

**SSP Self-Assessment Checklist
The Implementation of the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards**

Organisation			
Completed By		Agreed with Chief Executive: Name	
Position		Signature	
Date		Date Presented to Senior Mgt. Team	

This checklist sets out the key processes and internal controls required to enable you to recruit salaried staff and volunteers and appoint contractors and agencies safely and in accordance with Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership’s Key Safeguarding Employment Processes. The processes and controls are recommended to safeguard against exposing children and young people to contact with staff that are unsuitable, which could lead to actual harm from determined sex offenders and other individuals who are unsuitable to work with these vulnerable group.

The checklist draws upon key legislation, guidance and policy, as listed below: -

- The Key Safeguarding Employment Standards for Suffolk
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018
- KCSIE, Part 4 “Allegations made against teachers, including supply teachers and other staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Fostering Services Regulations and Guidance 2011.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by Freedoms Act 2012.

Question	Yes	No	Action Proposed	Proposed Completion Date	Person Responsible
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES					
<p>1. Do you have an explicit written recruitment and selection policy and procedures that comply with the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards, which details all aspects of the process and links to your child and adult protection policy and procedures?</p>					
<p>2. Do you have a clearly documented policy governing the managers to be involved in recruitment and selection of staff?</p> <p>For the appointment of staff to work directly with vulnerable groups it is <u>strongly recommended</u> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than one person interviews ▪ The Line manager is always a member of the formal interview panel ▪ Value based interviews ['Warner'] are undertaken for posts which require them. Have these posts been identified? 					
<p>3. Does the organisation's recruitment and selection policy incorporate an explicit statement about your commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable people? For example:</p> <p>"_____ is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people * and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment".</p>					

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<p>4. Do you ensure that the above statement is included in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publicity materials ▪ Recruitment websites ▪ Advertisements ▪ Candidate information packs ▪ Person specifications ▪ Job descriptions ▪ Competency frameworks ▪ Induction training 					
<p>5. Have all managers involved in recruitment and selection received appropriate training? Do you ensure that at least one trained person is present on each interview panel?</p>					
<p>6. Do clear policies exist which set out the disciplinary consequences for recruiting managers for noncompliance with safer recruitment policy?</p>					
<p>APPLICATION FORMS / POST & CANDIDATE INFORMATION</p>					
<p>7. When a vacancy is advertised, does the advertisement include a statement about the employer's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake a criminal record check via the DBS [previously known as CRB], where appropriate, as well as the usual details of the post and salary, qualifications required, etc?</p>					

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<p>8. Do you review the following documentation on a regular basis to ensure that it is up to date and clearly sets out the extent of the relationships/ contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Person specification ▪ Application form ▪ Job description ▪ Information/guidance for applicants that will form part of the pack to be sent to prospective applicants. 					
<p>9. Do application forms used by the organisation obtain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full identifying details of the applicant (current / former names, date of birth, current address & NI number) ▪ A statement of relevant academic or vocational qualifications and date of award ▪ A full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training, and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training, and reasons for leaving employment. ▪ A declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees or employers (including Councillors and School Governors) ▪ Details of referees - one referee should be the applicant's current or most recent employer, and normally two referees should be sufficient. The form should make it clear that references will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends. 					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to his/her suitability for the post advertised and how s/he meets the person specification. 					
<p>10. Does the information pack to candidates include an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore that all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared?</p>					
<p>11. Are applicants required to provide a signed statement stating that they are not on the list of those barred from working with children and vulnerable adults, disqualified from work with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body, and either has no convictions, cautions, or bind-overs, or has attached details of their record in a sealed envelope marked confidential?</p>					
<p>12. Does the application form state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where appropriate the successful applicant will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS [CRB as was] ▪ The organisation I will seek references on shortlisted candidates, and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview ▪ If the applicant is currently working with children, their current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any which the penalty is 'time expired' and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection investigations, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. NB. For teachers and other staff in schools and for foster carers current Government guidance 					

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<p>requires that where an allegation has been found to be unfounded, malicious or unsubstantiated it must not be included in a reference even where there has been a pattern of such allegations.</p>					
<p>13. Does the job description clearly state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The main duties and responsibilities of the post ▪ The individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons they are responsible for or come into contact with. 					
<p>14. Does the person specification include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The qualifications and experience, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people; ▪ The competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate; and, ▪ An explanation of how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process. 					
<p>15. Does the information pack sent to candidates include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application form ▪ Job description and Person Specification ▪ Statements of relevant policies such as equal opportunities and the recruitment of ex-offenders ▪ The organisation's Child / Adult Protection Policy statements 					

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SHORTLISTING					
16. Are applications 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?					
17. Are reasons for obvious gaps in employment, a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent post to temporary work noted so that they can be explored and verified during the interview?					
REFERENCES					
18. Are at least 2 references taken up for each appointment (one of which should be the applicant's current employer)?					
19. Do you ensure that references are always obtained directly from the referee and that reliance is not placed on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern"?					
20. Are references sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, and obtained before interview so that any issues of concern can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview? (Note: In exceptional circumstances it might not be possible to obtain references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because a candidate strongly objects to their current employer being approached at that stage, but that should be the aim in all cases).					

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<p>21. Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, does the organisation ensure that it is received and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed?</p>					
<p>22. When requesting a reference do you send the referee a standard reference request pro forma, a copy of the job description and a copy of the person specification for the post for which the person is applying?</p>					
<p>23. Does the standard reference request form used by the organisation ask for the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The referee's relationship with the candidate ▪ Specific comments about the applicant's suitability for the post ▪ Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person may be unsuitable. 					
<p>24 Do reference requests to the candidate's current employer, or a previous employer in work with children, seek:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary, and sick record; ▪ Specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct; ▪ Details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to in which the disciplinary sanction is current; ▪ Details of any allegations, concerns or disciplinary procedures that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults and the outcome of those 					

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concerns/proceedings. [See information in bold type in section 12 above.]					
25. If a candidate for post involving direct work with vulnerable people is not currently employed in such a role or is an agency worker, are checks undertaken with their most recent employer who did employ them in such a role, to confirm details of their employment and reasons for leaving?					
26. On receipt are all references checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily?					
27. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, is the referee telephoned and asked to provide written answers or amplification as appropriate?					
28. Is the referee telephoned in order to confirm their identity?					
29. Is the information provided by the referee compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and his/her previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form? (Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant).					
30. Is any information that has been provided about a past disciplinary action or allegations considered in the circumstances of the individual case?					
31. Where telephone references are taken up, are they confirmed as soon as possible in writing? Are notes of any telephone references formally recorded?					

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INTERVIEWS					
<p>32. Prior to the interview are all shortlisted candidates provided with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Time and location of the interview ▪ Directions to the venue ▪ Membership of the interview panel ▪ Details about how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore, including suitability to work with children. (N.B. Enclosing a copy of the person specification can usefully draw attention to the relevant information). ▪ Notification that all candidates should bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy CRB requirements and also <i>original</i> documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post. 					
<p>33. Are interviews conducted by at least two persons at least one of whom has received specific training in safer employment and is aware of the safeguarding agenda?</p>					
<p>34. Does the interview process explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The candidate's attitude toward children and young people ▪ Their ability to support the organisation's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the vulnerable clients in their care; ▪ Gaps in the candidate's employment history ▪ Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and / or a referee. 					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any declarations that the candidate may wish to make in light of the requirement for a criminal records check. ▪ Make use of Value Based [Warner] interview questions when selecting staff to posts which require this approach [see Appendix A] 					
35. Is consideration given to involving children/young people in the recruitment and selection process in some way?					
36. Do you record all interviews and the information ascertained and retain such records on the personal file for future reference, for at least six months in case of a challenge by an unsuccessful applicant?					
PRE- APPOINTMENT CHECKS					
<p>37. Is an offer of appointment to the successful candidate conditional upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The receipt of at least two satisfactory references ▪ Verification of the candidate's identity ▪ A check of the children/vulnerable adults barred lists for those working in Regulated Activity and, where appropriate, a satisfactory DBS enhanced disclosure ▪ Verification of qualifications ▪ Verification of professional status where required ▪ Satisfactory completion of the probationary period 					
38. Do you ensure that all of the above checks are confirmed in writing, retained on the personnel file and followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided?					
39. Do all new staff serve a 6-month period of probation in accordance with conditions of service?					

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40. Is this made clear to the candidate at the interview?					
41. Is an evaluation undertaken after the initial 6 months of employment?					
CHILDREN/VULNERABLE ADULTS BARRED LIST / CRB CHECKS					
42. Is an enhanced DBS check requested for all new employees working in Regulated Activity including those moving internally into such posts?					
43. Are staff involved in the DBS process aware of the checks that need to be performed in respect of the completed application?					
44. Is original documentation to support proof of identity always obtained, such as a birth certificate, photo driving licence, or a passport?					
45. Do you check I.D. to the DBS form in accordance with the instructions on the form?					
46. Are copies made for your personnel records?					
47. Do you have in place a process in place to deal with criminal records checks that have revealed a trace – e.g. an objective assessment form countersigned by a senior manager?					
48. Are instances where the conviction revealed had not been disclosed on the application form followed up?					
49. If a DBS check is not received prior to start of the job, is a risk assessment undertaken and a check made against the Barred list for those in Regulated Activity? Are the results of the risk assessment clearly documented, signed by the					

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<p>person completing the assessment, a final decision clearly stated and where relevant the decision approved? NB. It is only possible to check the Barred list prior to full criminal records disclosure for schools' staff and those working in adult social care.</p>					
<p>50. Does the DBS process work as follows (or broadly similar)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The successful applicant is made aware that they are the 'preferred candidate' ▪ The applicant completes the form and returns it to the manager along with an original passport / driving licence / birth certificate for verification. ▪ The manager verifies personal details and forwards the disclosure to your HR department ▪ Your HR adviser/manager countersigns the disclosure form and forwards that to the DBS. ▪ Your HR manager advises the manager of the outcome of the check immediately it has been received 					
<p>51. Do you undertake criminal records checks or any other appropriate checks on foreign nationals (i.e. candidates with a limited or no prior period of residence in the U.K.)? Note: For certain positions you may still have a statutory duty to undertake checks on the list held by the DH and DFES).</p>					
<p>52. If no response is received from DBS is this rigorously pursued and the employee's position regularly reviewed?</p>					
<p>53. Do you have procedures in place to monitor new employees during their probation period? (E.g. new staff could be subject to periodic unannounced peer review; Line managers could receive feedback on the progress of staff who report directly to another member of the team?)</p>					

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USE OF VOLUNTEERS					
54. Do you maintain an up to date list of all volunteer helpers used by the organisation?					
55. If you are actively seeking volunteers, and are considering candidates about whom you have little or no recent knowledge, do you adopt equivalent recruitment measures as you would for paid staff?					
56. Where using individuals known to the organisation I as volunteers, do you still: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek references ▪ Conduct an informal interview to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability ▪ Undertake a DBS at the highest level for any volunteers who are in Regulated Activity 					
57. Do you maintain a policy with regard to which types of volunteers require a DBS?					
CONTRACTORS					
58. Do you ensure that firms providing services that engage their employees in Regulated Activity have undertaken DBS checks as a minimum?					
59. Do you obtain assurance that all staff that work directly with children and young people have been subject to the required checks?					
60. If no checks are undertaken do you have appropriate measures in place to reduce any associated risks (e.g. segregation, works undertaken when children/young people will not be on site)?					

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<p>61. Do you have systems in place to ensure that the staff employed by other agencies that have regular contact with children in your organisation have been subject to DBS at the highest level available for the activity in which they are engaged?</p>					
<p>62. Do you ask for written confirmation that, where relevant, a DBS and references have been obtained by the agency that indicate there are no reasons the person should not be employed to work with children?</p>					
<p>63. In the appointment of agency staff engaging in Regulated Activity do you ensure that you obtain: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two satisfactory references ▪ Medical clearance ▪ Enhanced Criminal Records check 					
<p>INDUCTION AND TRAINING</p>					
<p>64. Does the organisation have an induction programme for all newly appointed staff and volunteers, the purpose of which should be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide training and information about the organisation's policies and procedures ▪ Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged ▪ Confirm the conduct expected of staff in relation to safe working practices with children and young people or vulnerable adults? ▪ Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities 					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability for work with the client group at the outset and address them immediately. 					
<p>65. Both the newly appointed worker and the line manager make a signed record that the induction process has been completed satisfactorily. The record is kept on file.</p>					
<p>66. Is formal child or adult protection training provided for all staff that have contact with children or vulnerable adults, updated regularly and embedded in performance management systems?</p>					
<p>67. Is there clarity amongst staff in relation to what constitutes safe working practices with vulnerable client groups?</p>					
<p>68. Is additional training on safer recruitment available to those who recruit staff and is this regularly updated? Does this include value based [Warner] training for those required to undertake these interviews?</p>					
<p>69. Can managers evidence that such training has been undertaken and updated?</p>					
<p>70. Is training mandatory for employees who do not have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults but who do have access to information systems containing details of these service users?</p>					
<p>SAFE WORKING CULTURE</p>					
<p>71. Is a positive obligation for safeguarding vulnerable groups placed overtly on all employees?</p>					

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72. Are the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults paramount, they are listened to and any concerns about their welfare are acted upon promptly?					
73. Are all employees are monitored by their line manager to ensure that all staff comply with expected behaviours and attitudes that constitute best practice in relation to safeguarding? Is this monitoring evidenced through performance management and professional development arrangements?					
WHISTLEBLOWING AND COMPLAINTS					
74. Do you have in place clear policies and procedures including how to deal with allegations made against staff, support / contract staff and volunteers? 75. Has the policy been clearly communicated to staff, volunteers, parents and carers?					
76. Do you have a whistle blowing policy that has been publicised to all and on which all staff have been briefed? Are all concerns acted upon in a fair and timely manner? Is there evidence that whistle blowing is being used appropriately to improve outcomes?					
77. Do you have an accessible complaints procedure in place to allow service users to raise concerns?					
78. Is there evidence that complaints are fully investigated and accurately recorded? Do you retain records of concerns securely?					
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES					

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79. Are staff provided with clear codes of conduct and guidance on safe working practice?					
80. Are appropriate disciplinary procedures applied when safeguarding measures are not strictly adhered to?					
81. Are there clear policies in place regarding the transportation of vulnerable groups ensuring that safeguarding principles are strictly observed?					
MONITORING SYSTEMS					
82. Are formal audits conducted regularly which identify improvements and which allow time for these improvements to be achieved. Are the results recorded and reported effectively?					