

Rodolfus Choral Foundation

The Rodolfus Choral Foundation Limited

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

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KEY TERMINOLOGY

The Foundation refers to **The Rodolfus Choral Foundation**

The OT refers to **The Operations Team**. This would usually comprise the General Manager, Course Operations Manager, Communications Manager, Access and Partnerships Manager and the Choir Team.

Staff refers to all those who work for or on behalf of The Foundation in any capacity whether paid or voluntary. All staff working for the foundation will be over the age of 18.

Parent refers to birth parents or other adults who are in a parenting role e.g guardians, stepparents or adoptive parents.

Child refers to all young people under the age of 18.

Young person/Student (here) refers to all people who may be participants in The Foundation's courses and choirs (excl. Adult Courses). This includes participants on Senior Courses or singers in the Rodolfus Choir who may be aged 18 – 23.

DSL refers to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

ToS refers to the **Trustee with oversight of Safeguarding**

CoBT refers to the **Chair of the Board of Trustees**

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1 POLICY AIMS

1.1 Philosophy Statement

The Rodolfus Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The aim of this policy is to support that outcome, and to set out the framework for safe recruitment in order to:

- attract the best possible people to our organisation
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people
- adhere to statutory responsibilities to conduct background checks on staff who are working unsupervised with children and young people (regulated activity)
- provide an induction that supports good practice
- create a culture of safe organisational practice

1.2 Objectives

The policy takes into account the statutory guidance set out in **Working Together 2018** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE)** part three. Although KCSIE is directed at schools and colleges, it is a helpful guide for practice.

The Rodolfus Foundation is a regulated activity provider, because it is offering services where employees and volunteers are teaching young people on a regular basis and providing overnight care on choral courses. As such, the Foundation has statutory responsibilities to undertake criminal record and background checks on those working directly with children and young people as defined in the **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**, updated in the **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**. The system for providing checks and associated guidance is provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

2 RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCESS

2.1 Advertising

The Rodolfus Foundation is currently developing an advertisement and application process in order to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible. Diversity is a strength, and we want to encourage it. Adverts will contain a statement of the Foundation's commitment to safeguarding children and equal opportunities and indicate that successful candidates will need to meet the requirements of pre-employment checks, an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references. Taken in combination, these steps will help to encourage a wider range of applicants and to deter unsuitable people.

2.2 Interview

Interviews will be undertaken by a panel of at least two people, one of whom will have undertaken accredited safer recruitment training to ensure that this is a strong area of practice.

It is appropriate to include a relevant question about the candidates understanding of safeguarding practice in the planned question schedule. In

addition to competence questions, the interview should robustly explore the candidate's employment history, and to check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

3 PRE-APPOINTMENT VETTING

3.1 Reference Requests

Contact details of two referees must be provided by the candidate, one of which must be from the current or most recent employer. Open references are not acceptable. Written references will be sought directly from the referee, and s/he will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges. Any information disclosed about past disciplinary action should be considered carefully.

3.2 Identity and Employment checks

For all appointments we will undertake a range of background checks and criminal record checks to ensure the candidate is suitable for the post and to work with children and young people. We will:

- Verify a candidate's identity from current photo ID (originals), date of birth and proof of address (originals).
- Verify original certificates for academic and professional qualifications.
- Confirm the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibly.
- Verify the candidate's right to work in the UK in line with current Home Office Guidance
- Require evidence of good character if the candidate has lived and worked outside the UK for 3 months or more through checks with the relevant Police or Embassy.
- Carry out all relevant checks for internal staff members as if the person were a new member of staff if the person is moving from a post that involved non-regulated activity to one that involved regulated activity.
- Develop a single Central Record of pre-employment checks for our staff.

4 DISCLOSURE & BARRING CHECKS (DBS)

4.1 The DBS provides criminal record certificates for people undertaking work with vulnerable groups and can bar unsuitable people from working in such positions. As a minimum, all appointments at the Foundation including Trustee positions are subject to the receipt of satisfactory Enhanced DBS checks. The level of DBS certificate required, and whether any additional checks are needed will depend on the role that is being offered and the duties that are involved and it is the responsibility of the organisation to check this. The DBS provides an eligibility tool at www.gov.uk that can assist, and telephone advice is also available on 0300 020 0190.

4.2 As the majority of staff will be engaging in **regulated activity**, an Enhanced DBS Certificate with checks on whether the individual is barred from working in regulated activity will be required for most appointments. In summary, a person will be considered to be undertaking regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they will on a regular basis:

- Be responsible for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or providing advice or guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children
- carry out paid or unsupervised unpaid work regularly in a school or college with the opportunity for contact with children (but not including work done by supervised volunteers).
- Engage in intimate or personal care, or overnight activity, even if that happens only once
- Managers and supervisors of those in regulated activity are also eligible for an enhanced check with barred list check.
- It is a criminal offence for a barred person to work in a regulated activity, and it is also an offence for an employer or voluntary organisation to knowingly allow that to happen.
- Those who visit courses to teach young people on a regular basis, such as the teachers of the Alexander Technique will be checked in the same way as all other staff.
- Members of staff who are not in regulated activity but have regular contact with young people will usually be eligible for an enhanced DBS check without the barred list check.

4.3 Application for a DBS Check

Applications for an Enhanced DBS check can only be initiated by an employer; however, the certificate is sent directly to the applicant. For this we use an online service provided by:

Atlantic Data – www.disclosures.co.uk

There is a two-stage process under which we are required to obtain and scrutinise original ID documents. The guidelines for which documents are required, and how to check them, are available via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines>

The document is sent to the individual and they must produce the original copy for verification.

A record must be made of the details of the check on the Single central record for employment checks. Certificate information will be kept securely with strictly controlled access and limited to those who are entitled to see it for professional purposes, in line with the DBS Code of Practice 2015, and with regard for the responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Act (GDPR). Physical copies of DBS certificates can be made but will only be kept for six months.

Any positive disclose on the DBS certificate will be treated fairly and subject to a risk assessment by a senior manager. Where the information is considered to render the individual unsuitable for the post this will be clearly explained and confidentially recorded.

4.4 DBS Update service

Individuals can join the DBS Update Service at the point an application for a new DBS check is made, enabling future checks to be carried out to confirm that no new information has been added to the certificate since its issue. We request all staff to subscribe to the DBS Update Service, which allows us to check their current DBS status online. The individual must provide us with:

1. the certificate number to which the subscription applies
2. the surname under which it was issued,
3. their date of birth, and
4. their consent to our checking their status from time to time as needed.

The individual must sign up for the service within 30 days of the print date of the underlying certificate, which thereafter has the advantage that it renders the certificate valid across multiple employments and effectively extends the life of the underlying certificate indefinitely.

The organisation can request an updated check on an individual at any time where concerns about their practice arise. Otherwise checks will be updated every three years for all staff.

4.5 Overseas staff

Criminal record checks should be requested from the countries where the individual has lived or worked for three months or more. These should be applied for by the applicant either in their home country or from the relevant Embassy in the U.K. This does vary from country to country and therefore it is advisable to check current Home Office guidance on criminal records checks for overseas applicants which contains a country-by-country guide. The DBS web site guidelines are set out via the link below::

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

It is also important to take up references from employers or educational bodies. Where for practical reasons it has not been possible to obtain a complete record, this must be the subject of a written risk assessment by a Senior Manager

4.6 Volunteers

A supervised volunteer is not in regulated activity as long as the supervision is provided by a member of staff in regulated activity, and the supervision is consistent, clear and purposeful. Foundation managers will undertake a risk assessment and use their professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity, depending on the frequency and nature of the role.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer who has undergone no checks be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Volunteers who will work unsupervised are eligible for an enhanced DBS check which should include barred list information.

4.7 Guest Teachers and Conductors

Guest teachers or Conductors who visit for the purpose of a Masterclass or one off

appearance will not be DBS checked, but must be supervised at all times by a nominated member of staff who is in regulated activity.

4.8 Host Schools

Our contracts with Host schools may reasonably expect that we are able to provide them with the following in respect of all staff (visitors excepted) on the courses we run:

1. pdf of the DBS certificate, and
2. certification:
 - of the certificate number and issue date
 - of receipt of signed KCSIE certification
 - of successful completion of safeguarding interview
 - that ID has been checked
 - that the certificate is enhanced for working with children, and
 - that overseas CR clearance has been received, where necessary

5 START OF EMPLOYMENT & INDUCTION

The pre-employment checks listed above must be completed before the employee starts work. All new employees will be provided with an induction programme that will cover all relevant matters of Foundation policy including our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, and KCSIE 2019 Part One

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

Staff are required to read and sign the Foundation Code of Conduct that will be held on their personnel file. The Code of Conduct is intended to shape the individual's understanding of professional boundaries and standards. An important feature of the Code of Conduct for safe recruitment purposes is that staff are required to notify the Foundation if they become the subject of a statutory investigation by Police or Social Services.

In very exceptional circumstances, and with the written approval of the Chair of Trustees, a member of staff can begin work in restricted duties before the full DBS certificate is available. The individual must always be fully supervised by a nominated member of staff (in regulated activity) and the matter must have been the subject of a written risk assessment by a senior manager. However, if the employee is in regulated activity, it is essential to obtain a separate barred list check first. The offer of employment is not official until the satisfactory check is received and the appointing manager must ensure the situation is resolved as soon as possible.

6 SAFE ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICE

The recruitment and pre-employment checking process are the foundation of safe organisational practice. However, it is equally important to recognise that due

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to the hidden nature of abuse and exploitation, unsuitable individuals can evade detection and prosecution. Therefore, it is essential to create an organisational culture which maintains an “it could happen here” mentality, upholds high professional standards, and addresses concerns about staff at the first opportunity. Good governance and managerial practice in these matters are effective at deterring harmful behaviour and therefore play a key role in an overall strategy to safeguard young people.

The Foundation has a duty to make a referral to the DBS of any concern that an employee has caused harm to a child or young person or is not suitable to work in regulated activity. In such a case, it will always be appropriate to liaise with the local Children’s Services and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) first, and to read the current DBS guidance on making referrals.