

Safer Recruitment Procedures for All Applicants



Safe Recruitment and Selection

At St Joseph's Specialist Trust, safeguarding is the heart of our recruitment and selection process. We are committed to ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults are treated with dignity and respect and are protected from all forms of abuse, neglect and mistreatment.

Our commitment to safeguarding is embedded at every stage of the recruitment process, from advertising and shortlisting through to interview, referencing, identity and qualification checks and appropriate pre-employment vetting.

We apply a thorough, consistent and robust safer recruitment process to help ensure that we appoint people who are suitable to work with the children and young people in our care.

All staff at St Joseph's receive mandatory safeguarding and child protection training. This, alongside our safer recruitment procedures, policies and ongoing monitoring, helps us to maintain a strong culture of safeguarding and minimise the risk of harm.

The Key Standards

1. General Recruitment

- a. Only fully completed and signed application forms will be accepted. CVs will not be accepted as a substitute for an application form.
- b. The Trust complies with all relevant legislation and statutory guidance relating to safer recruitment, including the latest version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and *The Children's Home Regulations*.
- c. All applicants will be assessed consistently against the requirements of the role.
- d. All interviews will include questions designed to explore the applicant's understanding of, and commitment to, safeguarding.

2. Interviewing

- a. Recruitment panels will consist of a minimum of two interviewers, with at least one member of the panel having appropriate safer recruitment training and/or a sound understanding of safeguarding.
- b. Interviews will be conducted face to face, including where there is only one shortlisted candidate.
- c. Appropriate notes will be taken during interviews and retained in accordance with the Trust's recruitment and data retention procedures.
- d. The recruitment process will explore matters relevant to safeguarding, including:
 - i. Verification of identity and examination of the applicant's full employment history, including an explanation of any gaps.
 - ii. Exploration of any concerns, discrepancies or inconsistencies identified within the application, references or other information provided by the applicant.
 - iii. Giving applicants the opportunity to declare any relevant information in light of the requirement for an enhanced DBS check.
 - iv. Appropriate questions relating to suitability to work with children and young people.

3. References

- a. References form an important part of our safer recruitment process.
 - i. The Trust will seek at least two references, including a reference from the applicant's current or most recent employer wherever possible.
 - ii. Where an applicant does not wish their current employer to be contacted before interview, an additional referee will be required.
 - iii. References will be requested directly from the named referee.
 - iv. References from relatives or individuals acting solely in the capacity of a personal friend will not be accepted.
 - v. Open or generic references, including to 'whom it may concern' references, will not be accepted.
 - vi. Written references will be reviewed carefully and, where appropriate, verified verbally.
 - vii. Where agency staff are engaged, agencies must demonstrate that they operate appropriate safer recruitment and safeguarding procedures, including obtaining suitable employment references.
 - viii. Referees will be asked specific questions regarding:
 - 1. The applicant's suitability to work with children and young people
 - 2. Any concerns that they may have about the applicant working with children and young people
 - 3. Any relevant safeguarding concerns or information that may affect the applicant's suitability for the role.

4. Pre-Employment Checks

- Before an appointment is confirmed, appropriate pre-employment checks will be completed in accordance with the requirements of the role.
- These may include:
 - An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, including a check of the relevant barred list where the role requires this.
 - Verification of identity.
 - Verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK.
 - Verification of qualifications and professional registration where relevant to the role.
 - Appropriate employment and reference checks.
 - Consideration and investigation of any gaps or discrepancies in employment history
 - Occupational health clearance and any required health checks
 - Additional checks where appropriate, including overseas criminal record checks where required.
 - Any other checks required by legislation, statutory guidance or the nature of the role.
- No individual will be permitted to undertake duties for which the required safeguarding checks have not been satisfactorily completed, unless the Trust is satisfied that any legally permitted interim arrangements are appropriate and in accordance with the relevant requirements.
- Where an applicant has previously worked with children or vulnerable adults, we may seek a reference from the organisation where that work took place, even where this is not the applicant's current or most recent employer.
- For roles involving care, references will be sought for relevant periods of employment, including previous work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

5. Post-Employment

- a. Safer recruitment continues beyond the point of appointment
- b. All new employees undertake an appropriate induction and probationary period designed to establish a clear understanding of the Trust's safeguarding policies, expectations, ethos and culture.

- c. New employees receive clear guidance on safeguarding, professional boundaries and safe working practices.
- d. During their probationary period, employees are appropriately supervised and supported by their line manager.
- e. Concerns regarding conduct, behaviour or safeguarding will be addressed promptly and in accordance with the Trust's relevant policies and procedures.

6. Training

- a. Safeguarding and child protection training is mandatory for all staff and is updated regularly in line with statutory guidance and the needs of the Trust.
- b. Safeguarding knowledge and practice are reinforced through induction, ongoing training, supervision and performance management.
- c. Staff involved in recruitment receive appropriate safer recruitment training, which is regularly updated.
- d. Staff are expected to maintain an ongoing awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and to report concerns through the appropriate channels.

7. Safe Working Culture

- a. Safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of staff.
- b. Line managers monitor staff conduct and performance to ensure that expected standards of behaviour, professional boundaries and safe working practices are consistently maintained.
- c. Staff are expected to promote a culture in which safeguarding concerns can be raised openly and responded to appropriately.
- d. Any safeguarding concerns relating to staff, volunteers or other individuals working within the Trust will be addressed promptly and in accordance with the Trust's safeguarding procedures.

8. Policies and Procedures

- a. All staff, volunteers and other personnel are required to comply with the Trust's policies, procedures, codes of conduct and safe working practices.
- b. All new staff receive clear information about safeguarding expectations, professional conduct and safe working practices as part of their induction.
- c. Staff are expected to understand and follow the Trust's safeguarding and child protection procedures at all times.
- d. Where safeguarding requirements or expected standards of conduct are not followed, appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the Trust's policies and procedures.

St Joseph's Specialist Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.