



Safer Recruitment

Statement of intent

At Minis we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures and are committed to ensuring that all people working with children are suitable to do so.

The welfare and safety of children is paramount. We recognise that robust safer recruitment procedures are an essential part of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

This policy applies whenever we recruit a new member of staff and, where relevant, to students, apprentices, volunteers and agency staff.

We follow the requirements of the current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), relevant safeguarding legislation, employment legislation and the Equality Act 2010.

The EYFS requires providers to ensure that people looking after children are suitable, appropriately qualified and trained, and have completed the checks required for their role.

Equal recruitment

We are committed to fair and inclusive recruitment and will treat applicants consistently and without unlawful discrimination.

Recruitment decisions will be based on the requirements of the role, the candidate's skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications, safeguarding understanding, suitability and ability to meet the needs of the children and nursery.

We follow our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment and selection process where required.

Advertising vacancies

We use appropriate recruitment platforms, websites, social media and other suitable methods to advertise vacancies.

Recruitment information will make clear our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Job advertisements or recruitment information will state that:

-  posts are subject to appropriate safer recruitment checks;
-  an enhanced DBS check will be required where applicable;
-  two references will be sought;
-  applicants must disclose information relevant to their suitability to work with children in accordance with current legislation;
-  Minis is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
-  Candidates will receive or have access to an appropriate job description and information about the requirements of the role.

Applications and employment history

Applicants will be asked to provide sufficient information for Minis to assess their suitability for the position.

We will review employment and education history and discuss any gaps, inconsistencies or unexplained periods.



Candidates will be asked to provide reasons for leaving their current or most recent employment and, where relevant, previous employment working with children.

Any discrepancies or concerns identified during the recruitment process will be explored with the candidate and satisfactorily resolved before an appointment is confirmed.

Shortlisting/selection process and online searches

Candidates will be shortlisted against appropriate and consistent criteria relevant to the role.

As part of our safer recruitment due diligence, Minis may undertake an online search of shortlisted candidates. Candidates will be informed that such a search may be undertaken.

The purpose of an online search is to identify publicly available information which may be relevant to an individual's suitability to work with children or which may require clarification during the recruitment process.

Online searches will not be used to make decisions on the basis of protected characteristics or irrelevant personal information. Any potentially relevant information identified will be considered objectively and, where appropriate, discussed with the candidate before any decision is made.

Interview and selection

Where possible, the interview panel will consist of at least two people, and we aim to ensure that at least one person involved in recruitment has appropriate safer recruitment knowledge or training.

Candidates will be asked questions against consistent criteria appropriate to the role.

The interview will explore, as appropriate:

- 🌸 experience and qualifications;
 - 🌸 understanding of children's learning, development and care;
 - 🌸 safeguarding knowledge;
 - 🌸 attitudes towards child protection;
 - 🌸 ability to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns;
 - 🌸 previous employment and reasons for leaving;
 - 🌸 gaps or discrepancies in employment history;
 - 🌸 suitability to work with young children.
- 🌸 Candidates will be asked appropriate safeguarding questions to explore their understanding of their responsibility to protect children.

Where a practical exercise forms part of the interview, for example spending a short period interacting with children, this will be appropriately supervised at all times. The candidate will not undertake personal care or have unsupervised access to children.

The interview panel will receive feedback from the team monitoring within the room which will be viewed as part of the decision-making process and selecting the candidate considered most suitable for the position.

Conditional offer and pre-employment checks

Any offer of employment will be conditional upon satisfactory completion of all required safer recruitment and employment checks.

Depending upon the role, these will include:

- 🌸 satisfactory references;
- 🌸 identity verification;
- 🌸 right-to-work checks;



- ✿ qualification verification;
- ✿ enhanced DBS and Children's Barred List checks where required;
- ✿ additional overseas checks where applicable;
- ✿ satisfactory consideration of employment history;
- ✿ appropriate suitability declarations;
- ✿ any other checks legally required for the position.

A candidate will not be permitted to commence employment or volunteering where the EYFS requires an enhanced criminal-record and barred-list check until the required check has been received.

References

Minis requires at least two satisfactory references wherever reasonably practicable as part of our safer recruitment procedure.

This is a higher internal standard than the EYFS statutory minimum, which requires at least one written reference for staff, including students and volunteers.

References will normally include:

the candidate's current or most recent employer;

where the candidate currently or previously worked with children, an appropriate reference from an employer for whom they worked with children;

for newly qualified applicants, students or those without an employment history, an appropriate reference from a tutor, training provider or educational establishment.

We will:

- ✿ not accept open references such as 'To whom it may concern';
- ✿ not rely on the applicant to obtain their own reference;
- ✿ seek references directly from the referee;
- ✿ ensure references are supplied by an appropriately senior or authorised person;
- ✿ not accept references from family members;
- ✿ establish that electronic references have originated from a legitimate source;
- ✿ contact the referee where information is vague, incomplete or gives cause for concern;
- ✿ compare references with the candidate's application and employment history;
- ✿ follow up discrepancies;
- ✿ establish the reason for leaving the candidate's current or most recent relevant employment.
- ✿ Where appropriate, we will ask whether the referee is satisfied with the individual's suitability to work with children.

Any safeguarding information supplied in a reference will be considered carefully before an appointment is confirmed.

When Minis provides references for current or former employees, information will be factual, fair and accurate. Substantiated safeguarding concerns or allegations meeting the harm threshold may be included; unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations should not be included.

Identity, qualifications and right to work

Successful applicants will be required to provide appropriate proof of identity.

We will check an individual's right to work in the UK in accordance with current Home Office requirements.

Where qualifications are required for a role, original or otherwise appropriately verifiable evidence will be checked.

Copies or appropriate records of relevant qualifications and checks will be retained on the employee's personnel file in accordance with our data-protection and record-retention procedures.



Disclosure and Barring Service Check

Minis will undertake the level of DBS check appropriate and legally permitted for each role.

Under the EYFS requirements effective from September 2026, an enhanced criminal-record check with barred-list check is required for relevant persons aged 16 and over, including volunteers who work directly with children, subject to the limited statutory exception for certain occasional supervised volunteers.

A person requiring these checks will not commence working or volunteering until the required enhanced crime record and barred-list check has been received.

Where an applicant is subscribed to the DBS Update Service, Minis will undertake a status check against the original certificate where the certificate is at the appropriate level and for the appropriate workforce.

If an Update Service check indicates that information has changed, a new appropriate DBS check will be obtained.

Minis will maintain appropriate records of completed vetting processes, including where required:

- 🌸 the DBS certificate/check reference number;
- 🌸 date obtained;
- 🌸 identity checks completed;
- 🌸 qualifications checked;
- 🌸 reference checks;
- 🌸 the person who completed or obtained the check.
- 🌸 The nursery does not routinely retain copies of DBS certificates beyond what is necessary and permitted.

Minis may periodically recheck DBS status and/or require updated checks as part of its ongoing safeguarding arrangements.

Information disclosed on a DBS certificate

The presence of information on a DBS certificate does not necessarily mean that an individual is automatically unsuitable to work at Minis.

Where information is disclosed, management will undertake an individual risk assessment and consider all relevant circumstances, including where applicable:

- 🌸 the nature and seriousness of the offence or information;
- 🌸 relevance to the position;
- 🌸 the individual's age at the time;
- 🌸 the length of time that has elapsed;
- 🌸 whether there is a pattern of behaviour;
- 🌸 circumstances surrounding the matter;
- 🌸 the level of supervision associated with the role;
- 🌸 any evidence of rehabilitation;
- 🌸 any explanation provided by the candidate;
- 🌸 the potential risk to children.
- 🌸 Safeguarding and children's welfare will remain the primary consideration.

Overseas checks

Where an applicant has lived or worked outside the UK, Minis will obtain appropriate additional criminal-record checks for the relevant country or countries where these checks are available.

These are additional to, not a replacement for, the required UK DBS and other recruitment checks.



Where a particular overseas check cannot reasonably be obtained, management will consider what additional evidence or risk-management arrangements are required before determining suitability.

Suitability disclosure

Staff and prospective staff must disclose information that could affect their suitability to work with children.

This includes, where disclosure is legally required, information such as:

-  arrests;
-  charges;
-  convictions;
-  cautions;
-  court orders;
-  reprimands;
-  warnings;
-  other relevant circumstances affecting suitability.

This requirement applies both before employment and throughout employment.

New employees will be required to complete Minis' appropriate suitability/self-disclosure documentation.

Staff must immediately inform their manager if circumstances change in a way which may affect their suitability to work with children.

Disqualification

Minis will comply with the requirements relating to disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 and associated regulations.

Where information comes to our attention which could mean that an individual is disqualified or otherwise unsuitable to work within early years provision, we will take appropriate action to safeguard children and obtain advice where necessary.

A person who is legally disqualified from working in connection with early years provision will not be employed in such a role unless a legally valid waiver or other applicable provision permits this.

The nursery will make any required notification to Ofsted.

Health, disability and reasonable adjustments

Minis is committed to equality of opportunity and will make reasonable adjustments where required.

We will not use general health or disability questions as a mechanism for screening applicants before making an offer of employment.

Before an offer, health- or disability-related questions will only be asked where permitted by law, for example to establish whether an applicant requires reasonable adjustments to participate in an interview or assessment, or where another specific Equality Act exception applies.



Following a conditional offer, Minis may obtain appropriate information necessary to identify reasonable adjustments, assess the individual's ability to undertake relevant duties safely and provide appropriate support.

Health information will be treated confidentially and will not be used unlawfully to discriminate against an applicant or employee.

Contractors and visitors

Where contractors or other people may have access to nursery premises, Minis will assess the level of contact they may have with children.

Appropriate safeguards will be implemented according to the circumstances.

People whose suitability has not been appropriately checked will not be given unsupervised access to children.

Where practicable, work will be scheduled outside children's operating hours or contractors will be appropriately supervised.

Agency

Before using agency, Minis will obtain appropriate confirmation from the agency that the checks required for the individual's role have been completed.

This may include confirmation of:

-  identity;
-  enhanced DBS/Children's Barred List status where applicable;
-  right to work;
-  qualifications;
-  references;
-  other suitability checks appropriate to the role.
-  Identification will be checked when agency staff arrive at the setting.

Agency staff will receive an appropriate setting induction, including safeguarding arrangements, emergency procedures, professional expectations and information necessary to keep children safe.

Minis will retain appropriate evidence that the necessary checks have been confirmed.

Agency staff will be appropriately supervised according to their role, experience and the information available to the nursery.

Induction

Once all necessary recruitment checks have been completed satisfactorily, the employee will receive their contract and commence the nursery induction process.

All new team members will be shown where nursery policies and procedures are located and will be required to familiarise themselves with them.

Induction will include, as applicable:

-  safeguarding and child protection;
-  the identity and role of the DSL;
-  whistleblowing;



- ✿ professional boundaries;
- ✿ staff code of conduct;
- ✿ allegations against staff;
- ✿ emergency evacuation procedures;
- ✿ health and safety;
- ✿ equality and inclusion;
- ✿ confidentiality and data protection;
- ✿ mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices;
- ✿ other relevant nursery procedures.

All new staff will undergo an appropriate induction period, during which managers will discuss nursery policies and procedures and establish their understanding and ability to put them into practice.

Probation

New employees will normally be subject to a probationary period in accordance with their contract of employment.

During probation, the nursery will review the employee's:

- ✿ performance;
- ✿ attendance and conduct;
- ✿ safeguarding practice;
- ✿ understanding of policies and procedures;
- ✿ relationships and interactions with children;
- ✿ suitability for the role;
- ✿ training and development needs.

Regular meetings will be held with the manager and/or mentor.

Where required, appropriate objectives and support will be put in place.

Where progress does not meet the required standard, Minis may extend probation where permitted under the employee's contract and company procedures, or take other appropriate action.

Successful completion of probation does not remove the ongoing requirement for staff to remain suitable to work with children.

Ongoing suitability and checks

Safer recruitment does not end once an employee has been appointed.

All members of staff remain responsible for maintaining their suitability to work with children.

Staff must notify management immediately of any information or change in circumstances which could affect their suitability.

Minis requires team members to complete a Team Suitability Declaration prior to commencing employment and this will be reviewed or renewed periodically, including through our annual suitability processes.

DBS status may be periodically reviewed in accordance with the nursery's internal procedures, including through the DBS Update Service where applicable.

Management will consider any information that could raise concerns about continued suitability and will take proportionate action to protect children.



Depending on the circumstances, action could include:

-  further enquiries;
-  risk assessment;
-  additional supervision;
-  restriction of duties;
-  suspension in accordance with our procedures;
-  obtaining safeguarding/HR advice;
-  disciplinary action;
-  referral to external agencies where required.

DBS referrals

Minis recognises its legal responsibilities concerning referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Where the legal criteria are met, Minis will make a DBS referral when an individual working in regulated activity is removed from that activity, or would have been removed had they not resigned, retired or otherwise left, because they have harmed a child, placed a child at risk of harm or otherwise satisfy the relevant referral criteria.

The duty may apply even where information has also been reported to the LADO, children's social care, police or another regulator.

An investigation or disciplinary process will not simply be abandoned because an employee resigns where safeguarding concerns require the matter to be concluded and/or considered for referral.

Ongoing support, supervision and professional development

Staff will receive appropriate supervision, support and professional development throughout their employment.

Managers, deputies, room leaders and mentors will provide support appropriate to the individual's role.

Supervision provides staff with opportunities to:

-  discuss children's development and wellbeing;
-  raise safeguarding concerns;
-  discuss professional practice;
-  identify support or training needs;
-  resolve issues;
-  receive coaching and feedback;
-  reflect on their performance.
-  Staff will have regular opportunities to undertake professional development and training to improve the quality of care, safeguarding and learning experiences provided to children.

Safeguarding training

All relevant staff will undertake safeguarding training in accordance with current EYFS requirements and Minis' safeguarding procedures.

Staff will receive ongoing support to understand and implement the nursery's safeguarding policy and procedures.

The DSL will provide support, advice and guidance in relation to safeguarding matters.

Safeguarding training will be renewed in accordance with the current EYFS requirements and additional refresher training may be provided where appropriate.



Record keeping and confidentiality

Minis will maintain appropriate records of recruitment and suitability checks.

Records will be securely maintained and accessed only by authorised people.

Recruitment and vetting information will be processed in accordance with UK data-protection legislation and the nursery's privacy and record-retention procedures.

Records will include, where required, information about qualifications and completed identity, vetting and reference checks, including the DBS check reference number, date obtained and details of who obtained it.

Information concerning criminal records, safeguarding matters, health and other sensitive information will be handled confidentially and only shared where there is a legitimate and lawful reason.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are:

-  changes in legislation or statutory guidance;
-  changes to EYFS requirements;
-  updates to DBS requirements;
-  relevant safeguarding learning;
-  significant incidents;
-  changes to nursery practice.

All recruitment decisions must place children's safety and welfare at the center of the process.

Key statutory and guidance references

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers - requirements in force from September 2026.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidance, including regulated activity, barred-list checks and the legal duty to refer.

Equality Act 2010, including recruitment and reasonable-adjustment duties.

Childcare Act 2006 and associated disqualification requirements.

Current Home Office right-to-work guidance.

This policy was updated	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
September 2026	Jane Shortland Operations Director	September 2027