

Safer Recruitment Policy

December 2022

(Next review date August 2023)

Safeguarding Statement

SupaJam is a post-16 specialist provider, specialising in Music, Maths, English and Life Skills. All staff, volunteers and partners are committed to safeguarding the welfare of every person within SupaJam. Our mission is to help young people to engage and achieve within a safe and inclusive environment.

Introduction

The safe recruitment of staff in education facilities is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. SupaJam is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, SupaJam expects all to possess the ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and wellbeing of young people at all times.

In line with recent legislation including the Children Act 2004, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance DfES/04217/2006, The Independent Colleges Standards Regulations 2009 (Standards 4, 4A, 4B, 4C), the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, and the Keeping Children Safe in Education with effect from September 2022, SupaJam takes very seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, SupaJam is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might cause harm to pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them, by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

SupaJam has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job, based on the applicant's abilities, qualifications, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation.

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, selection and decision-making process.

The policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly whilst obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at SupaJam Education in Music and Media.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Advisory Board to:

- ensure SupaJam has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements. This will be maintained through regular check, challenge and quality assurance procedures.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and other Managers involved in recruitment to:

- ensure that SupaJam operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at SupaJam.
- monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Regulated activity for children and young people is unsupervised activities on a frequent basis, for example, teaching, training, care or supervision, advice or guidance on well-being or driving a vehicle with children as passengers.

Frequent is once a week or more on an on-going basis, more than three days within a 30 day period, or overnight.

Recruitment and selection

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, SupaJam will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.

Any advertisement will make clear SupaJam's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with GDPR.

Application forms

SupaJam uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form in its entirety. The application form will include the applicant's employment and education history, and any gaps in employment will need to be explained. SupaJam will use its professional curiosity and caution with regards to any unexplained gaps or discrepancies in the application form. The application form will also include the applicant's declarations regarding any criminal cautions or convictions. Should an application form be missing any information, SupaJam staff will return it and request that the information be submitted and the form fully completed.

Job descriptions and person specifications

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role. The job description and advert will include a specific reference to the suitability to work with children.

The person specification, issued dependent on role, is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.

References

References for successful applicants will be requested before appointment with the formal offer of employment being subject to satisfactory references.

Two professional/character references must be provided, with one being a candidate's current or most recent employer and the other being from an educational setting if they have worked for one. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up with the referees.

SupaJam does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Shortlisting

All applications will be subject to fair shortlisting against the job specification and criteria. Candidates will be shortlisted against a matrix to ensure fair and equal shortlisting.

Online searches of shortlisted candidates will take place as part of the recruitment process. In line with the recent update in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022, during the shortlisting the potential employee online presence will be reviewed by the Operations Manager or a senior manager. This online search will be conducted via an internet search and a record of this check noted on the new starter checklist. Any articles or images that are flagged as a concern will be raised with the shortlisting panel for review. Appropriate action will be taken as necessary.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the shortlisting panel and interview panel will consist of the same two members of SupaJam staff throughout the recruitment process unless extenuating circumstances prevent this. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job specification and meet the job criteria through structured, pre-planned questions. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with the NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training).

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable. Safeguarding questions will be asked by the qualified safer recruitment panel member.

All successful applicants will be required to produce original documentation of their identity, address and qualifications along with documents to prove their 'Right to work in the UK'. Acceptable proof of an applicant's right to work in the UK includes a biometric residence permit number, biometric residence card number, UK passport or national identity card.

Offering the post and onboarding

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, copies of qualification and proof of identity as well as documents to prove their 'Right to work in the UK'. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' **must be** declared when applying for any position at SupaJam.

SupaJam will not discriminate against those with past convictions but will take into consideration the nature of the crime, whether the conviction has been spent and the risk of re-offence.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formerly known as CRB Disclosure)

All staff at SupaJam require an enhanced DBS Certificate, and if undertaking regulated activity, barred list checks. Therefore a DBS Certificate **must be** obtained before the commencement of employment of **any** new employee. Members of staff at SupaJam are aware of their obligation to inform the Senior Leadership Team of any cautions or convictions that arise following these checks taking place. .,

Dealing with convictions

SupaJam operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- how long ago the offence occurred;
- one-off or history of offences;
- changes in circumstances,
- decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Senior Leadership Team. A decision will be made following this meeting.

Proof of Identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status

All successful applicants will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in the UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have obtained any academic or vocational qualification legally required for the position and claimed in their application form.

Medical Fitness

Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with young people must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed.

Overseas checks

All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks in accordance with Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. SupaJam, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, will, if applicable, sponsor all new foreign members of staff (see Certificate of Sponsorship section). In addition, applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a police check from the relevant country.

Additional checks

When a new teacher joins SupaJam, a check is made against the NCTL List of Prohibited Teachers and the EEA sanctioned list.

Onboarding (Induction) process

We will ensure that all staff are properly inducted into their roles at SupaJam. We will:

- Introduce them to the team
- Allow time to read policies and procedures including whistleblowing and safeguarding
- Deliver a safeguarding and health and safety introduction
- Ensure relevant training is provided
- Where possible, assign a regular mentor to guide them for the first term of employment.

Single Central Record of Members of Staff

In addition to the various staff records kept in SupaJam and on individual personnel files, a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept in accordance with the DfE's requirements. This will give an overview of:

- all employees who are employed to work at SupaJam
- all employees who are employed as supply staff to SupaJam whether employed directly or through an agency
- all others who have been chosen by SupaJam to work in regular contact with young people.

This will cover volunteers, advisors, peripatetic staff and people brought into SupaJam to provide additional teaching or instruction for pupils but who are not staff members e.g: yoga teachers etc.

The Operations Manager will be responsible for collecting all necessary information from staff in order to complete the Single Central Record. The Director of Safeguarding will be responsible for auditing the Single Central Record and reporting his/her findings to the full Advisory Board.

Probationary period

All roles will be subject to a probationary period, as set out in the successful candidate's contract. Within this probation period, employees will be subject to a mid-term and end term review to ensure continued satisfactory performance.

Employment

SupaJam recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. SupaJam will therefore provide on-going training and support for all staff, as identified through the Annual Review/appraisal procedure.

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse (i.e: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect) SupaJam's Disciplinary Policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, SupaJam will inform the DfE and the Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances of why the employee is leaving employment.

Visiting speakers

The College frequently makes use of external speakers covering both academic and wider curriculum topics.

All staff are aware that it is their responsibility to ensure that they have researched the speakers that they have organised to come into SupaJam and have completed an internet check. Staff are regularly reminded of the protocols associated with the signing in and supervision of visiting speakers. No visiting speaker will be left unaccompanied by a member of staff at any time within SupaJam.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Operations Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and (implemented throughout SupaJam's processes and policies.

This policy has been impact assessed with regard to equality and inclusion and safeguarding.