



Safer Recruitment Policy

August 2023

(Next review date August 2024)

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 staff 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 2023, SupaJam takes seriously its duty of care for all pupils. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all 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. Applicants are also encouraged to disclose any relationships they have with existing staff or persons connected to SupaJam on their application form.

This policy's 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 the 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 the 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 activity on a frequent basis, for example, teaching, training, care or supervision, advice or guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle with children and young people 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. Where CVs are received, for example from recruitment agencies, CVs will follow a shortlisting process to determine the candidates that will be asked to complete a full application form as part of the next stage of the recruitment process. CVs that have not been shortlisted to receive an application form will be disregarded.

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 and whether or not they have lived or worked outside of the UK in the last 5 years. 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 and young people.

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 2023, during the shortlisting the potential employee's 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 applicant tracking system. 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 safeguarding criteria (in line with the KSCMP 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 personnel file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the KSCMP Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personnel 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 or birth certificate 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 to ensure students receive a high level of support. Where a candidate is concerned that they may not possess the appropriate levels, this should be discussed with the recruitment panel.

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. If SupaJam hires new foreign members of staff, it will, in accordance with the UK Border Agency Code of Practice, sponsor said staff to work legally in the UK. 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

To 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 Department for Education'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 their findings to the full Advisory Board.

Probationary period

All permanent 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. For agency workers or contractors that become permanent employees, the probationary period will come into effect as per the start date outlined in their SupaJam contract.

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. 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 that are within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect) SupaJam's Disciplinary Policy will apply. In cases of dismissal due to the above behaviour, SupaJam will inform the Department for Education and the Children's Safeguarding Unit of the circumstances of why the employee is leaving employment.

Agency Workers

All recruitment agencies are expected to send written confirmation that the necessary checks have been undertaken prior to an agency worker's placement at SupaJam. On the agency worker's first day at SupaJam, they will be asked to produce ID to confirm their identity. When an agency worker is taken on as a permanent employee, they will be required to complete an application form and the necessary checks will be conducted by the

Operations Manager, including running a new DBS certificate. During this time, checks from their previous agency employer will fulfil the requirements of assessing the risk of the agency worker whilst working with our students.

Visiting speakers

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

Visiting speakers must:

- Agree to the code of conduct that outlines SupaJam's expectations around behaviour and content displayed to staff and young people (Expectations for Visitors and Guest Speakers)
- Have had an internet search completed by the member of staff organising the visit, prior to the event
- Be accompanied by a SupaJam member of staff at all times
- Wear a visitor's lanyard clearly identifying them as a visitor to SupaJam
- Complete the visitor's induction with the receptionist and sign in before entering any SupaJam building

Monitoring and evaluation

The Operations Manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and implemented throughout SupaJam. This policy has been impact assessed with regard to equality and inclusion and safeguarding.

Disclaimer

This policy does not form part of your term and conditions of employment. We reserve the right to amend, shorten or to not follow this policy for employees under two years service.