

# Northmoor Community Association



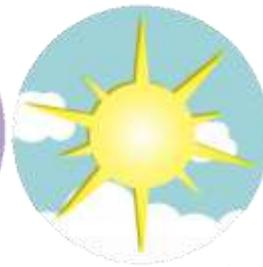
Advancing Skills  
and Learning



Relieving Poverty



Promoting Health  
and Wellbeing



Quality of Life

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Northmoor Community Association (NCA) is committed to ensuring that the processes of recruiting new members of staff reflects its commitment to Equal Opportunities and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all staff and service users, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. NCA expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The recruitment and selection process is of paramount importance in order to recruit staff with the necessary skills, attributes and attitude to enable the organisation to fulfil its aims and objectives. This safer recruitment policy and procedures aims to provide clear guidance, whilst promoting and supporting good practice to those staff and trustees involved in the NCA's detailed recruitment, selection and appointment of staff and volunteers.

## 2.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Where appointments are made to posts (for employees) or roles (for volunteers) working with children or vulnerable adults, it is vital that NCA applies recruitment and selection procedures that identify people who are unsuited to such work. The measures described in this policy should be applied in relation to everyone who regularly comes into contact with children or vulnerable adults in a supporting capacity.

This policy forms part of documentation included in NCA's application pack for any position, along with a detailed job description, person specification, application form, equal opportunities policy and equal opportunities monitoring form. The aims of this policy and procedures is to ensure that we:

- Recruit the best-suited person to the job (right skills, qualifications, experience and attitude, the required number of paid staff with the appropriate skills, qualifications, experience and attitude).
- State clearly, to existing and potential employees, the organisation's stance on safer recruitment practices, ensuring that people who are not suitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults are identified, deterred or rejected.
- Create an on-going safe and secure environment for all service users by ensuring all staff are suitably trained.
- Foster a diverse workforce, as far as is possible that reflects the wider community that NCA serves.
- Work to a fair and effective recruitment procedure, which is consistent with employment legislation and the NCA's equality and diversity policy ensuring that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the **Equality Act 2010**. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
- Take into account and ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations, statutory and non-statutory guidance contained in '**Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2018)**', due regard for **Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance)** and **The Use of Social Media for On-line Radicalisation (July 2015)**) and the **Disqualification under Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018)**, and any guidance or code of practice published by the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**
- Ensure that NCA meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
- Ensure all those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers are familiar with and comply with the provisions of this policy.
- Conduct the recruitment and selection of staff in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

NCA aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies or volunteering positions at NCA.

## 2.0 DATA PROTECTION

NCA is legally required to carry out the pre-appointment checks detailed in this procedure. Staff and prospective staff will be required to provide certain information to NCA in order to carry out the checks that are applicable to their role. NCA will also be required to provide certain information to third parties, such as the Disclosure and Barring Service. Failure to provide requested information may result in NCA not being able to meet its employment, safeguarding or legal obligations. NCA will process personal information in accordance with its **Privacy notice**.

NCA will ensure the security of all employees' personal data at all times, whether prospective, current or ex employees. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018. Data will be retained and disposed of in line with NCA's data retention policies.

## 2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The Board of Trustees will:

- ensure NCA has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with statutory guidance and legal requirements
- monitor NCA's compliance with them
- ensure that appropriate staff and board members have completed safer recruitment training

2.2 The Centre Manager will:

- ensure that NCA operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and up-dated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance
- ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers
- monitor any contractors and agencies compliance with this document
- promote the safety and well being of children and young people at every stage of this process

The Board of Trustees as per the NCA scheme of delegation policy has delegated responsibility to the Centre Manager to lead in all appointments.

### **Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency**

The full legal 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. HM Government has produced a Factual note on regulated activity in relation to children service <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/safeguarding-vulnerable-groups-disclosure-and-barring->

Regulated activity includes:

1. teaching, training, instructing, caring for (see (c) below) or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children,
2. work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers;

Work under 1 or 2 is regulated activity only if done regularly. Some activities are always regulated activities, regardless of their frequency or whether they are supervised or not. This includes:

3. relevant personal care, or health care provided by or provided under the supervision of a health care professional:

- personal care includes helping a child, for reasons of age, illness or disability, with eating or drinking, or in connection with toileting, washing, bathing and dressing;
- health care means care for children provided by, or under the direction or supervision of, a regulated health care professional.

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of NCA will amount to "regulated activity" if it is carried out:

- frequently, meaning once a week or more; or
- overnight, meaning between 2.00 am, and 6.00 am; or
- satisfies the "period condition", meaning four times or more in a 30 day period; and provides the opportunity for contact with children.

## **3.0 WHERE IT APPLIES**

This safer recruitment policy applies to the recruitment of all volunteers, paid posts, including sessional 'bank' posts and fixed term contracts. Fixed term employees will be entitled to terms and conditions of employment that are no less favourable than the terms and conditions of comparable permanent employees. NCA will not normally engage a temporary employee for a period in excess of one year. The re-engagement of a temporary employee is not permitted within one month of the termination of his/her previous contract with NCA. NCA will limit the use of successive fixed-term contracts by imposing a cut-off of two years' continuity of service unless there is an objective reason that justifies a further fixed term.

## **4.0 CONSIDERATIONS**

### **4.1 Justification for recruitment**

Before recruitment begins, the following factors must be considered:

- Is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
- Does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- Is it appropriate to evaluate the grade of the post?
- Could the work be accommodated in other ways?
- Are there any staff 'at risk' of redundancy? Staff at risk within the organisation must be given first consideration for any vacancy prior to an external / internal advertisement being placed.

### **4.2 Authorisation for Recruitment**

In order for the recruitment process to commence the recruiting manager must gain authorisation from the Centre Manager and complete the appropriate documentation. The following documentation must be completed for recruitment to all posts:

- Job description
- Person specification
- For voluntary roles ensure that all vacancies have a Role Description and Person Specification.

In addition, for jobs specifically involving contact with children or vulnerable adults NCA will

- Ensure that the organisation's commitment to safeguarding service users is clear in its advertisements.

- Ensure that the job description makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with or near to children or vulnerable adults.

#### **4.3 Advertising**

To ensure equality of opportunity, NCA will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible, this will entail an advertisement which will make clear NCA's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All vacancies are advertised, both internally within NCA, as well as externally. Where it is considered that existing staff have the prerequisite skills consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only. Those staff who have been identified to be at risk of redundancy should be considered for vacant posts prior to advertisement if they meet all the essential criteria of the vacancy.

#### **4.4 Application pack and Enquiries**

NCA uses its own application form and all enquiries will receive an information pack detailing the requirements of the post and wherever possible, this will be provided in electronic format, and in alternative formats where requested. CVs will not be accepted. All applicants will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their suitability including academic and full employment history for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history). Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted.

The application pack includes a separate self-disclosure form allowing candidates the opportunity to confidentially disclose any unspent criminal convictions. If the role requires an enhanced DBS applicants will be asked to disclose any unprotected spent convictions and cautions. In England, Scotland and Wales NCA can only ask for information about cautions or convictions which are not designated as 'protected' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Applicants will be asked to complete the self-disclosure form before interview and bring them in a separate, sealed envelope marked 'Confidential'. The interview panel will only open the self-disclosure forms of candidates who have accepted a conditional offer, and review the information inside as part of our vetting checks. Unopened self-disclosure forms will be disposed of securely. The self-disclosure form does not replace the need for a DBS check. DBS checks should always be carried out as appropriate.

#### **4.5 Shortlisting**

Shortlisting must be undertaken by a minimum of two individuals one of whom must have completed safer recruitment training and who will go on to be involved in the interviewing process. At shortlisting, applications are checked for discrepancies, inconsistencies and gaps in employment (cross reference with the application form) - note, enquire further and consider if questions at interview are required.

Shortlisting of candidates will be against the person specification for the post and only shortlisted for interview if they meet the essential criteria defined in the person specification. If the number of candidates meeting the essential criteria is excessive, further selection must be undertaken utilising the desirable criteria to achieve a workable shortlist (suggest no more than between 8-10).

Candidate's personal information and equality and diversity monitoring forms are separated from the application forms prior to the shortlisting process. The shortlisting panel will not have access to this information whilst shortlisting.

#### **4.6 Interviewing**

There is a 2 stage face-to-face interview for all posts conducted by a panel of no less than 2 people at each stage and must include a board member at the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage. At least one member of the panel will have successfully completed training in Safer Recruitment within the last 3 years either online or face to face.

All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews and where applicable include questions around safeguarding. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. Follow up questions may be asked in response to candidate's answers.

#### **4.7 Skills assessment**

As part of the selection process candidates may be asked to partake in a series of skills tests as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> interview. These tests must be directly related to the role in question and must be measurable against objective criteria. Candidates must be informed of the details in the letter inviting them for 2<sup>nd</sup> interview.

#### 4.8 Appointment

The choice of candidate will be determined by majority view of interview panel formed by the scored interview sheets. In the case of a tied score the recruiting panel will vote for the candidate they feel is more suitable. A formal offer of appointment is to be made and confirmed in writing and will be conditional upon receipt of:

- Proof of identity
- Two satisfactory references of which one must be the current or most recent employer.
- If applicable to the post completion of a DBS disclosure application and receipt of satisfactory clearance;
- Providing actual certificates of qualifications, verification of qualifications/professional status;
- Proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK; Overseas Police Checks for any individual who within the last 5 years has lived or worked outside the UK, whether they are a British Citizen or not.
- The successful completion of a probation period is a requirement before a permanent appointment is made.

#### 4.9 Confidentiality

All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality and in line with NCA's GDPR policy incorporating information sharing and confidentiality. .

#### 4.10 Documentation

At all stages of the recruitment process, it is the responsibility of the interview panel to ensure that notes are kept detailing the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates. These notes could be called upon as evidence of the fairness of the process. The notes should therefore be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants would normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them (please note that applications are retained for 6 months only) as part of the record of the interview.

#### 4.11 Feedback

Feedback will be provided by a member of the interview panel or the Centre Manager at the request of any applicant at any stage of the recruitment process.

#### 4.12 Monitoring

For equality and diversity purposes, recruitment statistics are monitored on a yearly basis by gender, ethnicity, disability, age and job type. This information is disseminated to the Board of Trustees with any positive action identified as a consequence.

### 5.0 RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

#### 5.1 Introduction

This document details the procedures required to undertake the recruitment and selection process to completion. It splits the process into a number of stages. It is necessary to ensure that the procedures are followed as described since they are derived from legislation, organisational policy and good practice. The Centre Manager will be involved at all stages with the recruitment process and will be able to offer any help and assistance needed.

#### 5.2 Pre-advertisement

Before a post is advertised the following documentation must be completed:

- Advert text
- Job description
- Person specification

The main points to note about these documents are as follows:

- Advert text

The text for the advert should be drafted with the Centre Manager who is responsible for placing the advert. If the post will be working directly with children or vulnerable adults this should be stated clearly in the advert and reference should be made to the eligibility checks that will be made. All adverts for paid or unpaid posts will include the following statement:

***“Northmoor Community Association is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults therefore please note our recruitment procedure includes DBS checks and overseas checks (where applicable). Please note prospective employees will need to evidence they have the relevant permission to work in the UK.”***

This statement also appears on the safeguarding page of NCA's website and application form. NCA's safeguarding policies are on the website under the policies page. .

The choice of where to advertise is determined in consultation with the Centre Manager. If an individual manager has a specific request which is deemed to be additional to any usual advertising requirement, this can be considered.

Consideration should be given to the timing of placing adverts to ensure maximum benefit. For example, there are periods in the year when advertising would be less effective, e.g. Bank Holidays, Christmas. Consideration also needs to be given to advert 'closing' dates and the publication and distribution dates of any print media used.

The closing date must allow candidates sufficient time in which to prepare and submit their applications. Ideally closing dates must never be less than two weeks after the date of advertisement, or more than six weeks. Statutory or concessionary holidays should be taken into account when determining closing dates.

- Job description

A Job Description is a key document in the recruitment process and defines the purpose, scope and the principal duties and responsibilities of a particular role. It provides a framework which outlines the expectations; both for the employee and the employer, and forms part of the working agreement, but is not in itself contractually binding.

- Person specification

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The purpose is to provide criteria against which the recruitment of candidates will be carried out objectively in line with NCA's equality and diversity policy and will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children and young people. For any role working with children and young people, the person specification will highlight the importance of understanding safeguarding issues.. It defines both essential and desirable criteria and based upon the job description.

### **5.3 The interview panel**

The interview panels will be selected from staff and board members with the skills and experience to judge the suitability of candidates for the role and the relationship they are likely to have with the post holder. The panel will include the line manager of the post holder. For the second panel a member or members of the board of trustees will be involved in either shortlisting or interviewing. At least one member of the selection and recruitment panel will have completed training in safer recruitment (online or face to face).

## **6.0 PROCEDURE FOR SELECTING CANDIDATES**

It is the NCA's policy that all applications for roles must be made by filling out the application form. Curriculum vitae will not be accepted as an application. This is made clear on the job advertisement and within the application pack.

### **6.1 Receipt of applications**

Receipt of applications will not be acknowledged to individual applicants. All applications will be logged and referenced by the Finance Administration Officer. Equality and diversity monitoring forms and personal data will be separated from the application forms with the information recorded and monitored anonymously. In accordance with the GDPR policy, personal data (such as application forms) is shared only with those that are involved in the recruitment process. Where it is necessary for applications to be taken off site for consideration, the utmost care should be taken regarding their security. For example, applications should not be left unattended in a vehicle or in any public place.

### **6.2 Shortlisting**

The Line Manager will make appropriate arrangements for shortlisting which will be undertaken by at least two members of the panel. The shortlisting should be undertaken against the information compiled on the job description and the person specification. It is important to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the way in which shortlisting is undertaken. Greater weight may be given to experience demonstrated against some of the criteria than others. Shortlisting records will be kept for 6 months along side applications in order to provide feedback if requested and for equal opportunities monitoring.

### **6.3 Interviewing**

Following shortlisting, selected applicants will be invited for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> interview by the Line Manager. The purpose of an interview is to facilitate the selection of the most suitable candidate for the post, although it should be recognised that this is only one part of the selection process.

### **6.4 Invitations to Interview**

Candidates should be given at least one week's notice of an interview date. This may be through the interview date being stated in the advertisement. The invitation should include the details of any skills assessments and related preparatory work that they will be required to undertake prior to or as part of the recruitment process. Candidates should also be asked to bring with them satisfactory evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK (original documents must be checked and copied) and the originals of any qualifications required for the role. The candidates should also be asked whether any reasonable adjustments are to be made for the interview.

### **6.5 Conduct of the interview**

When conducting interviews, every member of the panel must complete a scoring sheet and must make notes of questions asked and answers given. The panel must be wary of answers that indicate the candidate:

- lacks understanding of children's needs or perspectives
- has unrealistic expectations of children
- is prepared to use children to meet their own needs
- Uses inappropriate language when talking about children
- Is unclear about boundaries when working with children.

This will provide feedback and evidence of why the candidates have been selected or rejected. These notes must be signed and given to the Line Manager. Just as with shortlisting, these notes should be relevant to, and necessary for the process itself. It should be noted that applicants will normally be entitled to have access to interview notes about them which are retained as part of the record of the interview.

All candidates must be asked the same questions and the questions must be relevant to the role applied for. All panel members must be clear about the skills and aptitudes that are being probed by each question. Care must be taken to avoid questions which are discriminatory.

For each panel a lead or chair panel member should be appointed. As well as leading the process the following are the responsibilities of the chair:

- Advise candidates what happens next;
- Advise candidates that all employment is offered subject to satisfactory references and other checks including DBS checks if appropriate to the role;
- Check whether candidates require a work permit and seek evidence of eligibility to work in the UK. This must be asked of every candidate. If there is doubt about the validity of the evidence supplied, advice should be sought from the Centre Manager.

It is important that interviews are conducted in a courteous and professional manner, since a badly managed and conducted interview could lead to legal action against the potential employer or the individual(s) involved in the interview. It is important that candidates leave with a positive impression of the organisation.

## 6.6 Skills tests

Skill tests or other activity that forms part of the selection process must be measurable against objective criteria. Notes of the outcome of the tests should be kept as part of the recruitment process. Under the data protection act, applicants will normally be entitled to have access to these notes if a specific request is made.

## 7.0 THE CHOICE OF CANDIDATE

7.1 The choice of candidate will be determined by the majority view from the interview panels formed by the scored interview sheets, the application form and any tests undertaken. In the case of a tied score the recruiting panel will vote for the candidate they feel is more suitable. If the candidate selected does not take up the appointment, any decision to offer the appointment to the second choice applicant must be taken by the whole panel. Before the panel disbands it should agree, if possible, on the reserve name(s).

## 7.2 Post-selection administration

### Offer of Employment

An offer of employment will be made by the Centre Manager. It must be made clear, however, that the offer is conditional upon the satisfactory completion of references, satisfactory evidence of eligibility to work in the UK and other appropriate checks. A verbal offer of employment must be followed up in writing. Only when all of the above have been obtained and cleared is the offer of employment legally binding. On verbal acceptance of the post the Centre Manager will issue the offer letter, contract and other relevant documents within 5 working days.

Unsuccessful candidates must be notified as early as possible of the outcome of their interview by the chair of the panel or the Centre Manager. Ideally this should be no more than three working days after the successful candidate has confirmed their acceptance of the post.

## 7.3 References

The Line Manager will take up the references from the application form. Employment references should be obtained from at least the last or current employer, either in writing or by initial contact via the telephone, to be confirmed in writing. The questions and information gleaned from the reference must be relevant to the aspects of the post in question e.g. where cash handling is involved in a post, then the honesty of the prospective employee must be discussed.

If the successful candidate is an internal one the taking up of references may be 'waived' or an internal reference may be sought.

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referees, and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. A copy of the job description and person specification will be circulated with the reference request. Referees must not be a relative. Referees will always be asked specific questions about:

- referee's relationship with the candidate;
- the candidate's suitability for this post.
- if applicable the candidate's suitability for working with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant to the safety/welfare of children or behaviour towards children and the outcome of those concerns – conclusions reached and how the matter was resolved;
- any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children

## 7.4 Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

From 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012 CRB and ISA merged to form the Disclosure and Barring Service. Administrative processes remained the same (see <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/vetting-barring-scheme/>). NCA uses the Atlantic Data Disclosures Ltd to undertake the checks.

As a registered body with the Disclosure and Barring Service, NCA is obliged to comply with the Code of Practice as published under section 122 of the Police Act 1997 (see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers>). The Code of Practice is intended to ensure that disclosure information is not used to unfairly discriminate against the subject of the disclosure (on the basis of convictions or other defaults revealed) and that the handling and storage of Disclosed information is dealt with in an appropriate and confidential manner.

The obligations of the Code require organisation to have a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and a policy on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information. Copies are available on request.

Under the code, before withdrawing an offer of employment based on the Disclosure information, the matter should be discussed with the applicant.

Not all paid roles within NCA are subject to an enhanced DBS check due to the nature of the project and services provided as limited paid roles with NCA work with children and vulnerable adults. The roles working directly with children or vulnerable adults will be subject to checking against the relevant barred lists and enhanced DBS checks.

Sessional workers whose roles are in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults are subject to full checks. For sessional workers in other areas we will accept DBS checks undertaken by other providers so long as they are no more than 3 months old.

Volunteers including Trustees in contact with children or vulnerable adults are all subject to enhanced DBS checks. We will accept DBS checks undertaken by other providers so long as they are no more than 3 months old.

#### **7.5 Prevention of Illegal Working Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006**

Requires that organisations ensure applicants for employment possess documentary evidence of their eligibility to live and work in the U.K. Full details of checking documents are included in the "Prevention of Illegal Working Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 – Comprehensive Guidance for Employers - updated October 2013 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide>

#### **8.0 OTHER READING AND LINKED POLICES**

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures.
- Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.
- GDPR Policy incorporating Data Protection and Confidentiality
- Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure
- Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy

#### **9.0 REVIEWED AND POLICY REVISIONS**

This policy will be reviewed and amended every three years or as necessary, to reflect best practice and/or changes in legislation. All staff or volunteers should pass suggestions or recommendations for the revision of any aspect of the policy through normal channels to the Centre Manager or Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

Policy Ref: GP 11	Approved: 12/12/2018
Last Revision: 06/12/2018	Next Review: December 2021
Signature: _____ (Chairperson of NCA Board)	