

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY**

Contents	
POLICY STATEMENT .....	2
INTRODUCTION .....	2
AIMS .....	2
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES .....	2
REGULATED ACTIVITY .....	2
RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURE .....	2
JOB DESCRIPTIONS & ADVERTISING .....	2
APPLICATIONS & SHORT LISTING .....	3
INTERVIEWS .....	3
REFERENCES & DBS .....	3
References .....	3
DBS checks .....	4
SAFEGUARDING INDUCTION TRAINING .....	4
SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR) .....	4
FEEDBACK AND MONITORING .....	4
CONFIDENTIALITY .....	5

## POLICY STATEMENT

The safety and well-being of its beneficiaries and all who come into contact with it is central to Doorstep Library's delivery of its charitable purpose, which is to embed the joy of reading into the home life of children under the age of 12 who qualify for our support. We expect the commitment to this ethos to be shared by all staff, trustees and volunteers we employ/appoint.

## INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out Doorstep Library's approach to safer recruitment, which it believes is the foundation of creating and sustaining an open, diverse and inclusive environment in which all of our employees, volunteers and trustees can work to the best of their abilities, and in which is embedded a strong culture of safeguarding and wellbeing.

## AIMS

The aim of this policy is to ensure that no person who might abuse or in any other way be unsuitable to work with children is able to work or volunteer for Doorstep Library. Further, it aims to ensure as far as possible that

- recruitments are carried out with equity and without bias and candidates are appointed based on the on the evidence of the skills and experience required by the role
- there is a consistent and defined approach to recruitment across the charity.

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees of Doorstep Library are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies appropriate to the Charity and any relevant legislation are in place, are operationally effective and are reviewed regularly.

The CEO and Senior Management team are responsible for ensuring that all recruitments are carried out in line with this policy and that all staff involved in recruitments are familiar with it.

## REGULATED ACTIVITY

Doorstep Library carries out regulated activity as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) which has been amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (PoFA). HM Government has produced a document on [Regulated activity in relation to children \(2012\)](#), which provides guidance on the scope of regulated activity. Regulated activity is work that a barred person must not do, and Doorstep Library will not employ/appoint anybody who is on the children's barred list.

## RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURE

### JOB DESCRIPTIONS & ADVERTISING

Doorstep Library advertises its roles externally. All posts must be advertised using the safer recruitment template which contains the following safer recruitment statement:

***Doorstep Library is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and all those it comes into contact with. All employees/volunteers undergo rigorous safer recruitment processes including specified interview questions, a DBS check, and the collection of written and/or verbal references. Safeguarding training is a mandatory part of the induction process for all employees/volunteers, and employees/volunteers are expected to always adhere to our safeguarding policies and procedures.***

They must set out fully the roles and responsibilities of the post, including the job description and person specification. All Doorstep Library job descriptions, regardless of whether or not they are for front-line project staff, will include safeguarding as a responsibility and a person-specification which will establish the criteria against which all candidates will be assessed equally and without prejudice. The person specification will include as an essential criterium, for certain roles, reference to the applicant's suitability to work with children.

## APPLICATIONS & SHORT LISTING

Doorstep Library encourages and accepts applications from all sections of the community. Applicants are required to submit a CV accompanied by a covering letter (employees) or Doorstep Library's bespoke application form (volunteers) explaining why they want to work/volunteer for the Charity and how they feel their skills and experiences make them suitable candidates. Applicants will be shortlisted on the basis of the information they provide.

## INTERVIEWS

All interview panels contain at least one individual who has undergone safer recruitment training. All interviews, regardless of the post, contain as a minimum a standard question about safeguarding, around identifying behaviours and taking action. For paid roles working directly with children, safeguarding and the protection of children is tested in greater depth.

Interviewers actively challenge gaps in CVs/Employment history that are not explained.

## REFERENCES & DBS

Successful applicants are offered the role provisionally, and it is made clear to them that a full offer will be made only on the successful uplift of references and the appropriate level of DBS check.

### References

Two independent references are required and are requested using a bespoke reference form, which is sent out with the role description. Referees are asked about the candidate's suitability to the role and about their suitability to work with children. For paid employees, the reference request form contains the following statement:

***As part of our Safer Recruitment Policy, we will call you to verify your identity and that you have submitted this reference.***

References are reviewed first by the recruiting manager and are then passed to the safeguarding lead, with any queries/concerns, to be verified directly with the referee via phone. This telephone verification uses a standard set of questions designed to confirm the candidate's suitability to work with children and explore any concerns the referee may have.

The same verification process will be followed for any volunteer where there are concerns about the candidate or questions about the written references received.

All references provided must include:

- Current/most recent employer
- Last place they worked/volunteered with children and young people (if applicable)
- At least one pertaining to a person's character, professional or personal (a third reference may be obtained for this purpose if needed)

They must have known the candidate within the last five years. Where the candidate has lived outside the UK for longer than one year within the last 3 years, one referee must be able to professionally comment at least one year of this period.

### DBS checks

DBS checks at the relevant level – including enhanced with a check of the children’s barred list for frontline staff or volunteers working directly with children – are carried out using third party supplier Thirtyone:eight. As part of this process, the Charity will

- Verify identity
- Verify address
- Check and confirm right to work in the UK

DBS checking will be the responsibility only of appointed individuals within the organisation.

While DBS certificates do not legally expire, we recheck our volunteers, employees and trustees every three years. For those not on the Government Update Service we use the services of Thirtyone:eight. For those on the Update Service, we follow the service requirements at all stages and check that there is no change in the level of check from that the original certificate. If this is the case, we will start the DBS check as new.

Overseas checks for candidates who have lived outside of the UK will be sought on a risk basis, where information obtained from references, CV and interview are not satisfactory.

All paid roles have a period of probation attached of either three or six months, which can be extended if necessary.

### SAFEGUARDING INDUCTION TRAINING

All trustees, staff and volunteers, regardless of role, are required to undertake safeguarding training. This includes a video module, a questionnaire to test learning, mandatory policies and procedural documents to read, and a live training session. Employee induction includes an overview of Doorstep Library’s Data Protection and Whistleblowing Policy, Code of Conduct and the Employee Handbook, which contains all of the Charity’s policies.

Trustees receive safeguarding training as part of their induction together with an introduction and access to all of the Charity’s safeguarding policies

Volunteers receive in-depth safeguarding training as part of their on-boarding process.

Safeguarding refresher training is delivered annually, at a level relevant to the role.

### SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD (SCR)

We maintain a Single Central Record in a secure location for the recording of DBS checks (pre-employment/ appointment, and renewal) and reference checks. For trustees and staff this is maintained by the Head of Operations, and reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead termly. A separate database is maintained for Volunteers by the Volunteer Engagement Officer.

### FEEDBACK AND MONITORING

All volunteers undergo a trial period of 3 reading sessions, within which safeguarding feedback is obtained from the volunteer they are partnered with. Frontline staff or other staff visiting projects are subject to the same feedback process.

Volunteers have regular supervisions, in which they are asked if they have any concerns about any person they have been partnered with.

Doorstep Library nurtures a low-level concerns culture in which staff and volunteers are encouraged to report any concerns they may have over another staff member or volunteer, at any time, whether they meet the threshold for abuse or not.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Doorstep Library obtains, processes and retains personal data in line with GDPR regulation and the legal requirements pertaining to specific data types and is registered with the ICO.