**RICHMOND HOCKEY CLUB**

**POLICY FOR SAFER RECRUITMENT**

**Introduction**

“Richmond Hockey Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all committee members, coaches, captains, players and volunteers in whatever capacity to share this commitment.”

The Committee should prevent people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children, taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for any checks beyond what is required; and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised.

Whatever the post, making sure that we do everything we can to prevent appointing people who may pose a risk to children is an essential part of safeguarding.

We will adopt an approach that, ‘it could happen here’ and expect all who work for the club to be vigilant in this regard.

1. **Scope of this policy**

The guidance in this policy applies to everyone employed in a role at Richmond Hockey Club (paid or volunteer) who is likely to be seen by the children as a safe and trustworthy adult.

It is vital that the club creates a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. The committee must act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence including: criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks together with references and interview information.

For most appointments at Richmond Hockey Club, an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, will be required as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. In summary, a person will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity if as a result of their work they:

* will be responsible, on a regular basis at the club, for coaching, caring for or supervising children; or
* will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly at the club where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate.

A **supervised** volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity. Where a volunteer’s role will be a one off, such as accompanying children to a fixture or helping at an event, these measures would be unnecessary provided that the person is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of children.

**What is the DBS?**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are a government run organisation which aids organisations in making safer recruitment choices. They do this by processing and issuing DBS checks that discloses any criminal convictions, warnings, cautions or reprimands held in England or Wales. They also maintain adult and child barred lists and make decisions on whether individuals should be added to said lists.

**Who requires a DBS check?**

A DBS check is required for anyone who is working or volunteering in a role that is in ‘regulated activity’ with anyone under the age of 18. Hockey clubs and associations have a legal requirement to not knowingly employ anyone who is working in ‘regulated activity’ who is on the child barred list. Anyone who is or planning to work in regulated activity with under 18s in hockey is required to perform an enhanced DBS check with a child barred list check included. This check must be performed every three years.

**Where can I get a DBS check?**

All DBS checks through hockey clubs and associations are performed though a company called First Advantage. Clubs and Areas who need to perform DBS checks will have an account set up with First Advantage and at least one DBS Verifier who will be able to manage the check from start to finish. If your role requires you to obtain a DBS check, please contact your club's DBS Verifier.

1. **Elements of Safer Practice**

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the club’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants.

The main elements of the process include:

* ensuring the job description/person specifiction makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
* obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies;
* obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant’s suitability to work with children and following up any concerns;
* a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate’s suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post;
* verifying the successful applicant’s identity;
* verifying that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
* checking his or her previous employment history and experience;
* verifying that s/he has the health and physical capacity for the job;
* obtaining a certificate for an enhanced DBS check which will include barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity;

**N.B.**

It is important not to rely solely on criminal record and Barring List checks to screen out unsuitable applicants. Those checks are an essential safeguard, but they will only pick up those abusers who have been convicted, or have come to the attention of the police, or who have been listed. Many individuals who are unsuited to working with children will not have any previous convictions, and will not appear on the Barred lists.

**Continuing Awareness**

It is vital that the measures described in this policy are applied thoroughly whenever someone is recruited to work at Richmond Hockey Club but that must not be the end of the matter. Hockey clubs are safe environments for the great majority of children, and the vast majority of people who work with children have their safety and welfare at heart. But we must not be complacent. We know that some people seek access to children in order to abuse, and that abused children very often do not disclose the abuse at the time.

It is crucial therefore that everyone working at the club is aware of safeguarding issues, and the need to adopt ways of working and appropriate practice to protect our pupils and help reduce allegations. And it is equally important that everyone is able to raise concerns about what seems to be poor or unsafe practice by colleagues, and that those concerns, and concerns expressed by children, parents or others are listened to and taken seriously.

1. **Safer Recruitment Practice**

This section provides a detailed description of the process for the safe recruitment and selection of staff, which forms an essential part of any efforts to safeguard children. Recruitment and the checks that are undertaken as part of this process are the club’s first chance to make robust efforts to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children.

**A consistently applied and robust process is always needed to ensure the safest levels of staff recruitment.** The following 12 steps to safer recruitment checklist provides a brief overview of the steps that should be taken when recruiting staff.

**12 steps to safer recruitment**

**Before we release the post . . .**

**Step 1** Ensure that we have an up to date recruitment and selection policy that describes the process and roles before we begin

**Step 2** Ensure that we have a safeguarding policy and that a statement about the club’s commitment to safeguarding is included in all recruitment and selection materials

**Step 3** Ensure that we have an up to date job description and person specification for the role(s) you wish to recruit to, that have been agreed with the relevant middle-leader

**Step 4** Ensure that we have an appropriate advertisement prepared that contains all necessary information about the role, timetable for recruitment and our commitment to safeguarding

**Step 5** Ensure that we have compiled a suitable candidate information pack containing all the required information about the organisation, role, recruitment timetable, safeguarding policy/statement and application form

**Before we interview. . .**

**Step 6** Ensure that each application received is scrutinised in a systematic way by the shortlisting panel in order to agree our shortlist before sending invitations to interview

**Step 7** Ensure that all appropriate checks have been undertaken on our shortlisted candidates, including receipt of at least 1 reference.

**Step 8** Ensure that all shortlisted candidates receive the same letter of invitation to interview, supplying them with all necessary information

**Before we select our preferred candidate. . .**

**Step 9** Ensure that we check original documents which verify the identity, any academic or vocational qualifications claimed in the application form and the right to work in the UK of all shortlisted candidates.

**Step 10** Ensure that a face-to-face interview is conducted for ALL shortlisted candidates based on an objective assessment of the candidate’s ability to meet the person specification and job description. Specific questions designed to gain required information about each candidate’s suitability must be asked, including those needed to address any gaps in information supplied in the application form

**Before we formally appoint . . .**

**Step 11** Ensure that you are able to make a confident selection of a preferred candidate based upon their demonstration of suitability for the role

**Step 12** Ensure that your preferred candidate is informed that the offer of employment (including volunteer positions) is conditional on receiving satisfactory information from all necessary checks

**Guidelines for ensuring a safer recruitment process**

1. **Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement**

“Richmond Hockey Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all committee members, coaches, captains, players and volunteers in whatever capacity to share this commitment.”

The statement should be included in:

* Publicity materials
* Recruitment websites
* Advertisements
* Candidate information packs
* Person specifications
* Job descriptions
* Induction training

1. **Planning and Advertising**

Planning is vital to successful recruitment. It is important to be clear about what mix of qualities, qualifications and experience a successful candidate will need to demonstrate, and whether there are any particular matters that need to be mentioned in the advertisement for the post in order to prevent unwanted applications. It is essential to plan the recruitment exercise itself, identifying who should be involved, assigning responsibilities, and setting aside sufficient time for the work needed at each stage so that safeguards are not skimped or overlooked. For example, it is important to organise the selection process to allow references to be obtained on shortlisted candidates before interview.

When a vacancy is advertised, the advertisement should include a statement about the Club’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check which will include barred list information, where appropriate, as well as the usual details of the post and salary, qualifications required, etc.

The person specification will need careful thought and drafting. It is also good practice to make sure at the outset that all the other material, e.g. the application form, job description, and information or guidance for applicants that will form part of the candidate information pack is up-to- date, and clearly sets out the extent of the relationships and contact with children, and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled.

1. **Application Form (Appendix 1)**

The standard England Hockey application form for roles working with young people in hockey will be used for every appointment to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants. We will not accept curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants in place of an application form.

1. **Job Description**

This should clearly state:

* the main duties and responsibilities of the post; and
* the individual’s responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons s/he is responsible for, or comes into contact with.

1. **Person Specification**

This should:

* include the qualifications and experience, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people;
* describe the competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate;
* explain how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process. For example:

“In addition to candidates’ ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including:

* motivation to work with children and young people;
* ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
* emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours; and
* attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline;” and

It should also explain that if the applicant is short listed any relevant issues arising from his or her references will be taken up at interview.

1. **Candidate Information Pack**

The pack will be in the ‘Vacancies’ section of the club website and will include a copy of:

* the Hounslow application form, and explanatory notes about completing the form;
* the job description and person specification;
* details about which documents short-listed candidates are required to bring to interview
* any relevant information about Richmond Hockey Club and the recruitment process, and statements of relevant policies such as the authority or establishment’s policy about equal opportunities, the recruitment of ex-offenders, etc;
* the Club’s Child Protection Policy Statement; and
* a statement of the terms and conditions relating to the post.

1. **Scrutinising and Short listing**

All applications should be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment. Incomplete applications should not be accepted and should be returned for completion. Any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified by the scrutiny should be noted so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant. As well as reasons for obvious gaps in employment, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work, also need to be explored and verified.

All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation

1. **Employment History and References**

We will always ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete. References will be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, before interview, so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview.

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. References should always be obtained, scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily, before the appointment is confirmed. They should always be requested directly from the referee and employers should not rely on open references, for example in the form of ‘to whom it may concern’ testimonials.

On receipt, references should be checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. The referee should be contacted to provide further clarification as appropriate: for example if the answers are vague. They should also be compared for consistency with the information provided by the candidate on their application form. Any discrepancies should be taken up with the candidate.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered carefully when assessing the applicant’s suitability for the post (including information obtained from the Employer Access Online checks referred to previously).

England Hockey’s Reference form will be used for any recruitment involving work with children or young people (Appendix 2).

1. **Checks Before Interview**

If a short listed applicant claims to have some specific qualification or previous experience that is particularly relevant to the post for which s/he is applying that will not be verified by a reference, it is good practice to verify the facts before interview so that any discrepancy can be explored at interview. The qualification or experience can usually be verified quickly by telephoning the relevant previous employer and asking for written confirmation of the facts.

1. **Involving Pupils and Students**

Involving young people in the recruitment and selection process in some way, or observing short listed candidates’ interaction with them is common, and recognised as good practice. There are different ways of doing that. For example, candidates for coaching posts might be asked to coach a session.

1. **Interviews**

The interview should assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work with children. The selection process for people who will work with children should always include a face-to- face interview even if there is only one candidate.

1. **Invitation to Interview**

In addition to the arrangements for interviews – time and place, directions to the venue, membership of the interview panel – the invitation should remind candidates about how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore including suitability to work with children. The invitation should also stress that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked thoroughly to ensure the person is who he or she claims to be, and that where a DBS Disclosure is appropriate the person will be required to complete an application for an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity) straight away. Consequently all candidates should be instructed to bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements. A full list of acceptable documents will form part of the application pack.

Candidates should also be asked to bring original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body. N.B. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies written confirmation of his or her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate’s identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file.

1. **Interview Panel**

Interviews will be conducted by a minimum of two interviewers, and in some cases, e.g. for senior or specialist posts, a larger panel might be appropriate. A panel of at least two people allows one member to observe and assess the candidate, and make notes, while the candidate is talking to the other. It also reduces the possibility of any dispute about what was said or asked during the interview.

The members of the panel should:

* have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointment;
* be appropriately trained, (one member of interview panels **must** have undertaken safer recruitment training.
* meet before the interviews to:
  + reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing;
  + consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those; and
  + agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification.

The panel must agree in advance a list of questions for each candidate that they will not deviate from, but they should agree a set of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post, and the issues they will explore with each candidate based on the information provided in the candidate’s application and references (if available). A candidate’s response to a question about an issue will determine whether and how that is followed up. Where possible it is best to avoid hypothetical questions because they allow theoretical answers. It is better to ask competence based questions that ask a candidate to relate how s/he has responded to, or dealt with, an actual situation, or questions that test a candidate’s attitudes and understanding of issues.

1. **Scope of the Interview**

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant’s suitability for the particular post, the interview panel should also explore:

* the candidate’s attitude toward children and young people;
* finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and

their motivation for working with children;

* his or her ability to support the club’s agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
* concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.

The interviews should be used to explore potential areas of concern to determine the applicant’s suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further probing include:

* implication that adults and children are equal;
* lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children;
* inappropriate idealisation of children;
* inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children; and,
* indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

The panel should also ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS Disclosure.

If, for whatever reason, references are not obtained before the interview, the candidate should also be asked at interview if there is anything s/he wishes to declare or discuss in light of the questions that have been (or will be) put to his or her referees. It is vital that **TWO** references are obtained and scrutinised before a person’s appointment is confirmed and before s/he starts work.

1. **Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks**

All new appointments

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate, including one who has lived or worked abroad, must be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

When appointing new staff, the club **must**

* verify a candidate’s identity; Identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website.
* for most appointments, obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes barred list information, as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. Note that when using the DBS update service you still need to obtain the original physical certificate

In summary, a person will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they:

• will be responsible, on a regular basis in the club, for teaching, coaching instructing, or supervising children; or

• will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly at the club where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; obtain a separate barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available;

* verify the candidate’s mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role;
* if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the club consider appropriate

Where the club allows an individual to start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, they should ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed.

The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any individual, including volunteers, who are not engaging in regulated activity.

Appendix 1 sets out detailed guidance on pre-appointment checks and what records need to be made and retained of these checks.

The club should seek advice from England Hockey, and follow relevant DBS guidance if a check reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed in course of the selection process.

**If a club knows or has reason to believe that an individual is barred, it commits an offence if it allows the individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.**

**England Hockey Contact for Reporting Concerns:**

Ethics and Welfare Manager (Lead for Safeguarding):  
**Tel:** 01628 897500 / 07738 644171  
**Email:** safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk  
**NSPCC Helpline (free 24-hour helpline):** 0808 800 5000

Where:

* the Enhanced DBS , which includes barred list information, reveals that a candidate s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or
* an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his or her application; or
* there are serious concerns about an applicant’s suitability to work with children,

we will refer the candidate to the DBS via the barring helpline.

**It’s against the law for employers to employ someone or allow them to volunteer for this kind of work if they know they’re on one of the barred lists.**

Employers must refer someone to DBS if they:

* sacked them because they harmed someone
* sacked them or removed them from working in regulated activity because they might have harmed someone
* were planning to sack them for either of these reasons, but they resigned first

**Existing staff**

If a club has concerns about an existing staff member’s suitability to work with children, the club should carry out all relevant checks as if the person were a new member of staff. Similarly, if a person working or volunteering at the club moves from a post that was not regulated activity into work which is considered to be regulated activity, the relevant checks for that regulated activity must be carried out.

**Clubs have a legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:**

* **the harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual;**
* **the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence; and**
* **the individual has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left.**

**The legal duty to refer applies equally in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity, or they are suspended.**

The DBS will consider whether to bar the person. Referrals should be made as soon as possible after the resignation, removal or redeployment of the individual.

**You’re breaking the law if you don’t refer someone to DBS when you should.**

**Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK**

Individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK must undergo the same checks as all other staff. In addition, clubs **must** make any further checks they think appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. Following the UK’s exit from the EU, clubs should apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world (see appendices 6 and 7)

The Home Office has published guidance on criminal record checks for overseas applicants. The Department for Education has also issued guidance on the employment of overseas-trained teachers. This gives information on the requirements for overseas-trained teachers from the European Economic Area to teach in England, and the award of qualified teacher status for teachers qualified in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America.

1. **Other adults who come into contact with children**

**Volunteers**

Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Volunteers who on an unsupervised basis coach, instruct or look after children regularly at the club will be in regulated activity. The club should obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (which should include barred list information) for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity. Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information). However, the club should conduct a repeat DBS check (which should include barred list information) on any such volunteer should they have concerns.

Clubs may obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (not including barred list information), for volunteers who are not engaging in regulated activity, but have the opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, e.g. supervised volunteers **Employers are not legally permitted to request barred list information on a volunteer who, because they are supervised, is not in regulated activity.**

The club should undertake a risk assessment and use their professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so we should consider:

* the nature of the work with children;
* what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers;
* whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on suitability;
* whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check; and

Details of the risk assessment should be recorded.

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 amended the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, removing supervised volunteers from regulated activity and applying a duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance to assist regulated activity providers such as clubs to decide what level of supervision is required so that this exclusion would apply. If the volunteer is to be supervised while undertaking an activity, which would be regulated activity if it was unsupervised, the statutory guidance must be followed. This is replicated at Annex D. The guidance issued following this change requires that:

* there must be supervision by a person who is in regulated activity;
* If the work is in a specified place such as a club, paid workers remain in regulated activity even if supervised.
* the supervision must be regular and day to day; and
* the supervision must be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children”.

The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any information, including volunteers, who are not in regulated activity.

**JANUARY 2023**