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Safe Recruitment Policy
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National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

Safeguarding & Behaviour Protection

Safe Recruitment Policy

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Section 1 – INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Introduction

Welcome to The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs Safer Recruitment Policy.

The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) is a federation of over 570 individual Clubs, Counties and Areas throughout England and Wales, most of which are independent charities and separate legal entities. NFYFC is one of the largest rural youth organisations in the U.K. with around 23,000 members aged between 10 and 28 years enjoying all the benefits that membership has to offer.

They all have a right to do so in a safe, fun, welcoming and inclusive environment where their welfare is safeguarded and they are protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.

Background

NFYFC is a voluntary youth organisation for children and young people aged 10-28. Due to the age group and the nature of work our organisation undertakes with young people, our staff and volunteers are subject to safe recruitment procedures to ensure that they are suitable for working with children, young people and adults at risk. Many of our members are under the age of 18 and it is essential that we take every possible step to protect the welfare of these children and young people, and also the good reputation of YFC.

NFYFC recognises that our staff (employees, volunteers and consultants) are our biggest asset, but it must also be acknowledged that there are individuals who have ulterior motives for wanting to work with children, young people and vulnerable groups. This could put YFC members and our reputation at risk. Although the vast majority of staff, volunteers, officials and helpers are committed, dedicated people who are motivated to work within YFC for commendable reasons, it is vital that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any unsuitable people or people who may abuse children are prevented from working with young people. Safe recruitment procedures will not always prevent those with poor intent from entering the organisation, but they help us to make informed choices about the suitability of the people we allow to work with our members, and act as a deterrent by demonstrating robust safeguarding understanding and arrangements.

Demonstrating a clear, well promoted and implemented safe recruitment procedure from the point that a role is advertised/becomes available through to appointment will strongly deter those people with ulterior motives from attempting to enter YFC to gain access to children and young people. Holding people to account in relation to their behaviour and professional boundaries and promoting safer working practices ensures that concerns are recognised, even at low levels, once individuals have been appointed.

NFYFC takes this matter very seriously and will take all reasonable steps to prevent inappropriate people from working within YFC and for ensuring that any individual that represents YFC is not only appropriately experienced, trained and qualified but also suitable to work with children and adults at risk and/or in a position of trust or power. Ensuring the safety of all those involved in or impacted by our work is of paramount importance to NFYFC.

Measures to ensure a safer workforce: volunteer and paid roles

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 – originally provided the legislative framework for the vetting and barring scheme which was reviewed from 2010-2012 resulting in the introduction of the Disclosure and Barring Service to allow soft information about those applying to or working with children, young people and adults at risk to be reported and monitored nationally to support organisations in relation to

assessing the suitability of individuals to undertake roles and responsibilities as part of their paid or volunteer workforce.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 - Checking employees working with children. All volunteers involved with YFC who take positions of responsibility over and above that of an ordinary member are, for the purposes of safeguarding, employees and volunteers. Some positions within YFC that frequently have the responsibility for the supervision, training or sole charge of children and young people will be working in a 'regulated' position. (Further information is in this Information published by the Disclosure and Barring Service: Regulated activity with children in England and Wales)

It is therefore a criminal offence if an employer or organisation does not take sufficient steps to check any employee working with children and young people in a regulated position. This means that volunteers and staff in certain roles must be subject to criminal record checks at the correct level of disclosure for the responsibilities that they are undertaking by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Section 2: POLICY

Safer Recruitment Policy

Guiding principles underpinning effective safe recruitment

Every YFC in England and in Wales is a charity. All charities in England and in Wales must be sure trustees, volunteers and staff are suitable to act in their roles through carrying out relevant checks. See this document for further information SR Appx 1 - CharityCommGuidelines.pdf.

Statutory guidance *Working together to safeguard children* (Department for Education, 2023) highlights the responsibility of all organisations working with children to have safe recruitment practices in place. The guidance in Wales is *A guide to recruiting well* (Social Care Wales 2017 and updates).

The vast majority of YFC volunteer leaders have grown up through the organisation and they are elected or approached by the membership to undertake a role. Upon accepting this role and responsibilities they go from being a member to a person in a position of responsibility.

We must recognise that when a member moves on to become an officer/leader/volunteer helper or takes on additional responsibilities in a club or county they should be treated in the same way as someone from outside of the organisation applying for a job or volunteering to offer to help.

All volunteers and staff are entitled to be treated equitably, that means treated in exactly the same way, subject to the same processes and sharing the same rights and responsibilities. Nobody has the right to volunteer without being assessed as suitable to do so in relation to the role and members they will be responsible for, through appropriate recruitment and selection checks.

If an individual 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 their application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

Scope of the Policy

This policy and associated standards and guidelines are mandatory and apply to all members, those in positions of responsibility (officers), volunteer helpers (leaders, advisory, committee members, presidents and vices, ambassadors and parents/carers) and staff involved in YFC and all those who are working with or on behalf of NFYFC such as directors, stewards, judges, officials or administrators whether employed, contracted or voluntary.

The policy applies to affiliated club, county and area YFCs involved in the delivery of YFC activities.

Any individual or organisation that is providing a service to NFYFC, even within a third-party capacity, must also demonstrate that they comply with these standards.

Voluntary positions of responsibility

Those in a voluntary position of responsibility within clubs and counties, including but not limited to officers, leaders, advisory, parental helpers, presidents, vice-presidents, trustees, coaches, etc. and will be required to comply with safe recruitment procedures.

Roles and responsibilities will vary between all clubs and counties due to differing structures across the organisation; individual roles should be assessed by the club/county against the definition of regulated contact and also based on their specific role within YFC in order for the correct safe recruitment procedures to be followed.

When considering the roles that must be subject to safe recruitment as outlined in this policy, consider the nature of the organisation and the likelihood that within YFC additional help is usually sought from the wider YFC community.

Alert: *Concerns have arisen where individuals have moved between volunteer roles within YFC without assessment of the need to undertake safe recruitment checks. This potentially enables unsuitable individuals to by-pass safeguarding measures once they have gained the trust of those around them at county or club level. Whenever an individual seeks to enter the organisation or to take on new roles and responsibilities, the need for safe recruitment checks must be considered.*

Before members apply for positions within YFC they should be made aware of the law around appropriate relationships whilst in a position of trust. This will help them make informed decisions around their application.

Nobody should be appointed or take up a role/position with sole charge of children, young people or adults who may be additionally vulnerable until appropriate safeguarding checks have been completed. As recruitment within the organisation is usually undertaken in retrospect of their appointment, clubs and counties should allow an overlap where previous officers remain in post until the new officers have completed their safe recruitment check.

Policy Statement

Safer recruitment procedures are essential to assess whether people are appropriate and suitable to work with vulnerable groups. These measures serve to protect children, young people and adults at risk from potential harm and reduce the opportunities for anyone with poor intent to have contact with our members and/or lead our activities. It also provides potentially positive evidence which can be considered to support those working with children, young people and adults who may be additionally vulnerable when concerns arise. A robust safer recruitment process not only protects vulnerable individuals but also safeguards the reputation and credibility of the organisation.

Safer recruitment is required to be considered at every stage of the recruitment process when appointing to a position working or volunteering with children. This Safer Recruitment Policy sets out this commitment, which includes a robust approach to advertisement and applications to ensure our safeguarding commitment is clearly communicated, and that interviews that explore behaviours and attitudes, criminal record checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for eligible roles, a self-declaration form, the take up of references and verifying the applicant's right to work documentation is carried out.

This policy explains how we seek to ensure that we recruit safe and appropriate people to work with children, young people and adults who may be additionally vulnerable within YFC. It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

Young Farmers will apply the following recruitment standards to those who are within the Club/County Officer Team/Junior Club Leaders, other volunteers or staff members who have regular access to children, young people and also to any adult who, within their role and responsibilities, may have a leadership/supervisory role or accompany young members on specific activities.

Higher risk activities are those which include travel and events. Residential activities fall under regulated activity 'Regulated contact' is a term use to classify a person's contact with children, young people or adults who may be additionally vulnerable which determines the level of safe recruitment checks they require, a full explanation of the categories of regulated contact in England and in Wales can be found Disclosure and Barring Service Publication: Regulated activity with children in England and Wales

Safe recruitment records should be made and retained in order to assist internal and external investigations for all those recruited or elected by YFC. In the case of an individual being dismissed from YFC because of safeguarding concerns, these records will be required to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service, the Charity Commission and potentially the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in line with current legislation and both statutory and sector guidance.

Section 3: RESPONSIBILITIES & COMMITMENTS

Responsibilities for Safe Recruitment

Many members describe Young Farmers as like being part of a family. Evidence from practice shows that the majority of abuse takes place in the home or is perpetrated by someone well known to the victim.

Whilst not creating a culture of suspicion, it is therefore vital that everybody in the organisation understands their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

The responsibility for safe recruitment within YFC belongs with everyone who selects or appoints any individual into any role at club, county, area or national level. Shown below are the groups within YFC that have specific responsibility for safe recruitment in YFC.

The National Federation

The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs is responsible for producing and maintaining up-to-date policies and procedures that are legally compliant with current legislation and statutory guidance.

NFYFC Board of Trustees (Board of Management)

The Board oversees the policy and procedures and ensure the NFYFC itself works to this policy.

Chief Officer (CO)

It is the responsibility of the Chief Operations Officer, and other team members involved in recruitment to:

— ensure that NFYFC operates safer recruitment procedures for staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers, including the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks
— monitor counties', clubs', contactors and agencies compliance with this Policy
— safeguard and promote the wellbeing and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk at every stage of the recruitment process.

County Staff

— ensure that their county YFC operates safer recruitment procedures for staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers, including the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks
— monitor counties', clubs', contactors and agencies compliance with this Policy
— safeguard and promote the wellbeing and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk at every stage of the recruitment process.

Club and County Officers

— ensure that their club and county YFC operates safer recruitment procedures for staff, volunteers, contractors and agency workers, including the satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks
— monitor counties', clubs', contactors and agencies compliance with this Policy
— safeguard and promote the wellbeing and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk at every stage of the recruitment process.

Part 2: SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

Summary of requirements

Step 1

- **Understand the role**
- Job/Role Descriptions must be shared and made available to all those that are considering putting themselves forward for a role in YFC. This includes elected officers of YFC clubs, county federations, area committees and the NFYFC (volunteers) and salaried officers (staff). See 2 Your Role in YFC

Step 2

- **Application and self-declaration form**
- **All staff and volunteers should complete an application form and self-declaration form SR Appx 2 POT appln form 2025.docx**
  - The application form will elicit information about the applicant's skills and experience, and it provides opportunity for a self-declaration about any criminal record

Step 3

- **Enrolment onto online YFC Safeguarding Awareness training**
- Those elected to office in YFC and subject to safe recruitment must be enrolled on the YFC Safeguarding Awareness training.
  - They should be enrolled with 28 days of taking up the position and must compete the online training with 28 days of being enrolled on the system.

Step 4

- **References**
- Two confidential references will be taken up.
  - If a potential employee has previously worked with children then they should enclose a reference from this organisation.
  - For volunteers in YFC, one reference may be provided from a referee within YFC, and the other must be sourced externally, e.g. from an employer, lecturer/teacher or other relevant organisation they have previously volunteered for. See SR Appx 5 Reference form and Cover letter.docx

Template documents are available to assist with safe recruitment in YFC. See Safe Recruitment templates

To ensure YFC only recruit suitable people into their roles, the following steps are taken when recruiting:

Step 1
Understand the role - YFC job/Role Description

All staff and volunteers recruited into YFC roles and posts are appointed based on their suitability against a predefined Job/Role Description. See 2 Your Role in YFC to download YFC Job/Role Descriptions.

Step 2
Application and Self-Declaration Form SR Appx 2 POT appln form 2025.docx

Asking all potential staff and volunteers to complete an application form is advisable over acceptance of a CV, as it facilitates specific and consistent questions about their employment and volunteering history to be asked.

A standard application form should be used during recruitment; this will also support transparent, consistent and equitable assessment of potential applicants.

A self-declaration is incorporated into the application forms for staff and volunteers and should be used for all regulated roles within the organisation.

It asks the applicant the exempt questions which requires applicants to disclose any past offences, including spent convictions, investigations, concerns and information that may need to be considered and assessed during the recruitment process. These questions can only be asked for roles which are eligible for enhanced level DBS checks. This information may or may not be disclosed on the DBS certificate but any discrepancies between these two sets of information may raise safeguarding concerns.

It is vital to recognise the need for sensitivity and confidentiality to be maintained in relation to any information shared by applicants. It should also be noted that many offences will not have any safeguarding implications or be relevant to the role applied for. In deciding the relevance, the following should be considered:

- The nature of the role
- The nature of the offence
- The age at which the offence took place
- The frequency of the offence

Any information disclosed will be considered in a transparent, informed and equitable way where it is relevant to the role and responsibilities that an individual is seeking to undertake.

Individuals are afforded the option of withdrawing their application should they not wish to be subject to these safe recruitment measures.

Failure to disclose unspent criminal convictions, including police cautions, children's social care investigations and disciplinary investigations, may result in their role being withdrawn from the club, organisation or event.

The application form will also allow the applicant/volunteer the opportunity to nominate two referees that can be contacted as part of the safe recruitment procedures.

Step 3
Enrolment onto YFC Safeguarding Awareness training

Those elected to office in YFC and subject to YFC safe recruitment must be enrolled on the YFC Safeguarding Awareness training.

They should be enrolled with 28 days of taking up the position and must compete the online training with 28 days of being enrolled on the system.

Any person who fails to complete within the 128 days of enrolment, is considered to have stepped down and must be removed from their role as soon as possible.

Step 4
References

References are used to obtain information about the suitability of an applicant for specific posts within YFC. Along with the DBS check for criminal history a reference gives a holistic picture of an applicant and may also identify behaviours that have caused concern but have not been subject to statutory agency action or criminal proceedings. This is known as soft intelligence. It can also identify and confirm strengths and, where there are concerns, mitigating factors that serve to address potential risks.
References are a critical part of any safe recruitment process and, in the event of concerns about a volunteer arising, failure to take up named and verified references appropriately would be seen as a serious failure in Young Farmers' duty of care to members.

New references should be sought when an individual changes role or if they are taking up a leadership or more senior position in the organisation, as meaningful steps to ensure a safe and appropriate workforce should be an on-going commitment.

Those who commit to progressing into leadership roles should demonstrate this safeguarding commitment by modelling and complying with best practice. Two referees should be requested, taken up, reviewed and recorded accordingly.

For staff two external, independent references should be obtained. For volunteers two references should also be obtained, one should be an external referee who can offer a professional or academic perspective on the candidate and their ability, motivation and aptitude for the post and their suitability to work with children, young people and adults who may be additionally vulnerable.

The second referee can be a personal one and ideally should be someone who has had the opportunity to observe the applicants behaviours and practices over a period of time (but not a relative - blood related or through family/marriage/relationships) in order to give an informed view of an applicant's suitability for a role with children, young people and adults who may be additionally vulnerable and offers insight into other aspects of their behaviour, experience and qualities.

For nominated or elected YFC roles the individual proposing the person for the position could complete a reference form.

Any concerns arising through this process must be investigated and acted upon appropriately. References should be returned within four weeks, if this deadline lapses then the applicant will be contacted to provide a new reference name.

Care should be taken to store safe recruitment paperwork and any electronic records securely with restricted and recorded access to any information.

Safe recruitment logs should be kept ensuring that the club/county can evidence that procedures have been carried out.

If a volunteer or staff member is dismissed, removed from their regulated role, or leaves before they could be dismissed due a safeguarding concern, a referral must be made to the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO), the national Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Charity Commission in order for them to log that there are safeguarding concerns that make them unsuitable to be part of the children's workforce. www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity

Step 5 & 6
Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) and identification checks

A DBS check is a criminal record check performed by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in England and Wales to help employers determine if a candidate is suitable for a job, particularly those involving children or vulnerable adults.

Due to the child and young person centric nature of the YFC, DBS checks are a key part of the safer recruitment process and is part as a part of a wider safe recruitment process, NOT the only part of safe recruitment.

The use of DBS checks is required in legislation for certain positions that are considered as 'regulated'.

Regulated activity is defined as, work which an individual who is barred from working with children, young people and/or adults who may be additionally vulnerable must not do. In summary, this includes:

— Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or providing advice/ guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children.
— Work being carried out regularly (at least weekly), frequently (four times a month or more) or overnight (between 2am and 6am) or work in a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: e.g. schools, children's homes, and childcare premises. **This applies to YFC due to frequency of YFC activities.**

It is an offence for a barred person to seek to work in regulated activity, and for an employer to knowingly employ a barred person in regulated activity.

The Charity Commission is the regulator of the charitable sector in England and Wales and one of its functions is to offer safeguarding recommendations for its registered charities. A key part of this is the guidance it publishes on the recruitment and vetting of charity trustees. See relevant checks.

It should be noted that charity trustees are eligible for a DBS check if:

— The charity is set up specifically for children or adults who may be additionally vulnerable (i.e. most YFCs) or
— The individual is carrying out a specific activity (regulated) which makes them eligible, regardless of the fact that they are a charity trustee.

All levels of the organisation should assess the roles within clubs and county federations against the levels of check available and decide on the most appropriate.

The table below will assist with the assessment and is available as a standalone document DBS and SG training - checklist Aug25.pdf. If in doubt seek the advice of the NFYFC Safeguarding Team.

This table is available as a separate paper for ease of reference.

Who needs a DBS?	✓ Must do
Who must do safeguarding training?	⚑ Could do
Who it would be good practice to do safeguarding training	✗ Does not do
	*Regulated activity below

County		DBS			
Management/Executive Committee	**Charity Trustee**	**Enhanced + barred list**	**Enhanced**	**Safeguarding training**	
Charity Trustee	✓	⚑	✓	✓	Check Regulated Activities within the role at the County Federation
Role (O/18s)					
Chair	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Vice Chair	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Secretary	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Treasurer	⚑	✗	✓	⚑	If involved in County Management
President	⚑	✗	✓	⚑	If involved in County Management
Vice President	⚑	✗	✓	⚑	If involved in County Management
Deputy President	⚑	✗	✓	⚑	If involved in County Management
Anyone in Regulated Activity*	-	✓	✗	✓	
County Office Staff/volunteers					
County Organiser	✗	✓	✗	✓	
County Admin	✗	⚑	✓	✓	
County DWSO	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
County Training Officer	⚑	✗	✓	✓	
Sub committees					
Sub-Committees	-	⚑	⚑	⚑	Needs to be assessed - depends on their activity/responsibility/role
Club		DBS			
Management/Executive Committee	**Charity Trustee**	**Enhanced + barred list**	**Enhanced**	**Safeguarding training**	
Charity Trustee	✓	⚑	✓	✓	Check Regulated Activities within the role at the Club
Role (O/18s)					
Chair	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Vice Chair	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Secretary	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Treasurer	⚑	✗	✓	⚑	
Club leader	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Advisory	✗	⚑	⚑	⚑	Needs to be assessed - depends on their activity/responsibility/role
Anyone in Regulated Activity*	-	✓	✗	✓	
Role (O/16s but u/18)					
Chair	✗	⚑	⚑	✓	It is considered good practice to DBS check officers aged 16+ as the check is available for them. Remember these officers hold a role 'in name' within YFC and this **must be shadowed / supervised at all times by an adult who has been subject to appropriate safe recruitment checks** (See page 15 of Safe Recruitment Policy). Be advised that should a concern be raised about an officer aged 16+, the investigation will ask the charity trustees *'why was a DBS check not done'* when it is available as a tool to protect YFC and YFC members/supporters/volunteers. Therefore an assessment should be carried out to record the decision and how it was made.
Vice Chair	✗	⚑	⚑	✓	
Secretary	✗	⚑	⚑	✓	
Treasurer	✗	✗	✓	⚑	
Role (U/16)					
Chair	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Vice Chair	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Secretary	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Treasurer	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Other roles and U/18 Officer Support					
Club Leader	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
Club Safeguarding Officer/DWSO	⚑	✓	✗	✓	
President	⚑	⚑	✓	✓	
Vice President	⚑	⚑	✓	✓	
Deputy President	⚑	⚑	✓	✓	
Treasurer	⚑	⚑	✓	✓	
Advisory Committee	-	⚑	⚑	⚑	Needs to be assessed - depends on their activity/responsibility/role
Anyone in Regulated Activity*	-	✓	✗	✓	
***Performing Arts 'Producers'**		✓	✗	✓	Needs to be assessed - very likely to be a Regulated Activity due to frequency of rehearsals
***Tug of War Coach/Trainer**		✓	✗	✓	Needs to be assessed - very likely to be a Regulated Activity due to frequency of practice and training sessions
Sub committees					
Sub-Committees	✗	⚑	⚑	⚑	Needs to be assessed - depends on their activity/responsibility/role

Regulated activity
carried out on more than 3 days in any 30-day period, or once at any time between 2am and 6am (with the opportunity for face-to-face contact with children) to be regulated activity with children:
teaching, training, or instructing children (unless it is incidental to teaching, training or instruction of adults). If supervised by someone else who is in regulated activity with children, then they are not in regulated activity so are only eligible for an Enhanced DBS check without a Children's Barred List check
caring for or supervising children, unless the care or supervision is incidental to care for or supervision of adults
providing any form of advice or guidance wholly or mainly for children relating to their physical, emotional, or educational wellbeing.
Individuals do not need to be in contact with the same children over this time frame – it can be with any number of different groups or individuals.
driving a vehicle specifically for children, including anyone supervising or caring for the children, as part of a formal third-party arrangement.
regular day-to-day management or supervision of a person carrying out regulated activity with children

Work with children
Where an individual is not in regulated activity but still has contact with children, they can still be eligible for an Enhanced DBS check without a Children's Barred List check. This is described as work with children. This includes situations where the individual would be in regulated activity but does not do the activity often enough.

Types of DBS check

Organisations who are entitled to use the DBS checking service can ask successful applicants to apply for one of the following types of check depending on the job role.

DBS providers will require the organisation to justify the requirement for a check before processing. Your club or county may need to state how the volunteer or staff member you are recruiting meets the definition of regulated activity within their role.

Level of Check	What does it include
Basic Check	The basic check can be used for any position or purpose. A basic certificate will show shows unspent convictions and conditional cautions
Standard check	A standard check shows spent and unspent convictions and cautions
Enhanced check The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act makes provision for an employer to opt to require a DBS disclosure (without a barred list check) for someone not in Regulated Activity: 'Any position which otherwise involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children.' The word 'regularly' in this eligibility code is not linked to the requirements in the definition of 'Regulated Activity'. It is therefore open to be defined by the organisation.	An enhanced check, which shows the same as a standard check plus any information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role • These are for posts that involve a far greater degree of contact with vulnerable groups, including children. In general, this will involve regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of such people.

Enhanced with a barred list check Staff and volunteers must be working in a 'regulated' role to be eligible for this level of check	An enhanced check with barred lists, which shows the same as an enhanced check plus whether the applicant is on the list of people barred from doing the role • Child barred list information is only available for those individuals engaged in regulated activity with children and a small number of posts as listed in the Police Act regulations, for example prospective adoptive parents. • Adult barred list is only available for those individuals engaged in regulated activity with adults and a small number of posts as listed in the Police Act regulations. • Child and adult barred list is only available for those individuals engaged in regulated activity with both vulnerable groups including children and a small number of posts as listed in the Police Act regulations.
Adult first check	This is a quick, upfront check of the DBS Adults' Barred List that allows employers to permit an applicant to start working with vulnerable adults under supervision before their full Enhanced DBS certificate is completed. This is intended for those working with adults at risk in facilities such as care homes

Charges for DBS checks
The DBS charges a fee to process the check applications for paid posts.
Standard and enhanced checks are free for volunteers.

All checks will usually be accompanied by an administration fee. These fees can be lower when using online providers. The fees to process criminal record checks for paid staff are available from the Disclosure and Barring Service website and currently are as follows: https://www.gov.uk/dbs-check-applicant-criminal-record/get-a-standard-or-enhanced-dbs-check-for-an-employee.

DBS checks for volunteers
The DBS defines a volunteer as a person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party other than, or in addition to, a close relative.

The minimum age at which someone can be asked to apply for a criminal record check is 16 years old.

Those in YFC officer/leader roles under the age of 18 must not have responsibility for the care and supervision of other children, young people and adults who may be additionally vulnerable and do not count in adult to child ratios. They may take on a role 'in name' within YFC but this must be shadowed/supervised at all times by an adult who has been subject to appropriate safe recruitment checks.

Following completion of a paper disclosure application form or online information system and identification checks by the county counter-signatory, the check will be sent directly to the DBS from your county or via an umbrella body or online system.

Time limits for DBS applications
Some individuals who have convictions may attempt to delay or avoid submitting to a DBS check to conceal past offending.

It should be made clear to all Club and County Officers that DBS information will be treated in the strictest confidence. Having previous convictions, cautions or reprimands is not necessarily a barrier to holding a role.

It is important that such individuals are encouraged to complete a self-declaration to provide further information and context, which will be considered alongside all other safe recruitment information. The recruitment decision should be based on a documented risk assessment that includes all relevant information to determine overall suitability for the role.

Any individual requiring a DBS check must submit their application within 28 days of appointment into their role. Any person who fails to submit to this deadline is considered to have stepped down and must be removed from their role as soon as possible. This is to ensure that no-one who is unsuitable for working with vulnerable groups is permitted to do so.

Identification checks
In order to undertake the appropriate safe recruitment checks, sight of **original** documentation will be required (e.g. passport, birth certificate, full UK driving license and utility bill) that provide the following personal information, these will be collected during the process of the Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) check:

- Details of full name and address
- Address(es) if less than five years at current address
- Date of birth
- Photographic identification (ID)

The applicant must provide a range of ID documents as part of the DBS check application process. The person processing their application must:

- follow the three route ID checking process as outlined in the DBS Guidance
- check and validate the information provided by the applicant on the application form/continuation sheet
- establish the true identity of the applicant through the examination of a range of documents as set out in the guidance
- ensure the applicant provides details of all names by which they have been known
- ensure the applicant provides details of all addresses where they have lived in the last five years
- check that the application form is fully completed and the information it contains is accurate

When checking the validity of the documents it is best practice to carry out this examination face-to-face. Other alternative methods include via a live video link, for example Zoom, Skype and FaceTime, etc. Any risks identified when using live video must be assessed and mitigated if implementing this practice.

In both cases the applicant must be in physical possession of the original documents. **Photocopies and scans must not be requested or accepted**. If there are any discrepancies in the information provided by the applicant and/or the identity documents supplied, and fraud is not suspected, the applicant should be asked to clarify. Failure to do this it may compromise the integrity of the DBS service and introduce risk to the recruitment process.

What you must do as part of the ID checking process

- valid, current, and original documentation only can be accepted
- photocopies or scans must not be accepted (or requested)

- Where an applicant proactively provides copies of documentation, this should not be accepted and should immediately be returned to the applicant or securely destroyed. It must never be stored on file.
- Documentation printed from the internet e.g. internet bank statements must not be accepted
- Identity information for the applicant's name, date of birth, and address recorded in section A and section B on the DBS application form must be validated
- Documents with photographic identity (e.g. passport, new style driving licence, etc.) should be compared against the applicant's likeness
- All documents must be in the applicant's current name as recorded in section A
- One document must confirm the applicant's date of birth as recorded in section A
- Ensure that the applicant declares all previous name changes, and provides documentary proof to support the change of name; if the applicant is unable to provide proof to support the change of name, a probing discussion should be held with the applicant about the reasons why, before considering to validate their identity
- At least one document to confirm the applicant's current address as recorded in section B should be seen, in accordance with the guidance
- A full and continuous address history covering the last five years must be provided and, where possible, verified
- The applicant's address history should be cross matched with any other information provided as part of the recruitment, such as their CV; this can highlight if an address has not been given e.g. if the applicant's CV shows that they have worked in Liverpool in the last five years, but the application form only shows London addresses, the applicant should be questioned further about this
- A document from each of the groups should be included only once in the document count, for example, two bank statements from the same bank should not be accepted as two of the required documents
- The foreign equivalent of an identity document should not be accepted if that document is specified as '(UK)' on the list of valid identity documents

Checking the ID of those that have changed their name via deed poll

In the case of a person that has changed their name via deed poll, it is recommended that identification checks include a birth certificate check to verify that the applicant has provided and accounted for any name changes since birth.

Transgender applicants

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) offers a confidential checking service for transgender applicants in accordance with the Gender Recognition Act 2004, known as the sensitive applications route, and is available for all levels of DBS check. The sensitive applications route gives transgender applicants the choice not to have any gender or name information disclosed on their DBS certificate that could reveal their previous gender identity.

If any member does not wish to have a previous identity disclosed to YFC, they should call or email the dedicated sensitive applications team before submitting their application. The team is experienced in dealing with sensitive cases and will advise on the process and what they need to do. To contact the sensitive applications team, telephone 0300 131 2784 or email sensitive@dbs.gov.uk. Please note, an applicant using the confidential checking service, will still complete the same application form as any other applicant.

If the member is happy to have their previous identity disclosed on their certificate, they do not need to contact the sensitive applications team and can simply submit this information under the 'any other names' section of their application.

Stages of the DBS checking process

The DBS checking process involves several different stages before an applicant receives their certificate. The process can be seen in the table below.

- **Stage 1 - Application form received and validated**
- **Stage 2 - Police National Computer (PNC) searched**
- **Stage 3 – Barred lists searched –** *Enhanced applications checked against the Adults or childrens Barred Lists*
- **Stage 4 – Local Police records searched (enhance only) -** *Enhanced checks the application is sent to the relevant local police force, which then conducts a search of its own records for any relevant information*
- **Stage 5 - DBS certificate issued and despatched** *and sent to the applicant only.*

Checking of certificates
DBS disclosures certificates are only sent to the individual applicant. Organisations do not receive their own copy. This is to give the applicant the chance to appeal against any content they feel is irrelevant for the post they are applying for before the check is seen by the employer or organisation.

Arrangements therefore have to be established to ensure that applicants show the original certificate to the YFC. **Original certificates need to be physically seen by those responsible for safe recruitment decisions** within the federation in order for certificate details and any content to be recorded.

Where it is not possible to visit the county office, certificates could be sent by post (recorded delivery) and returned. Alternatively, the club safeguarding officer or a nominated member of the officer team could be given the role of physically seeing the original certificate and be briefed on the process of checking and recording the DBS certificate numbers and dates.

These can they be logged in the club's safeguarding records or passed on to the county federation if this is where the club records are held.

Some online DBS services provide confirmation that the check contains no information which provides the club or county with an additional safeguard until the check is viewed physically.

Where information is present on a DBS check this needs to be explored with those responsible for making safe recruitment decisions at club or county level.

DBS checks – portable DBS check
Some people may already have a DBS disclosure certificate undertaken for another club, county or organisation, e.g. if they are a schoolteacher in their full-time role. The **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) update service** (www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service) enables applicants keep their DBS certificates up to date online and allows employers and organisations to check the status of the DBS.

If an individual has subscribed to the Update Service, then their current DBS check can be used where the **same level** of check is required.

A copy of the original certificate and its contents should be seen, any relevant information recorded and to confirm it as the certificate that is registered online with the DBS.

Then, with the permission of the individual the employing organisation is able to go online to perform an instant check to find out whether the individual's DBS certificate is still up to date (this is called a status check).

Appendix 4 (SR Appx 4 DBS Online StatusCheckPermission.docx) is a template to request permission to perform a status check on a volunteer or employee, record the outcome and complete a self-declaration.

The organisation can enter identifying details for the applicant onto the system which includes their DBS certificate number. This will verify whether the check is still current. If the system response is that no new information has been added, then that information can be added to the persons safe recruitment information record together with the date of the status check.

If new information has been added since the check was undertaken, then YFC must undertake a new check.

Using the online status check, the checks can be performed more frequently if necessary. Say, annual status checks will make local safeguarding procedures more robust as you are able to check staff and volunteers' certificates more regularly.

Applicants should be encouraged by counties and clubs to register to use the update service. Registration costs £16 per year for paid staff but there's no charge for volunteers. See register for the update service by visiting *DBS CRSC (crbonline.gov.uk)*

Applicants have 30 days from the certificate issue date to register for the Update Service.

Frequency of DBS checks
Those volunteers or staff members in positions of responsibility must be re-checked at intervals of **not more than three years** in order to confirm the person is still suitable for their post and no new information has been added to the criminal records (DBS) check in the interim period.

If staff and volunteers are registered to the online update service, they can be checked annually as the system is fast and efficient. This would considerably strengthen safeguarding procedures.

New DBS checks should be undertaken if roles change or are extended. An example of this is if a person goes from supporting role to become a club chair as the role and responsibilities are far greater and activities may now fall under regulated activity.

The DBS online update service which allows employers the opportunity to register themselves to re-check volunteers and employees online removes the need to complete a new paper or online application at the three-year re-checks period.

Assessment of DBS Checks
During the safe recruitment process if a check is returned with a caution or conviction the check should be assessed by those responsible for safe recruitment within the club or county, with support from NFYFC.

Having a caution or conviction will not necessarily mean that a person cannot volunteer or work within YFC. It should be noted that a caution requires an admission of guilt and therefore is no less significant than a conviction.

It is illegal for a person on the barred list to apply for work with children and young people; it is also an offence for an organisation to knowingly recruit a barred person to work within their organisation. In line with legislation passed in October 2023, some spent convictions will be removed from a criminal record (DBS) check if they are considered no longer relevant to the post applied for.

The rehabilitation periods depend on:

- the sentence given or disposal administered as a result of a conviction
- the age of the individual on the date they are convicted

Even then, it will only be removed if it does not appear on the list of offences relevant to safeguarding.

DBS disclosure information should be considered alongside all other relevant information when making a decision about an individual's suitability to work with children, young people or adults at risk. This may include references, application information, qualifications, relevant experience and previous training. Information gathered from the applicant and previous employers or organisations can be used to make a robust recruitment decision.

For guidance on Rehabilitation Periods visit https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rehabilitation-periods.

A risk assessment of any DBS disclosure information is required, which will include:

- Clarification of the nature and significance of cautions/convictions or previous recorded behaviour (ideally information from the applicant and from a reliable third party i.e. employer or organisation)
- A decision about the significance of this and other information in relation to the person's suitability to work with children, young people or adults who may be additionally vulnerable.
- Consideration of the role applied for and responsibilities it entails
- Clarification with the applicant about the context of the caution, conviction or concerns arising to identify aggravating and mitigating factors in relation to potential risk, in this situation an external source of information can be used such as previous employers, the police and the prison service.
- If or how any potential risks can be managed within YFC activities. If risks cannot be managed effectively then the appointment should not proceed.

It is essential that the risk assessment of disclosure information is undertaken in conjunction with someone with appropriate safeguarding case management knowledge, experience and training to ensure a defensible decision is made about any appointment or employment. Please seek **advice from NFYFC to ensure a robust and defensible decision-making process**.

Security of DBS records

The DBS certificate remains the property of the applicant, as part of a recruitment decision a log of the DBS reference number and check date along with any cautions or convictions can be recorded from the certificate.

Step 7
Record keeping

This template Safe Recruitment Record Log will assist keep relevant information in an accessible format: SR Appx 6 Safe Recruitment Record Log.xlsx

DBS check logs should always be stored securely along with other safe recruitment information and in line with data protection legislation and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

This can be challenging if safeguarding records are held by a club rather than at the county office base. If a club holds safeguarding information (safe recruitment files and safeguarding incident reports) they must do this securely and these records must be passed onto the next set of club trustees and retained.

Any information gathered to inform safe recruitment procedures are implemented are considered as sensitive personal information and those responsible for them should:

- Compile and label files and records carefully
- Keep files containing sensitive information or confidential data secure
- Allow access on a need-to-know basis and ensure access is restricted (Key to locked filing cabinets or password protection / restricted files if electronically stored) - DBS information could be stored as a record on Silo against the member it relates to.

- Keep a log of who has access to confidential files by documenting who has access to them and the reason for these permissions.
- Ensure documents have a review or destruction date.

Additional steps for salaried officers (paid staff)

Short listing (for staff posts within YFC)
The process of short-listing applicants should be undertaken by at least two people who should also be on the interview panel.

Any anomalies or gaps in employment identified should be considered when considering whether to short-list the applicant. A history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to agency, freelance or temporary work, also needs to be questioned.

Following the above checks, you should assess whether each application meets the required criteria for the post. All candidates should be assessed equally against the same criteria and an agreement reached by the short-listing panel about which applicants to invite for interview. The panel should record its decision-making process and the rationale supporting selection, in case of the need to respond to queries afterwards.

Interviews (for staff posts within YFC)

The selection process for people who will work with children, young people or adults at risk should always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

The interview should assess each candidate against the selection criteria derived from the job description and person specification for the role and explore their suitability to work with vulnerable groups.

Interviews are an opportunity for the candidates to demonstrate how they meet the specification for the role. It should not be seen as a test where no assistance can be provided or where candidates feel anxious that they might be 'caught out' by seemingly trick questions.

It is good practice for your interview panel to have a minimum of two interviewers, so that one member can observe and assess the candidate and make notes, while the candidate is talking to the other. These roles can be alternated and agreed in preparations before interviews start. This also reduces the potential for bias and also the possibility of any dispute about what was said or asked during the interview.

- All panel members should familiarise themselves with the candidates' application forms prior to the interviews starting.
- Consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who will ask about them.
- Agree your selection criteria in accordance with the person specification, the method of assessment you will use and the standards you will apply.

The panel should agree a set of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post and the issues they will explore with each candidate based on the information provided in the applications and references (if available at this stage).

Hypothetical questions should be avoided, and questions should be framed to ensure that applicants can speak from working, volunteering and lived experience (e.g. "Could you please describe a time when you…?".

If the applicant has declared any past criminal convictions or concerns/investigations the panel will also need to consider whether those are relevant and whether they need to be explored further during the interview.

For those who regularly conduct interviews for posts within Young Farmers, it may be beneficial to complete an online safe recruitment E-learning or attend training from the local authority on safe recruitment.

Checklist - For all new Young Farmers' staff posts -

— All new or prospective staff members should be provided with a clear job or role description that details their responsibilities and highlights line management reporting structures.

— All applicants should be asked to complete an application form and provide two recent references, one of which should be from their most recent employer.
- It is not advisable to request only CV's during a recruitment process as they can allow the applicant to hide information should they wish to do so. An application form provides uniform summary of each applicant for the recruitment panel to consider.
- Model application form SR Appx 3 Staff Application Form.docx

— As all convictions relating to children and young people must be disclosed (even 'spent' ones), all new members of staff should be given the opportunity to make a self-declaration.
- YFC is considered as an environment where the 'exempted question' can be asked as we are a youth focussed organisation providing extensive activities and opportunities for children and young people. These exemptions are covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

— All staff in 'regulated' contact with children, young people and adults at risk must be subject to a DBS check at the correct level for their role, to be undertaken through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

— Named Referees should be contacted obtain a reference for the applicant, any negative references received should be discussed with the provider (and the applicant where appropriate). A 'to whom it may concern' generic reference should not be accepted.

— In order for previous experience to be assessed and a decision to be made about the applicant's suitability to undertake the job role they should be interviewed by at least two people. Applicants should be asked to explain the reason for any gaps in employment or change in area of residence. Applicants should be scored throughout the interview on their response to questions, this will allow for comparisons and fair selection.

— All successful applicants should provide evidence of their identity (original documentation, including photo identity confirmation and proof of address confirmation, should be examined). For example, a passport, full UK driving licence or birth certificate and a recent utility bill that details the individual's address.

— The offer of employment with YFC should be subject to the timely return of acceptable safe recruitment paperwork and successful completion of a probationary period, which is normally three to six months.

— All staff should receive an information handover and induction training in their role. The NFYFC provides an induction programme for new county staff.

— There should be midterm and end of probationary period review to support the new staff member.

— Full staff should receive monthly support and supervision by their line manager or an agreed nominated person.