



SANDBACH GYMNASTICS FOUNDATION

SAFER RECRUITMENT

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SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

As Sandbach Gymnastics recruits new members of staff we always consider safeguarding issues at every stage of the recruitment process for both appointments in positions of work or volunteering for our young gymnasts and vulnerable adults

Although many coaches, officials and unqualified assistants are committed and dedicated individuals who are highly motivated to work within the sport, it is vital that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any unsuitable people or people who may abuse children are prevented from working with young people and vulnerable adults

The following procedures are adopted and applied consistently helping to ensure that Sandbach Gymnastics recruits individuals who share the organisation's values and approach to safeguarding as well as providing an effective deterrent to anyone who wants to abuse children within the sport. As a British Gymnastics registered club, we regularly review our existing practices and make any required changes

Unfortunately, people who want to abuse children may seek out various avenues to gain access to children, and hence, it is equally important that robust recruitment procedures are in place for both paid and voluntary positions at Sandbach Gymnastics. These practices are always followed, even where there is only one applicant for a position.

ONE-OFF VOLUNTEERS - The only current exception to this, is in the case of one-off volunteers, who will only have supervised contact with children for a limited period. This may include:

- Parents or other volunteers helping out at a club fundraiser or event
- Young people attending the club for a work experience

As a club with dedicated gymnastics facility, we ensure that all names of volunteers and helpers for specific events are recorded. Where one-off volunteering becomes more regular, i.e., more than once a month we follow our recruitment procedures in full

PARENTS - It should be noted that it is inappropriate and in the case of criminal records checks unlawful to apply recruitment procedures to parents whose only role is to care for their own child, e.g., a parent of a child with a disability who attends a gymnastics session to provide one-to-one support for the child. However, if the individual in question wishes to take on a role within the club that will bring responsibility for other young people the full recruitment procedures would be applied

It is essential that the following recruitment and selection procedures are applied without unlawfully discriminating against candidates on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation, and are fully compliant with the Data Protection Act (1998).

SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCESSES - The key elements of our robust safe recruitment process include:

Preparing Candidate Information to include:

- Job description that refers to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Person specification ensuring specific reference is made to suitability to work with children
- Application form which contains appropriate safeguarding sections.
- Job Advert stating an Enhanced DBS check will be made.
- Barred List check
- Social Media Check
- Right to Work in the UK check

Attracting Candidates

This may be done through advertising commonly in the press and on websites. Any publicity must make clear reference to safeguarding and the use of criminal records checks as part of the recruitment process

Scrutinising Applications

The process of analysing application forms with a view of selecting a shortlist and picking up on any discrepancies or anomalies in their paperwork, i.e gaps in their working history, which may be addressed with the candidate at interview.

Obtaining References

References that specifically address the applicant's suitability to work with children should, with consent of the applicant, ideally be taken before interview so that any issues can be addressed at this stage

Interview

In addition to the candidate's suitability for the role, the interview process should investigate the candidate's suitability to work with children, verifying:

- Applicant's identity
- Right to work in UK
- Relevant qualifications
- Enhanced DBS Check
- Work history, exploring any gaps with the candidate

An enhanced DBS or home country equivalent in line with the requirements set out in British Gymnastics Criminal Record Checks Policy and Guidelines must be completed for anyone over the age of sixteen who has not completed a check through British Gymnastics within the last three years or registered with the DBS Update Service.

Induction

The successful candidate has a period of time where he or she is introduced to the organisation's safeguarding policy, procedures and company structure. An assessment of learning needs is conducted, and appropriate training, coaching, and mentoring is provided to address these identified needs

Monitoring and Appraisal

Our staff and volunteers are provided with regular performance reviews, this is an ongoing process and particularly during the probation period, where support is given as appropriate

Candidate Information

Anyone who expresses an interest in the job or role is sent a candidate information pack, which together with the terms and conditions for the post includes the application form, job description and a person specification as well as information on the organisation's safeguarding policy and equality policy

The Job description identifies the key roles and responsibilities that make up the position. As safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, it includes the responsibility the post holder will have for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

In addition to the job description, the person specification aims to provide a profile of the 'ideal' person for the job, providing a framework within which several candidates can be assessed. It is standard practice to indicate which factors are essential and those that are desirable and common to identify how each aspect will be assessed, e.g., questioning raised at interview

Application Form

All applicants are required to complete a standard application form, even if they have provided a curriculum vitae (CV). This will ensure all required details are provided and will allow for easier comparison between applicants. Applicants should be asked to sign a declaration

confirming the information they have provided is true. A statement must be included on the application form saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)

Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate should physically sign a hard copy of the application at point of interview and sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. On the application it indicates that a DBS check will be requested as part of the pre-recruitment checks where a risk assessment has identified that it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. Such positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and require that applicants disclose all cautions, reprimands, final warnings, and convictions; even those that are considered 'spent'

The Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) states that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers and cannot be considered. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/disclosure-and-barring-service-filtering>

The applicant should be asked to supply the following information:

- Current and any former names, address, and other contact details; – National Insurance number to confirm the right to work
- Any relevant academic or vocational qualifications and details of the awarding body; – Current BG membership number
- A full history in chronological order of any paid or voluntary positions working with children, with start and end dates and reasons for leaving
- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that demonstrate the applicant's suitability for the position and how he or she fulfils the person specification

- Contact details of at least two referees (not relatives), one of whom should be a previous employer or club who have agreed to provide written comment on the individual's experience and suitability to work with children and young people. The application form should indicate that references will be sought for short-listed candidates prior to the interview, except in the case of current employers where the applicant has a justifiable objection
- Confirmation of whether they have any convictions, cautions, reprimands, or final warnings that are not "protected" as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013).
- It should highlight that the successful applicant will be required to complete a criminal record check through British Gymnastics or the relevant Home Country Gymnastics governing body.

Attracting Candidates

Safeguarding features strongly in our advertising when we recruit for a position working with young people and vulnerable adults. We include a safeguarding statement that features in any publicity about the role. In addition, the club states that a criminal record check will be required as part of the recruitment process

The following is included:

- Details of recruiting organisation
- Position, main duties, and responsibilities
- Salaried or voluntary
- Prior experience and qualifications required
- Safeguarding statement stating that we are committed to safeguarding children and ensuring all young people and vulnerable adults have a positive experience in the sport
- Successful applicants, choosing to work or voluntary support our organisation must be fully committed to these values
- Criminal records checks will be used as part of the recruitment and selection process

Scrutinising Applications

All applications are scrutinised to ensure the required information has been provided and to identify anything of concern. This could include any discrepancies in information provided or any unexplained gaps in respect of applicants' involvement in the sport.

All candidates are assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation and a shortlist prepared. Any concerns identified from the application form are addressed with the applicant at interview

Obtaining References

Prior to the interview, subject to the applicant's consent, references are sought and where appropriate relevant qualifications or previous experience is confirmed

If someone is being interviewed who has indicated he or she has previous qualifications or experience in gymnastics, we will request in writing on formal headed paper confirmation from British Gymnastics for:

- BG membership
- Date of last criminal record check
- BG qualifications and awards
- Any known reason for not employing or appointing the named person

Seeking references prior to interview is always preferable in order that any concerns can be addressed with the applicant

An applicant who does not agree to their current employer being approached is advised that in the event they are the preferred candidate for the job, they are required to address any issues raised by the current employer prior to their appointment being confirmed

In addition to the current employer, references are also sought from previous organisations' where the applicant worked in paid or voluntary position with children.

Interview

Where the position involves significant contact with young people a formal interview is held according to correct procedures and protocol. The purpose of the interview is to carry out an assessment of the qualities of candidates in relation to the requirements of the job and their suitability to work with children. Their mental health and physical health are ascertained in accordance with the demands and responsibilities of the role. There is always a face-to-face interview, even if there is only one candidate.

Additional information may be requested at interview to support the details contained in the application form and address or ask questions relating to any information disclosed in the self- declaration of convictions. It is also important to explore any discrepancies between the information on the application form and the information obtained in pre-interview checks

Where the post involves working with children, we always use a minimum of two interviewers to allow for a full assessment of the candidate's responses. The members of the interview panel must have attended safeguarding awareness training as a minimum and have the authority to make recruitment decision

It is important to agree in advance the process for the interview and the questions that will be asked. These include several questions that focus on suitability to work with children. These questions aim to identify underlying attitudes and may require the interview panel members to be probing in their questioning techniques. Questions to identify this type of information include asking how the applicant behaved in an actual situation involving young people, or to question why they believe specific aspects of the safeguarding policy are important.

The interview panel takes the opportunity to address any concerns arising from the information on the application form or as part of a reference. The panel also confirms the details made in the self-declaration are correct and the willingness to complete a DBS disclosure or equivalent if required in line with British Gymnastics DBS Checks Policy & Guidance.

Verification Processes

A checklist is adopted and used when recruiting people to work with children applies the following the selection process.

The checklist includes:

- Verification of identity
- Sponsorship and Endorsement of Migrant Workers
If a non-EU national (known as a migrant worker) wants to live/work in the UK they must apply to the UK Border Agency for a working visa under the new Points Based System – for further details refer to www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk
- Verification of qualifications
- To avoid any unnecessary delays, all candidates are instructed to bring their identity documents to the interview. Candidates must also bring with them any qualification and awards certificates.

Identity Checks

It is vital to be sure that the person is who he or she claims to be. As identity verification is required as part of the criminal record check application process, the club nominated, and designated person conducts the identity verification process using the British Gymnastics Identity Verification Form (IVF). Original identity documents must be provided, and verification must be conducted in the presence of the applicant to ensure they are the person shown in photographic evidence.

Confirming the Appointment

Once a decision has been made to employ someone or invite someone to take a voluntary role within a club or organisation, an offer letter is sent out. This letter supported by the contract of employment and specifies full details and requirements of the position and any probation period. The applicant is informed that the appointment would be subject to a satisfactory criminal record check and references

Criminal Records Checks

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 became law in May 2012 and placed the following legal requirements on organisations:

- To not knowingly allow a barred person to work in 'Regulated Activity'
- To inform the DBS if an individual is removed from 'Regulated Activity' because they have harmed or because they pose a risk of harm to vulnerable groups (including children).
- A criminal records check will confirm whether an individual is included on a barred list. British Gymnastics members in regulated activity are required to complete an enhanced DBS with barring list check through British Gymnastics every three years.
- It is the responsibility of the club to assess the role and determine whether a criminal record check is required in line and the appropriate level in line with BG Criminal Records Checks Policy & Guidance.
- For new employees and volunteers who are already a member of British Gymnastics and has completed a British Gymnastics disclosure within the last three years or has registered for the DBS Update Service, a new BG disclosure is not compulsory.
- If the club decides not to request a new disclosure, the club will confirm that British Gymnastics has approved the individual before an appointment is confirmed.
- Prior to receipt and British Gymnastics approval of the criminal record check, the individual may be permitted to undertake a role which is supervised at all times by a person in regulated activity within the affiliated organisation, for a maximum period of six weeks.
- The British Gymnastics Case Management Team is responsible for carrying out an initial assessment of any content on a disclosure and will make a suitability decision in the case of content assessed to be low risk. In the case of medium-high risk content, the British Gymnastics Case Referral Management Group (CRMG) will be responsible for the suitability decision. British Gymnastics affiliated clubs are required to abide by British Gymnastics decisions. British Gymnastics will contact the recruiting club without delay if a criminal record check contains

information of significant concern.

All checks should be:

- Confirmed in writing
- Documented and retained on the personnel file. (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information by DBS regulations)
- Followed up where they are unsatisfactory or discrepancies in the information provided.

Overseas Candidates

A DBS/Access NI/Disclosure Scotland Criminal Record Check will not provide a full picture of a criminal record for any candidate who has been resident in a foreign country. Different countries operate varying methods for providing background checks and not all countries are able to provide this service. The DBS website provides current advice on which countries can provide a check and the applicable procedure. Non-UK vetting must also be undertaken on British passport holders who have lived abroad in the past five years.

Induction

While the pre-recruitment processes are important particularly to act as a deterrent to those individuals who may be considered unsuitable. Perhaps the most significant time is the successful candidate's period of induction in the initial months of appointment. There may be some standard elements of induction, but a successful induction is likely to have considered the individual needs of each recruit and will involve a variety of elements, including:

- An explanation of Club and BG Safeguarding and protecting children policy and other policies
- Formally signing up to club policies and codes of ethics and conduct
- Clarification of roles, responsibilities, and consideration of expectations
- An assessment of learning needs, e.g., safeguarding, coaching, first aid, equality and diversity, English (*if English is not a first language*).

➤ Coaching and mentoring

Experienced individuals often have various mentors who support them at times throughout their career. A mentor is particularly important in an induction period and may act as a role model, cultural differences, language barriers etc. Good induction programmes will fully support the needs of new employees or volunteers and allow them to be successfully integrated into the club. An induction period may also highlight any potential poor practice concerns and allow the club to take any necessary remedial action

Monitoring and Appraisal

All staff and volunteers are given the opportunity to receive feedback, either through a formal appraisal or more informally through mentoring. Although this is good practice for any voluntary or paid position, appraisals are essential for positions that involve significant contact with young people and vulnerable adults. Appraisals are offered at regular intervals, initially at the end of a probation period and thereafter at yearly intervals. The appraisal helps to establish the individuals' learning needs, review targets, and consider any concerns. As a club we have a procedure to deal with complaints relating to staff and volunteers. Parents and all members are made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern