

Forming Connections DBS & Recruitment Policy



Last reviewed: 29/09/2025

Next review due: 29/09/2026

Policy owner: Education Director

Applies to: All staff, contractors, associates, and volunteers

1. Policy Statement

Forming Connections is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all children, young people, and vulnerable adults who engage with our services.

We recognise that safer recruitment is a key part of our safeguarding practice. By applying rigorous recruitment procedures, including appropriate background checks, we aim to deter, identify, and reject individuals who may pose a risk to those in our care.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure a **fair, safe, and transparent recruitment process**.
- Protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm.
- Comply with UK legislation, including the *Children Act 1989*, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*, the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)*.
- Fulfil our duty of care and promote best practice in safer recruitment.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees of Forming Connections
 - Volunteers, associates, and contractors
 - Freelance trainers, consultants, and workshop facilitators
 - Trustees and board members
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4. Safer Recruitment Principles

We follow these safer recruitment principles:

1. **Transparency:** Clear job descriptions and safeguarding responsibilities.
 2. **Rigour:** Thorough checks at each stage of the recruitment process.
 3. **Fairness:** Equal opportunities and compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
 4. **Safeguarding First:** No individual will work unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults without appropriate vetting and clearance.
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5. Recruitment and Vetting Procedures

5.1 Job Descriptions & Advertising

- All roles clearly state safeguarding responsibilities.
- Job adverts include a statement of Forming Connections' commitment to safeguarding.
- All applicants are informed that safeguarding checks, including DBS, will be undertaken.

5.2 Application Process

- All applicants must complete a formal application or submit a CV with full work history and explain any gaps.
- Applicants must provide details of **two referees**, one of whom should be their most recent employer.
- References are taken up **before appointment** wherever possible.

5.3 Interviews

- Interviews assess both **skills/experience** and **attitudes toward safeguarding**.
- At least one safeguarding question is included in every interview.
- Identity and right-to-work documents are checked at interview.

5.4 Pre-Employment Checks

Before starting work (including freelance roles), all successful candidates must complete:

- **Enhanced DBS check with Barred List check** where required by role.
- **Right to work in the UK** check.
- **Qualification and professional registration checks** (if applicable).
- **Reference checks** covering at least the previous 2 years.
- **Self-declaration of criminal convictions**, cautions, or investigations.

No individual will start work unsupervised until **all checks have been satisfactorily completed**.

6. DBS Checks

Forming Connections follows the DBS Code of Practice and statutory guidance.

- **Enhanced DBS with Barred List** is required for all roles involving regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults.
- **Enhanced DBS (without Barred List)** may be required for roles with regular but non-regulated contact.
- **Basic DBS** may be carried out for non-regulated roles (e.g. admin).
- **DBS Update Service** may be used to verify existing certificates where appropriate.

DBS checks are repeated every 3 years (or sooner if concerns arise).

All staff are required to notify the Director/DSL of any relevant changes in their circumstances immediately.

7. Handling of Disclosures

- Having a criminal record does not automatically bar someone from working with Forming Connections. Each case is considered individually and confidentially, in line with the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*.
 - Decisions will consider the nature, seriousness, relevance, and timing of the offence.
 - A risk assessment will be carried out where necessary.
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8. Induction and Training

All new staff, volunteers, and contractors must complete a structured induction that includes:

- Reading and signing the **Safeguarding Policy**.
 - Understanding the **DBS & Recruitment Policy**.
 - Completing **basic safeguarding training** appropriate to their role.
 - Familiarisation with the **Code of Conduct** and reporting procedures.
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9. Record-Keeping

We keep accurate and secure records of:

- DBS certificate numbers and issue dates
- Training records
- References and vetting documentation
- Risk assessments (where applicable)

All personal data is processed in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

10. Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, guidance, or organisational practice.

Approved by:

Name: Brenda Keirnan

Role: Education Director

Date: 29/09/2025