



Guidance on Safer Recruitment

Issued by the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Falkland Islands Safeguarding Children Board to assist all organisations who employ staff (whether paid or as volunteers) to work with children, young people or adults at risk

For Clubs, Societies, Sports Clubs and Volunteer-run Organisations

Safer Recruitment Guide for Clubs and Volunteer Organisations

1. Introduction

Keeping children, young people, and adults at risk safe is everyone's responsibility. If your club or organisation works with them, whether through staff or volunteers, you must make sure your recruitment processes help protect their welfare.

This guide is designed to help **clubs (including sports clubs), voluntary groups, and community organisations** recruit safely. It's based on best practices and aims to keep things consistent, clear, and practical — even if your organisation is small or run by volunteers.

Every group is different, but all should apply these principles to ensure you **don't put vulnerable people at risk** by allowing unsuitable individuals to work with them.

2. Who This Applies To

This guidance is for anyone involved in recruiting people to roles that involve:

- Direct work with children, young people, or adults at risk
- Regular contact with them (even if the role isn't a "care" role)
- Access to sensitive or confidential information

It applies to:

- Paid staff and volunteers
- Committee members, directors or trustees
- Temporary, part-time, and sessional workers
- People recruited from overseas or through an agency

Even if someone doesn't have direct responsibility, if they are seen as trustworthy or work in shared spaces (like reception or maintenance), they still count.

3. Safeguarding is Everyone's Business

Your club or organisation should have a **clear safeguarding policy** that:

- Shows your commitment to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe
- Explains how you will safely recruit staff and volunteers
- Applies to **everyone** — from long-term coaches to casual helpers

Volunteers and staff should understand that:

- The organisation takes safeguarding seriously
 - Recruitment checks are part of keeping people safe
 - Unsuitable people will be deterred or screened out during recruitment
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4. Key Safer Recruitment Steps for Clubs

Step 1: Planning the Role

Before recruiting, be clear about:

- What the role involves
- How much contact it includes with children or adults at risk
- What kind of person you're looking for

Create a **simple role description** with:

- Duties and responsibilities
 - The skills or experience needed
 - A clear statement that the role involves safeguarding responsibilities
 - Whether a **police check** will be needed
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Step 2: Advertising the Role

Even informal roles (like volunteer coaches or helpers) should be openly advertised, and you should make it clear that:

- You are committed to safeguarding
- All volunteers will go through appropriate checks
- References and background checks may be required

This helps deter people who might want to harm others.

Step 3: Application Process

Use a **basic application form** rather than just accepting a CV or a verbal agreement. It should ask for:

- Full name and contact details
 - Relevant experience (including voluntary work)
 - History of employment/volunteering (with any gaps explained)
 - Names of **two referees** (ideally including someone they've worked with in a similar role)
 - A short statement about why they want to volunteer and what they bring to the role
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Step 4: Interview or Informal Meeting

Even in small clubs, it's important to **meet with potential volunteers** before offering them a role. This doesn't have to be formal, but it should help you understand:

- Why they want to work with children or adults at risk
- What experience they have
- Whether they understand safeguarding responsibilities

Use the meeting to:

- Ask about any gaps or changes in their background
 - Discuss the club's safeguarding expectations
 - Gauge their attitude toward professional boundaries and safe behaviour
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Step 5: Reference Checks

Always check **at least two references**, including from someone who has supervised them in a similar role.

Ask the referee:

- How they know the person
- Whether they would trust them to work with children or adults at risk
- If they are aware of any concerns, complaints, or disciplinary actions

Do not accept open references (like "To whom it may concern") or those from family or friends.

Where there are concerns, follow up with the referees via a phone call.

Step 6: Criminal Records Checks

If the role involves regular or unsupervised work with children or vulnerable adults, you must carry out a **police check**.

- The Royal Falkland Islands Police will undertake local checks in line with this guidance for no charge
- If someone has lived overseas, ask for international police checks where possible
- For applicants who have lived in the UK checks can be requested via www.acro.police.uk/s/acro-services/police

Make decisions based on:

- What the offence was
- When it happened
- Whether it's relevant to the role
- Whether they have shown change or remorse

Keep a written record of any decision to appoint someone with a criminal record.

Where criminal record checks can't be successfully or reliably achieved a risk assessment should be completed

Step 7: Confirming the Role

Once checks are complete, make a **conditional offer**. Confirm in writing that:

- The role is subject to reference and background checks
- The volunteer agrees to follow the safeguarding policy
- They will receive an induction and training

Step 8: Induction and Training

Every new volunteer or staff member should get a short induction, including:

- The club's safeguarding policy and code of conduct
- What to do if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult
- Who to speak to about safeguarding issues
- Whistleblowing and complaints process

They should also complete **basic safeguarding training** (online or in person), appropriate to their role. Social Services will provide this for no charge.

5. Keeping a Safer Culture Going

‘Safer cultures’ refer to organisational or group environments where safeguarding and safety are prioritized, characterized by shared values, open communication, a commitment to preventing harm, and a culture of continuous improvement. Key aspects include empowerment for individuals to raise concerns without fear, effective governance and policies, visible leadership commitment, and learning from incidents to foster a resilient environment where safety is a shared responsibility and the preferred choice.

Creating a safer culture doesn’t stop at recruitment. Keep things safe by:

- Monitoring how volunteers and staff are doing
- Encouraging open communication and feedback
- Holding regular reviews and check-ins
- Making safeguarding part of team meetings or training days

Keep records of:

- Volunteer agreements
- References and police checks
- Any training completed
- Any concerns raised and how they were handled

6. Training for Recruiters and Committee Members

Anyone involved in recruiting staff or volunteers — especially committee members or safeguarding leads — should complete **safer recruitment training**.

Free or low-cost training is available from:

- NSPCC
- National sports or youth bodies

Volunteering umbrella organisation

7. Summary Checklist for Clubs

- ✓ Clear role descriptions
- ✓ Advertising with safeguarding statements
- ✓ Application forms, not just CVs

- ✓ Interview or informal conversation
 - ✓ Two references checked
 - ✓ Criminal records check (where needed)
 - ✓ Induction and training
 - ✓ Ongoing monitoring and record keeping
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Need Help?

If you're not sure what checks are needed or how to set up a safer recruitment process, contact:

- Social Services
 - The National Sports Council
 - Your national governing body (for sports or youth clubs)
 - A volunteer centre or umbrella body for your organisation
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