations that providers have safe, thorough, and effective recruitment processes that prevent modern slavery and unethical employment practices.

Policy Section

1. Introduction

Richmond House Social Care Services is an equal opportunities employer that recognises the value of diversity. We are committed to ensuring that job applicants and employees are treated fairly within our recruitment and selection processes, whilst acknowledging that the protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults is paramount. We operate a robust, transparent, and consistent procedure to recruit and retain staff with the necessary skills, values, and abilities to provide outstanding care.

We are committed to attracting and recruiting the best-suited people without regard to gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave, disability, or trade union membership.

Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded unless it is clear that the candidate is unable to perform an intrinsic duty of the role, having taken into account all reasonable adjustments. Adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure no applicant is disadvantaged.

CQC's 2026 Expectations: The CQC's Single Assessment Framework (being refined in 2026) emphasises continuous, data-driven monitoring and requires organisations to be audit-ready at all times. Providers must have auditable evidence that all checks are



completed before someone starts work.

2. Legislation

This policy is written with due regard to and in compliance with the following legislation:

Legislation	Key 2026 Updates
The Care Act 2014	Ongoing statutory framework
The Equality Act 2010	Protected characteristics remain in force
The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975	As amended
The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)	Barred list checks remain mandatory
The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006	Right to work checks mandatory
The Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR	Enhanced focus on storage and retention of recruitment data
The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014	Amendment Regulations 2026 coming into force 7 September 2026
The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026	Removing regulation 4(3)(f) and 4(3)(g)
The Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health and Social Care Personnel in England	Ongoing compliance required
The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022	Where applicable for drivers

3. Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs, the Recruitment Department must be informed by the Branch Manager. The job description and person specification will be reviewed to ensure they remain correct and relevant. All vacancies will be advertised using standard, compliant templates across agreed channels (online, newspapers, job centres, social media). Opportunities will be advertised internally where applicable.

CQC Expectation: Your recruitment policy must show the **stages of your recruitment process** (for example, advert, application, shortlisting, interview, checking identity, taking up references, DBS check, offering post).



4. Applications

Applications must be made using the company's official online application form or a paper-based equivalent. CVs will not be accepted in lieu of a completed application form. All enquiries must be directed to the official website. Received applications must be logged on the enquiry tracker.

CQC Expectation: Your policy must show how you make sure **recruitment is fair and complies with legislation**.

5. Pre-Screening

Pre-screening consists of reviewing the application form against the person specification and conducting a structured telephone interview. Candidates who meet the essential criteria must be invited to a face-to-face interview. Invitations will be sent via email, and candidates will be asked, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, to advise of any necessary reasonable adjustments to participate fully in the selection process.

6. Interview Process

The interview process consists of two stages: a telephone screening and a formal face-to-face interview. Interviews must be conducted by at least two trained individuals using a standardised scoring system based on pre-determined questions.

Safer Recruitment Training Requirement (Ofsted 2026): Ofsted inspectors will assess whether safer recruitment is applied consistently. They will check that at least one panel member has completed safer recruitment training.

At the face-to-face interview:

- Candidates must present original ID documents in line with the current DBS ID checking guidelines. Copies must be stamped/annotated with '*Original document seen by*' followed by the verifier's signature and date.
- A full employment history since leaving secondary education must be provided, and any gaps of one month or more must be discussed and satisfactorily accounted for.
- Unsuccessful candidates must be informed promptly and offered constructive



feedback.

A conditional offer of employment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks.

Ofsted 2026 Expectation: Inspectors will check whether **references are obtained before interview** and whether **gaps in employment are explored**.

7. Pre-employment Checks

A verbal conditional offer is subject to:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list(s) check, where appropriate. An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check must be undertaken prior to the recruitment of all care workers.
- Receipt of two satisfactory references – Ofsted inspectors will sample personnel files to test compliance.
- Proof of right to work in the UK.
- Relevant professional qualification validation (where applicable).
- A satisfactory adult/child barred list check (if applicable to the role).
- A full health declaration.
- Verification of previous employment, particularly if the applicant has worked in health or social care or with children or vulnerable adults.
- Verification of why previous employment ended.

For candidates with a criminal record, a self-declaration form must be completed. A risk assessment led by the Head of Recruitment will be conducted, considering the nature of the role, the offence, its relevance, and the time elapsed.

CQC 2026 Expectation: Regulation 19 requires that you employ only fit and proper people, that the Schedule 3 checks are complete before someone starts, and that you monitor fitness while they are employed.



Single Central Record (SCR) Requirements (Ofsted 2026):

Under KCSIE 2026, the SCR must contain:

Check Required	Status
Identity check	✓
Enhanced DBS check	✓
Children's barred list check (where required)	✓
Prohibition from teaching check	✓
Section 128 check (where required)	✓
Right to work in the UK	✓
Qualifications (where required)	✓
Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK	✓
Date each check was completed	✓

8. Induction Training

No employee may undertake any unsupervised care work before successfully completing the company's mandatory induction training, which includes safeguarding, health & safety, and role-specific competencies.

Ofsted 2026 Expectation: Every member of staff must:

- Read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full (Annex A has been withdrawn)
- Understand local safeguarding procedures
- Know how to report concerns
- Understand whistleblowing procedures

CQC Expectation: Providers must have a procedure for **ongoing monitoring of staff** to make sure they remain able to meet the requirements.

9. References

Two professional references must be obtained, one of which must be from the most recent employer, preferably in a care setting. References must be sought on a company proforma and validated by telephone to confirm authenticity. Any discrepancies between



the reference and the application form must be investigated with the candidate. Unsatisfactory references will be escalated to the Head of Recruitment for a decision on progression.

Ofsted 2026 Expectation: Inspectors will check whether references are obtained before interview.

CQC Expectation: Recruitment files must include the right checks, references and evidence that staff can safely carry out their roles.

10. Compliance

An employee is only deemed compliant and cleared to work once the Recruitment Team has confirmed in writing that all pre-employment checks are complete and satisfactory. No early authorisation to work will be permitted without prior written authorisation from the Head of Recruitment or a Company Director.

CQC 2026 Expectation: Full, traceable employment histories and verified references – particularly from the most recent employer – are essential. Checks must be clearly evidenced, stored securely, and linked to decision-making.

11. Employment of Ex-Offenders

Richmond House complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and treats all applicants with a criminal record fairly. We do not discriminate automatically based on convictions. We encourage early disclosure to have an open, frank discussion and conduct a balanced risk assessment focused on the safety of service users. Failure to disclose information that is later revealed on a DBS certificate may lead to withdrawal of the offer or dismissal.

Legal Framework: If an individual has been barred and they knowingly engage in regulated activity with a vulnerable group, they would be committing a criminal offence, punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine. The same applies to employers who knowingly employ somebody who is on the barred list.



12. International Recruitment and Modern Slavery

CQC 2026 Regulatory Position: CQC expects providers to have safe, thorough, and effective recruitment processes that prevent modern slavery.

Where providers are using a recruitment agency, they need to check that the agency is carrying out the recruitment checks that they would normally do.

Our Commitments:

- All international recruitment will comply with the Code of Practice for the International Recruitment of Health and Social Care Personnel in England.
- We will monitor registration applications to check for warning signs of potential exploitation of skilled workers recruited from overseas.
- We will ensure overseas workers are treated fairly and ethically throughout the recruitment process.
- We will maintain safeguarding policies that offer clear support and guidance for staff if they suspect someone is at risk of modern slavery.

CQC Expectation: Providers who treat their staff poorly are more likely to deliver poor quality care. CQC will use its powers to take regulatory and enforcement action where it identifies a risk of harm.

13. Storage of Disclosures

Richmond House complies with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the handling, storage, retention, and disposal of certificate information.

- **Storage:** DBS certificates and information are stored securely in a locked, non-portable container with access limited to authorised personnel.
- **Access:** A log of all individuals who have seen the certificate information will be maintained.
- **Retention:** Certificate information will not be retained for longer than **six months** after the recruitment decision, unless in exceptional circumstances and after consultation with the DBS.
- **Disposal:** Certificates will be destroyed by secure means (shredding). Only the date, name, role, DBS reference number, and recruitment decision may be kept



on file indefinitely.

CQC Expectation: Recruitment files must be audit-ready at all times with up-to-date records.

14. Branch Manager & Senior Management Recruitment

The recruitment of Branch Managers, Area Managers, and Senior Managers requires additional scrutiny. The Head of Recruitment must sign off on the complete application pack, including:

- Application Form
- Two satisfactory references
- Interview notes
- Enhanced DBS check
- Proof of right to work
- Validation of relevant qualifications

All documents must be received within four weeks of the start date. Any disclosures of cautions or convictions, or unsatisfactory references, must be escalated directly to the Company Directors for a final decision.

Guidance Section

Responsibilities

- **Recruiters** are responsible for demonstrating organisational values and adhering strictly to this policy.
 - **The Head of Recruitment / Head of Service** has overall responsibility for the implementation, review, and audit of this policy and its procedures.
 - **Branch Managers** are responsible for initiating the recruitment process and ensuring new starters are not deployed before formal compliance confirmation.
 - **All Staff** involved in recruitment must receive **annual safer recruitment training**.
 - **The Registered Manager** is accountable for ensuring **consistency across the organisation** – if different managers follow different processes, it becomes visible during inspection.
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Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing compliance with all legislative and regulatory changes, including updates to:

- CQC Regulation 19 requirements
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
- KCSIE statutory guidance
- DBS Code of Practice
- International recruitment codes of practice

CQC Expectation: Your policy must show how you'll meet the requirements of regulation 19, including details about what you check at each stage of the recruitment process.

Approved by:

J Al Karaki – Head of Service

Date: 1 September 2026



Document Control

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Effective Date	1 September 2026
Next Review Date	1 September 2027 (or sooner if statutory guidance changes)

Summary of Key Legislative and Guidance Updates (2026–2027)

Guidance / Legislation	Key Changes
Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026	Comes into force 7 September 2026; removes regulation 4(3)(f) and 4(3)(g); full implementation by 6 December 2027
CQC Regulation 19: Fit and Proper Persons Employed	Providers must only employ 'fit and proper' staff; Schedule 3 checks must be complete before someone starts; ongoing monitoring required
CQC Sector-Based Regulation	Moving to sector-specific frameworks following 2026 consultation; emphasis on continuous, data-driven monitoring
CQC Modern Slavery and International Recruitment	New regulatory policy position (June 2026); providers must have safe, thorough recruitment processes that prevent modern slavery
Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (September 2026)	Strengthened requirements for recruitment and suitability , including expectations for staff, volunteers, students and apprentices
KCSIE 2026	Annex A withdrawn; all staff must read Part One in full; SCR must contain all statutory checks
Safer Recruitment Training	Ofsted requires at least one panel member to have completed safer recruitment training
Single Central Record (SCR)	Ofsted will check SCR compliance as one of the first documents requested; even small inconsistencies can raise concerns

This Recruitment and Selection Policy should be read in conjunction with Richmond House's Safeguarding Policy, GDPR Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, and other relevant policies.