

Safer Recruitment Policy

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

iRock School of Music

Last Reviewed: 28th September 2023

1. Introduction

iRock School of Music (iRock / we) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults. The company is also committed to providing a supportive working environment for all its members of staff. It is of fundamental importance to recruit staff who share this commitment.

2. Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position.
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently.
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 - (KCSIE23), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- To ensure that the company meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy. All members of the recruitment department undertake the NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training at the start of their employment.

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.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the company to:

- Ensure effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements.
- It is the responsibility of the directors, head of operations and other senior leaders involved in recruitment to:

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

4. Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

The company is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff and volunteers who will be engaging in regulated activity on behalf of the company which amounts to 'regulated activity'. The definition of a regulated activity is if it is carried out:

- Frequently, meaning once a week or more.
- Satisfies the 'period condition', meaning four times or more in a 30-day period.
- Provides the opportunity for contact with children.

Roles which are carried out on an unpaid/voluntary basis will only amount to regulated activity if, in addition to the above, they are carried out on an unsupervised basis.

The company is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in 'regulated activity'.

The Company also carries out Standard DBS checks on all employees who do not carry out regulated activities.

5. Recruitment and Selection Process

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, the company 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 the company's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially and in accordance our privacy policy which can be found on our website www.irockschool.com

Application Stage

iRock School of Music uses its own application form and all applicants are required to complete an application form containing questions about their employment history and their suitability for the role. Applicants with an incomplete application form will not be shortlisted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. CVs on their own will not be considered without a completed questionnaire.

It is unlawful for the company to employ anyone in regulated activity with a group that they are barred from working or volunteering with.

It is a criminal offence for any person to seek, offer or engage in regulated activity with a group that they are barred from working or volunteering with.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and referral to the police and/or the DBS.

References

Professional references are requested using our standard proforma once a provisional offer has been made and accepted. As a minimum these should be from the two most recent employers.

The only exceptions are:

- Where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after the final selection stage.
- That they are self-employed, therefore suitable alternative references will be sought. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference. The company does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Shortlisting

Only those candidates meeting the criteria outlined in the person specification and job description will be shortlisted. Pre-appointment checks will be carried out, which may include online searches of publicly available information to identify any incidents or issues that have happened.

Interview

Shortlisted candidates will take part in a two or three stage selection process, dependent on the role. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in employment in their application form including their employment history.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken NSPCC Safer Recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

Candidates at the end of their interview will be reminded of their responsibility to disclose criminal convictions that are subject to DBS check if they have not already done so on the application.

All applicants who are invited to an In-Person Assessment will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted. Where needed, proof of right to work in the UK must also be provided.

Appointment

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract
- A Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (DBS) will be required for all appointed posts.
- A Fitness to Work declaration will be required to ensure that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job including keeping children safe in an education setting.
- A confirmation and declaration that the applicant is not on the Children's Barred List where an Enhanced DBS has been issued.
- Verification of the applicants right to work in the UK
- Verification of the applicant's identity

A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

Probation

All new staff will be subject to a three or six-month (dependent on role) probation. This period is to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed which includes the monitor and review of the performance of new staff in relation to duties, skills, qualifications and experience outlined in the job description and person specification. This will also include an employee's suitability to work with children and young people and their commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

6. 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 iRock School of Music.

7. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check

The company applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) in respect of all positions at the company which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information.

It is the company's policy that the correct level of DBS disclosure must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

iRock staff members are aware of their obligation to inform the company of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence.

The DBS no longer issues Disclosure Certificates to employers; therefore employees/applicants should bring their original Certificate to the school (for employees within 7 days of issue or applicants before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity).

8. Dealing with convictions

The company 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 also:

- 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 senior staff members at iRock. A decision will be made following this meeting. If relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the company will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the company may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

9. DATA PROTECTION

All information about how we process and protect applicants' data can be found on our Data Protection Policy at www.irockschool.com