GENIUSCRAFT LTD TRADING AS YOUNG ENGINEERS CANTERBURY

SAFE RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy statement

Young Engineers Canterbury is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This policy establishes a consistent, business-wide approach to safer recruitment and ongoing suitability across our activities.

1. Purpose and scope

Young Engineers Canterbury is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Safe recruitment is a central part of this commitment. We aim to ensure that people who work with or around children are suitable for their roles, understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are supported to maintain safe professional practice.

This policy applies across the business to employees, casual workers, tutors, activity leaders, volunteers, students, agency workers, contractors and external providers engaged to work with or around children in our after-school clubs, STEM and engineering sessions, workshops, holiday activities and other programmes.

Recruitment and suitability checks will be proportionate to the role and carried out in line with current law, the legal eligibility rules for DBS checks, relevant government guidance and any applicable contractual or commissioning requirements. A single check does not establish suitability: identity, references, employment history, interview, induction, supervision and ongoing conduct must all be considered.

2. Principles

- Recruit fairly, consistently and without unlawful discrimination, with the welfare of children as the primary consideration.
- Be clear about each role's duties, safeguarding responsibilities, required experience, qualifications, training and checks.
- Check information through reliable and, where reasonably possible, independently verified sources. Investigate gaps, inconsistencies or concerns before making an appointment.
- Protect applicants' personal information and criminal-record information, retaining only what is necessary and permitted and restricting access to authorised people.
- Do not allow a person to undertake regulated activity unless the required checks and legal conditions are satisfied. Do not assume that a pending DBS application automatically permits a person to work with children.

3. Responsibilities

The Director has overall responsibility for safer recruitment and for ensuring that this policy is implemented. Administrative tasks may be delegated, but the Director remains responsible for ensuring that required checks and decisions are completed and recorded.

Anyone involved in recruitment must understand the organisation's safeguarding expectations and receive appropriate training or guidance. At least one appropriately trained person should be involved in recruitment decisions.

Managers or designated staff responsible for a recruitment exercise must follow the process, check that required information is obtained, keep accurate records, arrange induction and escalate concerns promptly.

4. Planning and advertising

Prepare a role description and person specification that set out the duties, safeguarding responsibilities, required experience, qualifications, training and checks relevant to the role.

All job advertisements and application materials must clearly state the organisation's commitment to safeguarding. Explain that appointments are subject to satisfactory checks appropriate to the role, which may include identity, references, employment history, qualifications, right to work and DBS/suitability checks.

Use a structured application form. A CV alone is not sufficient. Applicants must provide a full employment and relevant volunteering history and explain gaps or inconsistencies.

5. Application, shortlisting and interview

Shortlist applicants against the person specification and record the reasons for decisions.

Explore unexplained gaps, frequent moves, discrepancies, reasons for leaving roles involving children and any relevant safeguarding concerns.

Conduct interviews face-to-face where practicable. If another format is used, record the reason and take appropriate steps to verify identity and suitability.

Include safeguarding-focused questions. These may cover professional boundaries, responding to a child's disclosure, managing behaviour, online communication, working with children with additional needs and raising concerns about a colleague.

Verify identity and relevant qualifications. Where online searches are used as part of safer recruitment, use them consistently and fairly, document relevant findings and give the candidate an opportunity to explain any concern before a decision is made.

6. References and employment history

Obtain two references before appointment, including one from the most recent employer and, where relevant, an employer or organisation where the applicant worked or volunteered with children. References must be obtained directly from the referee using independently verified contact details.

Check references for consistency and follow up if they are vague, incomplete or concerning. A person will not start work with children until two satisfactory references have been received. Any exception, for example where an applicant has no previous employer, must be authorised in writing by the Director, with the reason, alternative evidence and risk-based decision recorded before appointment.

Check the applicant's full employment and relevant volunteering history and investigate material gaps or discrepancies. Do not rely solely on documents supplied by the applicant where independent verification is reasonably available.

7. Pre-appointment checks

Before appointment, verify identity using appropriate original or otherwise reliable evidence; check references, relevant employment history and qualifications; and complete right-to-work checks where legally required.

Obtain the appropriate DBS check for the role where legally eligible and required. Obtain children's barred-list information only where the role and activity are legally eligible for that check. The level of check must be based on the actual duties and applicable eligibility rules, not simply on the fact that the person may be around children.

Check any relevant professional prohibition or restriction where applicable to the role, including prohibition from teaching where legally relevant.

Record the type of check, date, outcome and who completed it, along with any risk-management decision. Do not retain more criminal-record information than is necessary or permitted.

Assess any criminal-record disclosure fairly and individually, considering its relevance to the role, seriousness, circumstances, time elapsed, any pattern of behaviour and the applicant's representations. Keep the information confidential.

A DBS certificate is a snapshot, not a lifetime guarantee. Changes in role, new concerns or new information must be assessed.

8. Starting work and interim arrangements

Required pre-appointment checks must be completed before a person undertakes regulated activity with children. Where an Enhanced DBS check with children's barred-list information is required, the person must not begin regulated activity until the required checks and legal conditions have been satisfied.

Any exceptional interim arrangement before all checks are complete must be legally permitted, risk assessed, documented and authorised by the Director. The individual must not undertake regulated activity or any duties for which the required checks have not been completed. Supervision must not be treated as an exemption from DBS requirements.

The organisation will assess each role individually and ensure that the level of DBS check requested is legally appropriate for the person's duties and frequency of contact with children.

9. Volunteers, students, agency staff and external providers

Assess volunteers and students according to their actual duties and the legal eligibility rules. Complete checks that are legally required and appropriate to the role. An unchecked volunteer or student must not be left unsupervised with children or undertake regulated activity.

Supervision must be genuine, suitable to the risk and the person's role, continuous where needed, and documented. Give volunteers and students clear guidance on expected conduct, safeguarding and who to approach with concerns.

Before agency workers, contractors or external activity providers begin, obtain written assurance and, where appropriate, evidence of their safer recruitment arrangements, DBS eligibility and checks, safeguarding training, qualifications, insurance, supervision and risk assessments. Agree who is responsible for each check and retain a record.

Do not treat a supplier's general assurance as sufficient where Young Engineers Canterbury needs evidence of checks or contractual compliance.

10. Induction and training

Before working with children, staff must receive an induction covering, as relevant to their role: the Safeguarding Policy; this Safe Recruitment Policy; the Staff Code of Conduct; allegations and whistleblowing routes; online safety and appropriate use of devices/images; confidentiality and data protection; health and safety; first aid and emergency procedures; attendance, collection and missing-child arrangements; allergies and medical needs; behaviour management; inclusion and SEND; and the specific activities they will deliver.

Staff must confirm that they have read and understood the relevant policies. Keep a dated induction record and identify any training still required.

Provide role-appropriate safeguarding training and refresher updates. Record completion and review whether further training is needed following incidents, changes in role or activity, or audit findings.

11. Supervision and ongoing suitability

Supervise and monitor conduct, professional boundaries, performance and suitability throughout a person's engagement with the organisation.

Staff, volunteers and contractors must promptly disclose relevant changes in circumstances or concerns in accordance with organisational procedures.

Take appropriate action if concerns arise. Manage concerns about an adult under the Safeguarding Policy and Managing Allegations procedure. Seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate and make a DBS referral when the legal duty applies.

All staff must maintain professional boundaries, follow safeguarding procedures and report concerns about colleagues or unsafe practice immediately.

12. DBS referrals and reporting concerns

The Director will consider the legal duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a person has been removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left, and the relevant harm or conduct conditions are met.

A referral to the LADO, police or another agency does not replace consideration of whether a DBS referral is required. Record decisions, advice received and actions taken.

Staff must raise concerns about colleagues, managers or unsafe recruitment through the Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure. Concerns involving the Director or safeguarding lead must be escalated externally in accordance with the organisation's safeguarding procedures.

13. Records, confidentiality and audit

Maintain a secure recruitment record for each person and a central record of checks appropriate to the organisation's size, activities and applicable requirements. The central record may be referred to as a Single Central Record where that terminology is appropriate to the setting; the organisation will not assume that school-specific requirements automatically apply to every activity it delivers.

Records should show what was checked, when, by whom and the outcome, together with any documented decision, explanation, advice or risk assessment. Store and dispose of records in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and retention schedule.

Access to recruitment records must be restricted to authorised personnel. Handle criminal-record information in accordance with data protection requirements and applicable DBS rules.

The Director will review safer recruitment practice at least annually and after significant incidents, changes to activities or relevant legal/guidance changes.

14. Relevant guidance

This policy should be read alongside the organisation's Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Managing Allegations procedure, Whistleblowing Procedure and Data Protection Policy.

Relevant guidance includes: DfE guidance on keeping children safe in out-of-school settings; current DBS eligibility guidance for roles working with children; DBS guidance on referrals and barring; Keeping Children Safe in Education where applicable to a particular setting or contractual requirement; Working Together to Safeguard Children; the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and relevant exceptions; the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; and relevant Kent safeguarding procedures.

Official links (check that these remain current at each review):

Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice

DBS eligibility for roles working with children: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eligibility-for-roles-working-with-children

DBS referrals and barring: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-referrals-and-barring

Keeping Children Safe in Education: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Working Together to Safeguard Children: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership – worried about a child: https://www.kscmp.org.uk/guidance/worried-about-a-child

Data protection and children's information: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/childrens-information/children-and-the-uk-gdpr/

15. Review and document control

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a significant incident, a change in the organisation's activities or operating arrangements, or a relevant change in law, guidance or contractual requirements.

The organisation will maintain secure evidence that this policy is implemented, including role descriptions and person specifications, application and interview records, reference checks, identity and qualification checks, DBS eligibility decisions and check outcomes, employment-history gap explanations, risk assessments and authorised exceptions, induction and training records, supervision records, audit findings and corrective actions. Access will be limited to authorised people and retention will follow the Data Protection Policy and applicable DBS requirements.

16. Complaints, whistleblowing and protection from retaliation

Applicants, staff, volunteers and external providers may raise concerns about recruitment practice, suitability checks or safeguarding without fear of retaliation. Concerns should be raised with the Director or through the organisation's complaints/whistleblowing arrangements. If the concern relates to the Director, or internal reporting is inappropriate, the person should use the external escalation routes in the Safeguarding Policy, including the relevant local authority safeguarding route or police where necessary. Concerns will be recorded, considered promptly and handled fairly, with information shared only where lawful and necessary.

17. Ongoing checks, supervision and audit

At least annually, the Director will sample recruitment files and the central record to check that required evidence is present, dates and outcomes are recorded, gaps and exceptions are explained, induction and training are up to date, and actions from previous audits have been completed. The audit and any corrective action will be recorded. The policy will also be reviewed after a significant safeguarding concern, a change in the organisation's activities or operating arrangements, or a relevant change in law or guidance.

Safer recruitment is an ongoing process. The Director or designated manager will review continued suitability when duties change, new information or concerns arise, conduct falls below expected standards, a safeguarding incident occurs, or a required check or training record is found to be incomplete. Supervision and spot checks will be proportionate to the role and risk. Staff must promptly report relevant changes or concerns.

18. Safeguarding concerns, allegations and escalation

The Director will consider whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is legally required where the relevant conditions are met. Decisions, advice, referrals and follow-up actions will be recorded securely. A referral to another agency does not remove the need to consider a DBS referral.

All staff, volunteers, contractors and external providers must know how to report a safeguarding concern, an allegation about an adult, a breach of professional boundaries or a concern about recruitment/checking practice. Concerns must be reported immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and Managing Allegations procedure. Staff must not investigate allegations themselves, promise confidentiality, or delay referral while trying to establish the facts. The organisation will follow relevant Kent safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), children's social care or police as appropriate. Where the concern involves the Director or designated safeguarding lead, it must be escalated externally using the routes set out in the Safeguarding Policy.

19. Safeguarding assurance and recruitment decision record

The Director will check that recruitment records are complete before confirming an appointment. A second-person review will be used where practicable; where the organisation's size means this is not practicable, the Director will document the checks personally completed and the decision reached. Recruitment decisions must not be based on a DBS certificate alone. Concerns, inconsistencies or adverse information must be assessed individually, with advice sought where necessary and the rationale recorded.

For each appointment or engagement involving work with or around children, the responsible person will complete a role-specific safer recruitment record before the person starts. The record will identify the role and duties, whether the role is eligible for a DBS check and the rationale for the level requested, identity verification, references, employment/volunteering history and gap checks, qualifications and right-to-work checks where applicable, interview and safeguarding assessment, training and induction requirements, and the final suitability decision. Any outstanding item, exception or risk-control measure must be explained, authorised by the Director where appropriate, and recorded. A person must not undertake regulated activity unless the legal conditions and required checks are satisfied.

Approval

Policy owner	Director
Approved by	Tania Prisacariu, Director
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