



The Neuro-Affirming Network

Safer Recruitment Policy

(Full Policy – 2026)

1. Purpose of this Policy

The Neuro-Affirming Network is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This Safer Recruitment Policy ensures that all staff, volunteers, and contractors are suitable, safe, and appropriately vetted before working with children or vulnerable individuals.

2. Our Commitment

We will:

- Follow safer recruitment practices in line with UK statutory guidance.
- Prevent unsuitable individuals from gaining access to children.
- Promote a culture of vigilance, transparency, and accountability.
- Ensure all recruitment decisions prioritise child safety and wellbeing.
- Maintain a neuro-affirming, inclusive approach throughout the recruitment process.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All paid staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Session facilitators
- Anyone engaged in regulated or non-regulated activity with children or families



4. Principles of Safer Recruitment

Our recruitment process is guided by the following principles:

- **Safeguarding first:** Child safety is the foundation of all decisions.
- **Transparency:** Clear, fair, and consistent procedures.
- **Verification:** No assumptions — all information is checked.
- **Inclusivity:** Neuro-affirming, accessible recruitment practices.
- **Accountability:** Clear documentation and decision-making.

5. Recruitment Procedures

5.1 Advertising Roles

All job adverts will:

- State our commitment to safeguarding.
- Outline the need for DBS checks and references.
- Describe essential safeguarding responsibilities.
- Make clear that safer recruitment checks will be undertaken.

5.2 Application Process

Applicants must:

- Complete an application form or submit a CV with relevant details.
- Provide a full employment history with explanations for gaps.
- Declare any criminal convictions or safeguarding concerns.

5.3 Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be based on:

- Relevant skills, experience, and qualifications.
- Alignment with our neuro-affirming ethos.
- Evidence of safe, respectful practice with children and families.

5.4 Interviews

Interviews will include:

- Questions exploring safeguarding knowledge.



- Scenarios assessing judgement, boundaries, and professional conduct.
- Discussion of past experience working with children.
- Clarification of any employment gaps or concerns.

At least one interviewer will be trained in safer recruitment.

6. Pre-Appointment Checks

6.1 Identity Verification

Applicants must provide:

- Photographic ID
- Proof of address
- Proof of right to work in the UK

6.2 References

We require:

- Two references, including one from the most recent employer
- At least one reference from someone who has observed the applicant working with children (where applicable)
- Verification of authenticity before appointment

6.3 DBS Checks

Depending on the role:

- Enhanced DBS checks will be required for regulated activity.
- Standard DBS checks may be required for non-regulated roles.
- Existing DBS certificates may be accepted if registered with the Update Service.

No individual may begin work until appropriate checks are completed.

6.4 Employment History & Gaps

Any gaps in employment must be:

- Discussed during interview
- Explained satisfactorily
- Investigated further if concerns arise



6.5 Qualifications & Training

Where relevant, we will verify:

- Professional qualifications
- Training certificates
- Membership of professional bodies

6.6 Self-Disclosure

Applicants must declare:

- Criminal convictions
- Investigations
- Disciplinary actions
- Safeguarding concerns

Failure to disclose relevant information may result in withdrawal of employment.

7. Induction & Training

All new staff and volunteers will receive:

- Safeguarding training
- Behaviour and pastoral support training
- Health & safety and fire safety guidance
- Clear information about professional boundaries
- A copy of all relevant policies

Induction must be completed before unsupervised work with children.

8. Ongoing Suitability

We will ensure continued suitability through:

- Regular supervision and reflective practice
- Annual safeguarding refreshers
- Monitoring conduct and performance
- Addressing concerns promptly
- Re-checking DBS status when required



9. Managing Concerns About Staff

Any concerns or allegations will be:

- Reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Recorded factually
- Investigated following statutory guidance
- Referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate

Staff may be suspended during investigation if necessary for safety.

10. Contractors & External Providers

Contractors working with children must:

- Provide evidence of DBS checks
- Follow our safeguarding and behaviour policies
- Be supervised if checks are incomplete
- Meet the same standards as internal staff

11. Record Keeping

We will maintain secure records of:

- Application forms
- Interview notes
- References
- DBS checks
- Training completion
- Any concerns or investigations

Records will be stored confidentially and in line with data protection legislation.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or organisational needs change.