

# Safer Recruitment

Policy and procedures



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## Safer recruitment Policy

**Date of Policy: February 2020 reviewed February 2021 2022 2023 2024**

This policy super-cedes any other safer recruitment policy.

### Safer Recruitment Policy Statement

Bristol City Football Club, Bristol City Academy, Bristol City Women's Football Club, PGA-ETC, Bristol City Robins Foundation, Bristol Bears Rugby, Bristol Bears Women, Bristol Bears Academy, Bristol Bears Foundation, Bristol Flyers, Bristol Flyers Foundation, Bristol Sport Foundation, Ashton Gate and Bristol Sport are collectively referred to as "the Company".

"The Company" has both a moral and legal obligation to recruit the most suitable person for each vacancy, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital or gender status, pregnancy or maternity or socio-economic background and is committed to providing the quality of opportunity for all.

The rights, dignity and confidentiality of applicants will be respected at all times. (Dignity at work policy)

The policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and will be reviewed on a regular basis and can be amended at any time.

This policy applies to "the Company's" directors, officers, consultants and employees (full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal, voluntary). It does not apply to agency workers, or self-employed contractors.

### Principles

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the practice of safe and equitable recruitment and deployment of staff, ensuring the process is conducted in a fair, effective and economic way and to ensure that staff who are responsible for the process demonstrate a professional approach by dealing honestly, efficiently and fairly with all internal and external applicants.

"The Company" is committed to attracting, selecting and retaining the best possible employees who will successfully and positively contribute to providing a valuable service.

“The Company” recognises that a motivated and committed workforce with appropriate skills, knowledge and experience is critical to performance and delivery of quality development in all areas of the business.

The recruitment and selection process will seek to identify the person best suited to the job based on the applicant’s abilities, qualifications, experience and merit, measured against a clear job description and person specification for each role.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of “the Company” to ensure that all Managers when recruiting follow the safer recruitment policy, all legal requirements and guidance. In addition, all Designated Safeguarding Officers and others involved in the recruitment process should ensure that “the Company” operates safer recruitment procedures and makes sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff. This will also apply to any contractors, agency workers and volunteers whose role requires them to work with children or adults in need or at risk ( see “the Company’s” Safeguarding children, Safeguarding Adults policies and the government’s Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019) before the work or volunteering begins. This will ensure that “the Company” maintains a safe and secure workforce at all times.

All line Managers should be aware that satisfactory enhanced DBS checks must be received for all new staff who are taking up regulated activity (see DBS Policy and Procedures).

These checks will be co-ordinated through the Safeguarding office and authority to start work can only be given by the Senior Safeguarding Lead in “the Company”.

In exceptional circumstances prior to receipt of a satisfactory check a new member of staff may be given permission to start if:

- Arrangements are in place to ensure that the individual is supervised at all times.
- The enhanced check has been applied for
- A satisfactory barred list check has been completed
- All other checks, including references have been completed

This decision can only be made by the relevant Manager in consultation with the Senior Safeguarding Lead.

Should a DBS be received with a disclosure a safeguarding risk assessment must be carried out by the Senior Safeguarding Lead. Any decision to refuse employment should be agreed by a senior panel consisting of Senior Safeguarding lead / HR consultant / Executive Director.

## **Recruitment procedures**

The following processes and procedures are in place to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and to ensure equality of opportunity.

### **Advertising**

“The Company” will advertise vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible. This would normally entail internal and external advertisement in relevant publications or websites, including “the Company’s” own website. Any advertisement will include a clear statement of “the Company’s” commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

## **Job description and person specification**

The job description should outline the general nature of the post including the main duties and responsibilities. It will also identify the line manager for the post. The person specification will detail qualifications, attributes and skills required and will be used as the criteria for short-listing the applications. Additional information such as a description of the department, background information, closing date may also be included.

## **Criminal record checks**

“The Company” endorses the use of GBG/DBS (Criminal Record Checks/ Disclosure and Barring service) and FACRC (FA Criminal Record Checks) to ensure appropriate assessment for clearance for those working with children, young people and adults at risk. This includes those roles that are defined by law as a Regulated Activity, or those roles that have been identified as requiring Enhanced Disclosures in sport. These are defined as unsupervised roles which involve teaching, training and instruction or caring for and supervising.

“The Company” complies with the DBS and FA Criminal Records Body Code of Practice and seeks to treat all applicants for positions fairly. “The Company” undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information received.

Candidates for interview will be selected based on their skills, qualifications and experience. A DBS enhanced disclosure is requested only where the role involves working with children, young adults and adults at risk. This will be stated clearly in the application form and job description. In addition, a self-declaration form will need to be completed where any current or spent convictions must be recorded. This information should be sent separately under confidential cover to the Safeguarding team. Failure to declare a conviction could lead to immediate withdrawal of any job offer. A criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from working within “the Company”. The self-declaration form will be completed annually.

The definition of a spent conviction can be checked at <https://www.gov.uk/exoffenders-and-employment>

A satisfactory DBS check must be completed prior to the post being confirmed and before employment commences. This will be facilitated by the Safeguarding Administrator.

It is a criminal offence to employ or seek to employ anyone who is on the Barred list in a regulated activity. [http://www.eeyfl.co.uk/files/The\\_FAs\\_Policy\\_Statement\\_on\\_the\\_recruitment\\_of\\_Ex-Offenders.pdf](http://www.eeyfl.co.uk/files/The_FAs_Policy_Statement_on_the_recruitment_of_Ex-Offenders.pdf)

## **Application**

The application pack will contain the following:

- Company application form
- Job description
- A self-declaration form
- Relevant policies

Applicants for employment are required to complete the application form and must account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history. A CV may accompany the application form.

Applicants will be made aware that giving false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal and could be referred to the police and other regulatory professional bodies.

### **Receipt of application**

Applications will be collated, and the date of receipt added.  
Any anomaly will be clearly noted.

### **Short-listing**

Following the deadline for closure of applications all will be scrutinised by the relevant Head of Department/ team member, using a selection matrix, who will have either had Safer Recruitment training or will be supported by a member of staff who has the relevant expertise and a long list of candidates be drawn up. This long list will be constructed using the relevant criteria for the post.

The final short list will be drawn up at a short- listing meeting by a relevant panel of staff. This will usually be chaired by the Head of Department and include a member of staff with expertise in that area. All those staff involved in the short-listing process will form the interview panel. Where possible the panel meeting will take place within 5 days of the closing date.

Candidates for interview will be informed by phone. This will be followed up by either an email or letter.

In accordance with “the Company’s” Dignity at Work Policy, reasonable adjustments will be made at all stages of the recruitment process to accommodate the particular needs of any person who has notified “the Company” that they have a disability within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

### **References**

References for applicants who meet the short-list criteria will be taken up, where possible, before interview unless this would compromise the applicant’s current employment situation. References will contain a copy of the job description (not salary) and will take the form of a standard letter. In accordance with EFL recommendations (Safeguarding standards 3.4) a minimum of **two** references will be called for. References must be written and include the most recent employer and if relevant to the job role an employer who can indicate whether the applicant is suitable to work with children, young people or adults at risk. If in exceptional circumstances references are taken over the phone they must be as accurate as possible, dated, transcribed and kept with the application. Open references or testimonials from family members or friends are not acceptable.

Appointments will not be confirmed, nor starting date set, until satisfactory replies have been received from referees, proof of qualifications submitted, and any medical questionnaires reviewed. Appropriate documentation confirming the individual’s right to work in the UK seen and copied. The only accurate proof of identity is a birth certificate. “The Company” reserves the right to withdraw any job offer, or if employment has commenced, to terminate employment.

All information must be treated in a confidential and professional manner.

## **Interview**

At interview the candidate will be required to demonstrate their skill in the area advertised. This may include a presentation or demonstration. Core questions to be asked of all candidates will be agreed by the interview panel prior to the interview to ensure consistency and will be marked according to set criteria. Consideration will be taken when compiling the interview panel to ensure it is balanced and without bias. Where a candidate will be working with children, young people and adults at risk they will need to demonstrate their understanding of safeguarding. A member of the safeguarding team should be part of the interview panel. Example interview questions are contained in the appendix 2. All interview notes must be kept and handed to HR at the end of the process together with a record of decision making. Any notes on the successful candidate will be transferred to their HR file. All other notes, application forms will be kept for a minimum of 6 months in a secure area (see Data Protection Act 1998).

All candidates invited to interview should be informed of the outcome by the panel chair within 24 hours. A telephone debrief can be organised for a later date if requested.

All verbal and written offers, including any by email must state that the offer is provisional subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, criminal records check if applicable, verification of identity, proof of right to work in the UK, copies of relevant qualifications and confirmation of medical fitness.(Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS regulations Code of Practice)

Under no circumstances should an offer of employment, salary changes, benefits package or other terms be made without the agreement of the CEO or their acting advisor. All terms of reference and conditions of employment must be approved by HR.

## **Induction**

Prior to taking up post all new staff will be expected to attend an induction day. This will comprise of presentations by key staff providing an Induction to the Business, Health and Safety at work and Safeguarding - staff Code of Conduct. In addition, any on-line training modules such as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will be completed. All relevant Company policies will be issued.

## **Probation**

All appointments are made subject to a satisfactory probation period. "The Company's" probationary period is 6 months. New employees will be monitored closely by their relevant Manager during this period and will take part in monitoring interviews. At the end of the probationary period a decision will be made as to whether:

- employment should be confirmed
- the probation period should be extended
- employment should be terminated

The outcome will be confirmed in writing by the employee's Manager in conjunction with HR.

## **Single Central Record**

**This is a legal requirement of the EFL** and is the responsibility of the Senior Safeguarding lead supported by the Safeguarding Administrator. This record contains details including DBS numbers for all employees, voluntary staff and guests who have regular contact with children, young people and Adults at risk.

## **Ongoing Employment**

“The company” recognises that Safer Recruitment is not just about the start of employment but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. “The Company” will therefore identify and provide ongoing training and support for all staff as identified through the ongoing appraisal programme.

## **Leaving Employment**

All staff leaving employment will be invited to attend an exit interview and asked to complete an exit questionnaire. The HR department will retain the questionnaire and exit interview information in the employees personal file. The information obtained will be used for retention and monitoring purposes.

## **Contractors**

Contractors that are used within “the Company” should comply with “the Company’s” Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment requirements.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers that are working within “the Company” will be subject to the same employment and vetting checks as paid staff subject to assessment of their roles and responsibilities and whether they will be working in any unsupervised capacity. Volunteer roles will be assessed to see whether they fall within regulated activity and, if so, they will be subject to completion of identity checks, an application form, and an enhanced disclosure form DBS. They will also be asked for references and will require an interview. All checks will be recorded on “the Company’s” Single Central Register.

Regular volunteers will receive a letter of agreement confirming that they will not be asked to take sole responsibility for any individual players or teams and that they should always have the support of a member of staff and work under their supervision, support and guidance. The allocated member of staff is identified in the letter.

All volunteers are required to undergo “the Company’s” safeguarding induction training which will include the staff Code of Conduct and thereafter attend annual safeguarding training.



## Appendix 1      Administration check list Safer recruitment

This checklist will support and help to track paperwork in accordance with Safer Recruitment guidelines.

### 1.1 Pre-employment vetting checks

#### Qualifications

Verify identity – **original** only (remember if in doubt birth certificate is the only true means)

Coaching qualifications if applicable (copies of certificates must be passed to Safeguarding Administrator) **Essential to coach**

Safeguarding qualification- FA certificate if a coach (copies of certificates must be passed to Safeguarding Administrator) **Essential to coach**

First Aid FA certificate if applicable (copies of certificates must be passed to Safeguarding Administrator) **Essential to coach**

Current DBS certificate if applicable (copy of certificate must be passed to Safeguarding Administrator) **Essential to work with children, young people and adults at risk**

Completed Self-declaration form- (**original** must be passed to Safeguarding Administrator) **Essential to work with children, young people and adults at risk**

### 1.2 End of process

Collect and store all application forms in safe storage for 6 months.

Collate and store all panel interview notes in safe storage for 6 months

Ensure all relevant paperwork- contracts signed

Book employee onto induction training

**Remember no new member of staff should start until the above process has been completed**

## Appendix 2 Example interview questions

<b>Key Question: Give an example of how you have gone about establishing clear boundaries and expectations in your relationship with a (child or young person / adult at risk)?</b>	
<b>Follow up: Why did you do it this way? Why is it important to do this? How did they respond? What were the main challenges?</b>	
<b>Positive indicators:</b> Can describe and adhere to positive boundaries Is clear about the expectations and responsibilities of the role Understands the limitations of own power and authority Recognises where boundaries have been crossed or blurred Has strategies for re-establishing boundaries Acknowledges personal feelings and maintains professional integrity Able to sensitively challenge others who are acting in an unprofessional manner Seeks support appropriately Able to reflect on experience, own behaviour, and learn from mistakes	<b>Negative indicators:</b> Does not differentiate between personal or professional boundaries Unaware of the impact their position and behaviour may have on (children/ young people/adult at risk) Fulfilment of own needs is important Departs from established procedures without discussion Wants to save or rescue (children/young people/ adults at risk,) believes they are acting in (children's/ young people/ adults at risk), interests in spite of organisation and policies Unwilling to accept challenge or address own behaviour Works in isolation, does not acknowledge they need support/advice Easily manipulated or swayed to work outside agreed professional boundaries, no evidence of learning from experience
<b>Question: Tell us about a time when you had to deal with a (child/young person/adult at risk) who was behaving in a difficult or challenging way?</b>	
<b>Follow up: What were the main challenges? What did you do to diffuse the situation? How did this impact on you? How did you feel? What was the outcome in terms of your relationship with the (child/young person/adult at risk)? What learning have you taken from this experience? What would you do differently if faced with the situation again?</b>	
<b>Positive indicators:</b> Establishes close professional, trusting relationships with (children/ young people/ adults at risk) Shows understanding of issues which are important to (children/ young people/ adults at risk)-can see things from their perspective Puts the needs of the (child/ young people/ adults at risk), before their own Understands how actions and behaviours can be misinterpreted by (children/ young people/ adults at risk), and is aware of the impact they have on others Works within agreed procedures and protocols Open and transparent-involves and informs manager in any workplan with the (child/ young people/ adults at risk), Builds relationships with challenging (children/ young people/ adults at risk)- understands the causes of challenging behaviour Seeks support when lacks confidence about own abilities non-judgemental, does not jump to conclusions, takes time to listen	<b>Negative indicators:</b> Establishes personal not professional relationships with children-sees children as adults, friends, peers. Over identifies with issues relevant to children-sees self as a child Is motivated by meeting own needs through relationships with (children/ young people/ adults at risk), Unaware or unwilling to accept the impact his own behaviour and actions have on a (child/ young people/ adults at risk) Sees self as acting in the (child's/ young people/ adults at risk) interests despite the organisational policies, does not follow rules Does not seek support or approval from manager on activities with (child/ young people/ adults at risk) – his secrets, inconsistent in their behaviour and messages Blames (children/ young people/ adults at risk) for difficult behaviour- behaves inappropriately in dealing with difficult behaviour Works alone, not willing to admit if unsure of how to act Is intolerant and judgemental- makes assumptions, does not make an effort to understand (children/ young people/ adults at risk)

<b>Question: Describe an occasion when you had concerns about a child but felt that your power was limited?</b>	
<b>Follow up:</b> What did you do? Why did you take this action? How did you manage the situation? How did you work with others to change this? How do you feel? What was the outcome?	
<b>Positive indicators:</b> Clear that the (child/ young people/ adults at risk) is central and most important, demonstrates empathy for the (child/ young people/ adults at risk) Clear about their role/responsibilities Able to approach challenging situations where action is not being taken, speaks up to protect/ prevent harm Seeks support for themselves appropriately, acts transparently Works effectively with other professionals Clear about the need for confidentiality and the need to share information if in doubt or a child is at risk Able to recognise personal feelings about a situation and deals with internal conflict effectively Willing to undertake training / update knowledge on issues linked to taking action roles and/ or responsibilities Is aware of their power and responsibility for the children's welfare	<b>Negative indicators:</b> Places own or another adults needs above that of the (child / young people/ adults at risk) Unclear of own role and responsibility Does not challenge situations where action is not being taken when it is required, challenges inappropriately Does not access support from others, does not make use of available resources Does not show evidence of co-operating with others Does not seek solutions, presents problems Does not share information where necessary or breaches confidentiality inappropriately Allows own beliefs or values to prevent taking action in certain situations Unwilling to undertake training / update knowledge Allocates blame and responsibility to others, does not accept their role in protecting a (child/ young people/ adults at risk)
<b>NSPCC</b>	

**Note these situations are generic. Specific questions directly related to a role can be supplied through the safeguarding team**

## Reference materials

Company policies:

Dignity at work  
Safeguarding Children Policy  
Safeguarding Adult Policy  
DBS Policy and Procedures

Government policies:

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020  
GBG/DBS guidelines and Code of Practice  
Equality Act 2010  
Immigration, Asylum Act 2019  
Nationality Act 1998  
Data Protection Act 1998

FA/EFL Policies

FA Criminal Record Checks Policy  
EFL Safeguarding Standards 2019  
FA Policy-Recruitment Ex-Offenders

Date reviewed	Position	Owner
Feb 2020	Executive Board	M. A. Martin
Feb 2021	Executive Board	
Feb 2022	Executive Board	
Feb 2023	Executive Board	
Feb 2024	Executive Board	

