

Criminal Records Policy

Excellence • Integrity

Our Mission

Raising Aspirations, Unlocking Potential, Advancing Futures

Our Values

Excellence, Passion, Team Work, Integrity, Innovation, Sustainability, Valuing Others and Supportiveness

Sparsholt College Group

The Sparsholt College Group (the College Group) includes Sparsholt College, Andover College, University Centre Sparsholt, Sparsholt College Services, Westley Enterprises and Andover Town Football Club. College Group policies apply to each part of the group unless specified otherwise.

The Criminal Records *Policy* was approved by the Board of Governors in March 2023. This supersedes previous publications.

Originator: HR Manager
Located: College Group Intranet/Sharepoint
Due for review: February for March 2026

CRIMINAL RECORDS POLICY

Policy Statement

Sparsholt College Hampshire (the College) will take rigorous steps to ensure that children and young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults are protected from people who might be considered to pose a risk to them.

New members of staff will be unable to start working with the College without appropriate checks being made (see Appendix 3 Safeguarding Learners Policy).

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Sparsholt College Hampshire complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificates and Certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Existing Staff Who Change Job Role

The College will seek an enhanced DBS check prior to commencement in any new post, if the previous check was completed more than 3 years prior.

Enrolled Learners Who Require a DBS Certificate for their Work Placement

Learners in some curriculum areas who undertake work placements where they may be interacting with children or vulnerable adults in care settings are required to provide a disclosure certificate to the work placement provider in order to be able to undertake the placement.

Certificate Information

In the case of unsuccessful applicants, the Organisation retains the DBS application form and copies of the identifying documents required for the DBS to process the application. In the case of successful applicants, the Organisation retains a copy of the DBS application form until the Disclosure Certificate has been received and a record has been taken of the Certificate number. In addition, copies of the identifying documents required for the DBS to process the application are retained.

In the case of work experience learners, the organisation will not retain any supporting documentation once a record has been taken of the Disclosure Certificate number and date.

Storage and access

Certificate information will be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Certificates or Certificate information has been revealed and recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given. We will keep a central record of the date of issue of a Certificate, the name of the subject, the type of Certificate requested, the position or work placement for which the Certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the Certificate and the details of the recruitment decision taken. The Organisation will not retain a copy of the DBS Certificate itself, and the original will be returned to the subject.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Certificate information for longer than six months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Should an unsuccessful applicant wish for their DBS application form and supporting documentation not to be retained by the College in accordance with the standard timescales set out in this policy, the applicant may request for the documents to be destroyed and the College will do so within 5 working days. Confirmation of the destruction of the documentation will be communicated to the applicant.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that all Certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a Certificate.

Acting as an Umbrella Body

Before acting as an Umbrella Body (one which countersigns applications and receives Certificate information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), we will take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of Certificate information in full compliance with the DBS Code and in full accordance with this policy. We will also ensure that any body or individual, at whose request applications for Disclosure are countersigned, has such a written policy and, if necessary, will provide a model policy for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.