



## **ROYAL NATIONAL CHILDREN'S SPRINGBOARD FOUNDATION**

### **Safer Recruitment Policy**

#### **Introduction**

Royal National Children's SpringBoard Foundation (**RNCSF**) supports and works with children and young people under the age of 18 throughout the UK. Amongst the wide range of adults with whom RNCSF also has contact during the course of its work, may be some who are at risk. This Policy refers to adults at risk as well as to children and young people.

The aims of this Policy are to ensure:

- the present and future safety and well-being of all children and adults at risk with whom we work, as well as all staff, trustees and volunteers, by the implementation of robust safer recruitment practices;
- that the best possible staff, trustees and volunteers are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the role;
- that applicants unsuitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk are identified and rejected; and
- that the selection and appointment process complies with all relevant legislation and is rigorous, fair and efficient and without discrimination on any grounds, including race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, gender, age, mental or physical disability, responsibility for dependents or offending background.

Safeguarding children and protecting those who come into contact with RNCSF is everyone's responsibility. This Policy applies to the recruitment of trustees, members of staff (including for the purposes of this Policy: employees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns), and others involved or associated with the RNCSF activities.

#### **Relevant legislation, guidance and other Policies**

Law and guidance which underpin this Policy, and other relevant RNCSF Policies, are set out in RNCSF's Safeguarding Policy, under which this Policy sits. Additional law, guidance and other Policies/internal documentation relevant to this Policy include:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Charity Commission – Finding New Trustees (CC30)
- Charity Commission – Automatic disqualification rules for charity trustees and charity senior positions
- Charity Commission – How to Manage Your Charity's Volunteers
- Disclosure & Barring Service Eligibility Guidance, including DBS Checks: working with children in the charity sector (February 2020)
- NSPCC guidance on safer recruitment
- RNCSF Staff Handbook, including the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)

## Regulated activity

The full definition of “regulated activity” is set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Guidance on what constitutes Regulated Activity with Children can be found at: [Statutory guidance – Regulated activity \(children\) – Supervision of activity with children which is regulated activity when unsupervised](#)

Among other activities, “regulated activity” includes, when done regularly (more than three times in any 30-day period):

- teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised.
- providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being.
- moderating an internet chat room used wholly or mainly by children.

Much of RNCSF’s work is regulated activity.

## Recruitment procedures and pre-appointment checks

### 1. Staff, including employees and consultants

All appointments are made by the Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) who oversees the recruitment procedure for each role unless in the case of volunteers/mentors when the recruiting manager will be responsible for their engagement. The procedure includes:

#### *Advertisement and application*

All roles are advertised and each advertisement contains a statement of RNCSF’s commitment to keeping children safe. Applicants are provided with a job description and person specification, in which the importance of understanding safeguarding issues is clearly expressed. Where relevant, the advertisement also states that a Disclosure and Barring Service (**DBS**) check will be required. All RNCSF roles, permanent staff and volunteers, will be eligible for **an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check**.

Applications for roles are by CV and covering letter, with requests for the provision of details of two referees, confirmation of eligibility to work in the UK.

#### *Interview*

Candidates shortlisted for interview are required to provide original identification documents to verify their identity, as well as to enable DBS checks to be undertaken. Applicants who are not UK citizens may also have to provide proof of eligibility to work in the UK.

Each interview candidate is also required to bring a completed a self-disclosure form in a sealed envelope marked “confidential” to disclose any unspent criminal convictions, child protection investigations or disciplinary procedures on their record and, in the case of roles requiring an enhanced DBS check (as RNCSF roles usually will), unprotected spent convictions and cautions. RNCSF only opens self-disclosure forms provided by candidates who have accepted a conditional offer of employment. Once a conditional offer has been confirmed, accepted and the contract signed by the successful candidate, the self-disclosure forms of the unsuccessful candidates must be securely destroyed, unopened.

Candidates applying for a senior manager role must also be asked to declare that they have not been disqualified from holding such a role under the automatic disqualification rules.

All interviews are conducted:

- by a minimum of two people; and
- fairly and equally, by asking each candidate the same questions, using the same scoring system and evaluating each candidate according to the same criteria.

### *Offer*

Each offer is expressly conditional, subject to satisfactory completion of all relevant checks, including DBS checks and references. Referees should be asked about the candidate's suitability and ability to work with children and young people and also the candidate's knowledge and understanding of child protection and safeguarding.

## 2. Third party contractors

Prior to engaging a third-party contractor, school or agency, RNCSF will consider the extent to which vetting may be required. Depending on the work to be undertaken by the third-party contractor, (including whether the work constitutes regulated activity (see above definition) and whether it will be supervised by RNCSF), it may be necessary to obtain details of relevant contractor's/contractor's employees' DBS checks and/or a copy of the contractor's safeguarding policy and procedures.

The principles of safe recruitment will be included in the terms of any contract drawn up between RNCSF and any third-party contractors, schools or agencies that provide services for, or adults to work with, children in association with RNCSF. RNCSF will monitor compliance with the contract which will also include a requirement that the provider will not sub-contract to any personnel who have not been part of a safer recruitment process. Third party contractors, schools or agencies engaged by RNCSF will be expected to complete the same pre-appointment checks for their employees that RNCSF completes for its staff including:

- enhanced DBS renewed every 5 years,
- 2 references.

In the case of where the third party is a partner school, RNCSF will accept the DBS number, a copy of the DBS or letter of assurance stating the relevant safer recruitment procedures, training and induction have taken place. The letter of assurance will mitigate any risks in the case where DBS is more than 5 years old.

## 3. Trustees

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the relevant terms in RNCSF's governing document and pursuant to such decisions as the Board of Trustees has made regarding requirements for particular skills and experience. Trustees must not be disqualified from acting as a charity trustee or a company director (for example, by reason of an undischarged bankruptcy) and must be "fit and proper persons" (a test set by HM Revenue & Customs). They are also subject to DBS checks. Each prospective trustee meets with and is interviewed by at least two current trustees, usually including the Chairman, prior to being recommended to the Board for appointment.

Each trustee's appointment is subject to their written confirmation that they are willing to act as a trustee, their signed Declaration of Eligibility and a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.

## 4. Volunteers

If a volunteer or volunteers is/are engaged to provide temporary assistance with a particular project or event, such volunteers are generally subject to the same pre-appointment checks as described elsewhere in this Policy. Limited exceptions include those volunteers whose roles will not require them to engage in any regulated activity (see above definition) and who will have no contact with, or no

unsupervised access to, children or adults at risk. Volunteers for roles which do not require enhanced DBS checks may still require a DBS and have their identity verified by RNCSF.

### **Induction for new staff, trustees and volunteers**

All staff, trustees and volunteers are required to complete safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction. Training may be conducted online, through an external provider, as well as delivered through face-to-face induction sessions with relevant members of staff. All new joiners must also confirm, in order to complete their induction, that they have read and understood RNCSF's Safeguarding Policy. Regular update training will take place annually for both staff and trustees.

### **Concerns arising during the recruitment process**

If references, vetting or DBS checks raise concerns about a person's suitability or ability to work with children and young people, or adults at risk where relevant, the recruitment process must be suspended while RNCSF seeks further information and conducts a risk assessment. Further advice is likely to be required and it may be necessary to pass on information to other authorities.

### **Concerns arising once the role has commenced**

If concerns are raised or an allegation is made about a member of RNCSF staff, a trustee or a volunteer, the procedures set out in RNCSF's Safeguarding Policy will apply and must be followed.

### **Data Protection**

All candidate information, including identity documents, application forms, self-disclosure forms and declarations, interview notes, references and other records will be, as required, stored, retained and securely destroyed in accordance with RNCSF's Data Protection Policy.

### **Policy review date**

Date of approval and adoption: June 2024

Date of next review: June 2026