



# **SAFER RECRUITMENT, INDUCTION AND PROBATION POLICY**

**November 2023**

Department Owner: HR

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## 1. Monitoring and Review

1.1. This policy will be formally reviewed whenever any significant changes are made. A thorough review will also take place should any new legislation or regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines be implemented.

1.2. Any alterations to the policy will be detailed in the following table:

Version	Updated by	Job Role	Changes made	Date
1.0	Samantha Rose	HR Supervisor	New Policy	05/03/2021
1.0	Samantha Rose	HR Supervisor	Verified by Peninsular	27/04/2021
2.0	Samantha Rose	HR Supervisor	7.5, 15.7, 15.8	22/10/2021
3.0	Ben Gauntlett	Office Manager	Added 7.3	08/11/2023

## 2. Scope

2.1 This document describes The Serendipity Centre Ltd (TSCL) policy on safer recruitment, company induction and probation for all its staff. This policy draws on the Equality Act (2010) [RD1] and sets out the principles under which TSCL will operate to meet these aims and complies with the requirements and statutory guidance for safer recruitment within The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 [RD2] and Keeping children safe in education (2020) [RD3].

## 3. Introduction

3.1 TSCL is committed to recruiting staff who are suitable to work with children and young people. This policy forms part of a wider company commitment to safeguarding children and young people in its care and education. The measures described in this policy will be applied to all who are employed to work at TSCL.

3.2 Incorporated within the scope of this policy are staff employed by contractors, agency staff, volunteers and the like who regularly work at TSCL. Whilst they may not have direct contact with the young people/students as a result of their role/job, but nevertheless may be considered safe and trustworthy due to their regular presence at company sites.

## 4. Reference Documents

[RD1]	Equality Act 2010
[RD2]	The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015
[RD3]	Keeping children safe in education (2020): Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DOE, 2021)
[RD4]	Handling of DBS certificate information Guidance <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-of-dbs-certificate-information/handling-of-dbs-certificate-information">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-of-dbs-certificate-information/handling-of-dbs-certificate-information</a>
[RD5]	Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018

## 5. Applicable Documents

When reading this document, please be aware of the following related documents.

Applicable No:	Policy Name	Review Date
[AD1]	Safeguarding policy	01.05.2020
[AD2]	Social Media policy	30.10.2019
[AD3]	Equality and Diversity policy	05.03.2021
[AD4]	Staff Handbook	01.08.2018

## 6. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation or Acronym	Description
TSCL	The Serendipity Centre Ltd
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
AD	Applicable Documents
RD	Reference Document

## 7. Safer Recruitment

### 7.1 Statutory Requirements

TSCL is regulated by Ofsted, and under the guidance of The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 26-33 [RD2] and Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges (Department for Education, 2021) (Part 3) [RD3] ensure the prevention of unsuitable people from working with children and young people. This includes making sure staff have an early company induction to include safeguarding training before they have contact with the children, young people and students in our care.

### 7.2 Vetting, Disclosure and Barring Checks

TSCL will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee/consultants/contractors on checks and evidence, including criminal record checks (Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks), barred list checks. In addition education staff will be checked to ensure individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 [RD5] and prohibition checks. TSCL are legally obliged to ensure, by way of a DBS check, that **any** employee/consultants/contractors working in a regulated activity with children and young people has not been barred from doing so. If there are concerns arising from the checks or a delay in evidencing the DBS TSCL will undertake a risk assessment before engagement with the children, students and young people in our care.

## 7.3 Online Checks

Under the guidance of Keeping Children Safe in Education, The Serendipity Centre will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence, for any new potential candidates joining the company. TSCL will act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee/consultants/contractors on checks and evidence.

7.4 TSCL hold a Single Central Record (SCR) to record safeguarding checks for all employed staff and relevant people that have direct and indirect contact with the young people and students in TSCL care. The SCR is maintained by HR and available to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

7.5 On appointment and which forms your contract of employment/services, all TSCL employed staff/consultants/Contractors are required to register on the DBS Update Service within 14 days of receiving an Enhanced DBS certificate. In doing so you are authorising TSCL to carry out regular criminal record checks. The cost of this service will be reimbursed by the Company during your employment/services with TSCL.

7.6 If you miss the DBS deadline to register on the DBS Update Service within 28 days of receipt of the Certificate, the company is required to reapply for a further DBS application, this will incur the application cost which the company will request you to pay in full. You are then required to follow 7.4.

7.7 TSCL will carry out a number of other checks to determine and verify the suitability of the individual, these include:

- Right to work in the UK
- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references to include the most current employer and any previous employment within care/education
- Verification of the candidate's identity including photographic ID, evidence of any name changes from birth onwards
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness, through pre-employment medical questionnaire and/or health checks through Occupational Health (if applicable), to carry out their work responsibilities
- If the candidate has lived or worked outside the UK, any further checks deemed relevant
- Verification of qualifications
- Verification of professional status where required

## 8. Recruitment and Selection Process

8.1 Job adverts will include details of the post, salary, contract type, duties, qualifications and experience required as set out in [RD2] regulations 26-33. Safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of our young people, and the need for the successful applicant to undertake a criminal record check through the DBS.

8.2 Vacancies will be advertised openly and will normally be available for members of staff in the company to apply. In most cases vacancies will be advertised externally unless there are exceptional reasons why this should not occur, for example, in situations of potential redundancy.

New appointments promoted internally will be conditional upon a 6 month probation in their new role.

8.3 TSCL will not accept a curriculum vitae (CV) in place of an application form.

- Applications forms will be received by the HR team and checked to ensure that they are fully and properly completed. Incomplete applications forms will not be accepted and returned for completion;
- Applications received after the closing date will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances as agreed by the relevant manager;
- All application forms and supporting information will be held in HR for a maximum period of 6

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months before being destroyed.

## 9. Young People's Voice

9.1 TSCL will involve young people in the recruitment and selection process. The young people's involvement is considered good practice and may take the form of an interview, as part of a shift observation or similar activity.

## 10. Interview

10.1 TSCL will seek to have a minimum of two interviewers who have completed safer recruitment training. Where the interview is for a childcare workers post the home manager deputy manager or a senior residential childcare worker will form part of the interview panel. Where the interview is for an administrative post a member of SLT will form part of the selection panel.

10.2 All interviews will be clearly structured and include pre agreed questions relating to the requirements of the post.

10.3 Childcare worker posts will normally be invited to attend an observation shift to assess their suitability for working with young people with complex needs as set out in [RD2] regulations 26-33.

10.4 In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview panel will also clarify the following for each candidate:

- Understanding of safeguarding and promotion of welfare for children, young people and vulnerable adults as set out in TSCL's Safeguarding policy [AD1] and relevant national/ local guidance;
- Attitude toward vulnerable children, young people and students;
- Clarification regarding concerns and/or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee;
- Any declaration in light of the requirement for an enhanced DBS check;
- Any gaps in employment history;
- In connection with disability, clarification of adjustments required to the workplace to enable him/her to undertake the work required; and
- Applicant's physical and mental fitness as set out in [RD2] regulations 26-33.

## 11. Notifying Candidates of the Outcomes of Interviews

11.1 TSCL as soon as reasonably practicable, will notify the candidates the outcome of the interview process either by written or telephone communication.

11.2 Conditional Offer of Appointment - pre appointment checks. A verbal and provisional offer of appointment to the successful candidate is conditional and subject to vetting, disclosure and barring checks.

11.3 Successful candidates will receive written confirmation of the offer. However, the offer at this stage will be conditional and subject to satisfactory references, Enhanced DBS clearance, medical clearance (if applicable) and satisfactory online checks.

## 12. Contractors/Agency Staff

12.1 TSCL will ensure that all contractor staff engaged in the homes, school and other business units or similar works are checked prior to commencement of works. Contractor staff who may come into contact with TSCL young people will be escorted by a member of TSCL staff. At no time will

contractor staff have unsupervised access to young people without an Enhanced DBS check in place.

12.2 No agency staff will be permitted to work at TSCL without written confirmation from the agency of the individual's profile of ID checks, photo ID, Enhanced DBS disclosure number and date of clearance.

12.3 Where agency staff attend TSCL for the first time the member of staff will be asked to evidence their Enhanced DBS disclosure certificate, date of clearance and photographic image.

12.4 When supply agencies are approached for cover they will be required to provide the following information:

- **ID Checks :**  
Agencies will be required to send through by fax a photograph image of the member of agency staff prior to their arrival on site.
- **Qualification Checks:**  
Agencies are to verify qualification before agreeing placement, if required.
- **DBS Checks:**  
Enhanced DBS clearances are made available before any placement will be permitted to commence. It is the agencies responsibility to regularly review and update DBS checks.
- **Right to Work in the UK:**  
It is the agencies responsibility to undertake all the necessary checks to ensure that agency staff are eligible to work in the UK. The relevant documents are to be presented to TSCL prior to the commencement of any position.

## 13. Reporting and Recording

13.1 TSCL will maintain a written record of the vetting checks performed to verify employees

- Identity
- Vocational and academic qualifications
- Previous employment history
- Health
- Professional and character references

13.2 HR will maintain a written record of the interviews and their outcomes for all candidates. All application forms and supporting information will be held in HR for a maximum period of 6 years after employment.

13.3 Disclosures and Disclosure information will be handled as per the guidance on the Handling of Disclosure Information [RD4], noting the time limits for the retention of sensitive information.

## 14. Induction

14.1 TSCL recognises that all new permanent and temporary staff, and existing staff who are promoted or transferred, will require adjustment in their new role. The company aims to give support to these staff through a company induction programme (childcare workers as set out in [RD2] regulations 26-33. All staff who are included in the programme will be given support throughout their induction.

14.2 The purpose of the induction process is to:

- To assess the member of staff transferrable skills and training;
- Provide appropriate training and information about the company;

- Ensure staff are integrated and feel safe and valued;
- Establish the conduct expected of staff within the company
- Provide a platform for new members of staff to discuss any issues or concerns they may have regarding their role/responsibilities;
- Enable the line manager/mentor to monitor and review the new staff member's ability, suitability and/or capability and
- Reinforce policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare/wellbeing of our young people.

## 15. Probation

- 15.1 A probationary period is in addition to the company induction and is intended to allow both the member of staff and the manager to assess objectively whether or not the member of staff is suitable for the role (childcare workers as set out in [RD2] regulations 26-33).
- 15.2 The manager is responsible under this policy for ensuring that all new members of staff are properly monitored during their probationary period. If any problems arise, the manager should address these promptly with the member of staff. This will ensure that the member of staff is aware that some aspect of their performance or conduct is unsatisfactory and prevent the problem from escalating.
- 15.3 TSCL standard period of probation is six months. During probation employees will meet with their manager/supervisor to assess performance, capability and suitability for the role on an initial meeting, 1 month, 3 month and at the end of the 6 month probationary period, also through supervision. A copy of the reviews passed to the member of staff and the original forwarded to HR. If the employee's performance is satisfactory the manager should notify HR to issue a letter of confirmation of appointment to the member of staff.

On satisfactory probation the notice periods will be as defined in the member of staff's contract of employment.

- 15.4 TSCL reserves the right to extend a member of staff's period of probation at its discretion, reasons could include:
- improve their performance
  - meet targets
  - improve attendance or punctuality
  - correct general conduct with the workplace
  - learn a new skill that will allow them to meet required standards
  - long term absence (to give them more time needed to meet TSCL review criteria)
- 15.5 Before a probation period extension is agreed, the manager must consult with HR. If an extension to the probationary period is agreed, HR will confirm the terms of the extension in writing to the employee, including:
- the length of the extension and the date on which the extended period of probation will be reviewed;
  - the reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance details of how and why performance has fallen short of the required standards;
  - the performance standards or objectives that the member of staff is required to achieve by the end of the extended period of probation
  - any support, for example further training, that will be provided during the extended period of probation and
  - a statement that, if the employee does not meet fully the required standards by the end of the extended period of probation, their employment will be terminated
- 15.6 If a member of staff's performance while on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the manager), and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a



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satisfactory level of improvement, the company may offer an alternative post or terminate at the end of the period of probation.


- 15.7 If a member of staffs performance after satisfactory probation deteriorates, the company's normal capability/dismissal procedure must be followed in accordance with the TSCL Capability policy [AD4].
- 15.8 If the member of staff is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, will be conditional upon a 6 month probation in their new role. If the staffs performance while on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the manager), and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the company will offer their previous post or an alternative post.

## 16. Policy Review

16.1 This policy is reviewed annually.

16.2 The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2024

Signed off by:

Managing Director (full name)	Signature	Date
Sean Maguinness		08/11/2023



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