

Mary Pugsley MBE

Director, HAIR AT THE ACADEMY



Safer Recruitment Policy

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Last reviewed 18/05/2025

Next review date 17/05/2026

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SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY POLICY STATEMENT

The safety and wellbeing of our children and adults at risk is our top priority, and we take all reasonable and sensible measures to ensure they are kept safe from harm. We operate a Safer Recruitment Policy which ensures that all our staff are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. This helps ensure the safety of the children and adults at risk who attend our setting and our adult volunteers/staff who provide their supervision and care.

INTRODUCTION

The safe recruitment of staff in Hair at the Academy is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk in our care. Hair at the Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and adults at risk in its care. As an employer, Hair at the Academy expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Safer Recruitment Policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children and adults at risk or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff. The aims of Hair at the Academy's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance such as the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the Prevent Duty Guidance) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- to ensure that Hair at the Academy meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Recruitment will be managed by the Director and any employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff (including the director) are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

Hair at the Academy 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 at the Charity based on the applicant's abilities,

Recruitment and Selection is based on the 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, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. Recruitment will be managed by the Director however if a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a

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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 and selection decision-making process. Hair at the Academy aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies at the college.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Director to:

- ensure Hair at the Academy has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with all legal requirements;
- monitor the Hair at the Academy's compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of all involved in the recruitment process to:

- ensure that Hair at the Academy operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at Hair at the Academy
- monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document;
- promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk at every stage of the procedure.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

The full legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

HM Government has produced a Factual note on regulated activity in relation to children. Regulated activity includes:

- a) teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children and adults at risk if the person is unsupervised, or providing advice or guidance on well-being, for children or adults at risk;
- b) work for a limited range of establishments (known as 'specified places', which include schools and colleges), with the opportunity for contact with children or adults at risk, but not including work done by supervised volunteers.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, Hair at the Academy 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 Hair at the Academy's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Declaration Forms

All applicants will need to complete a declaration regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. It is unlawful for Hair at the Academy to employ anyone who is barred from working with children or adults at risk. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children or adults at risk to apply for a position at Hair at the Academy. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being

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rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or the DBS.

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 person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children and / or adults at risk.

References

References for shortlisted applicants will be requested immediately after short listing. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after the interview.

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by Hair at the Academy. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current / most recent employment does/did not involve work with children or adults at risk, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children or adults at risk. The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee, and their purpose is to provide objective information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk. Referees will also be asked to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised so that they do not support terrorism or any form of "extremism".

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

Hair at the Academy does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with Safer Recruitment Training).

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Any information regarding past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process if it has been disclosed on the application form.

At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited for an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Only original documents will be accepted, and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed six months after the recruitment programme.

OFFER OF APPOINTMENT AND NEW EMPLOYEE PROCESS

Hair at the Academy carries out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees.

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating Hair at the Academy's standard terms and conditions of employment;
- verification of the applicant's identity (where that has not previously been verified);
- the receipt of two references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which Hair at the Academy considers being satisfactory;
- For positions which involve "respite break work":
 - ❖ Hair at the Academy being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of any proceedings before a professional conduct panel or equivalent body in the UK or any other country for any reason which prevents the applicant working at Hair at the Academy or
 - ❖ alternatively, information which, in Hair at the Academy's opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work at Hair at the Academy;
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS which Hair at the Academy considers to be satisfactory;
- where the position amounts to "regulated activity" confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List*;
- verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role;
- verification of the applicant's right to work in the UK;
- any further checks which are necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside of the UK;
- verification of professional qualifications which Hair at the Academy deems a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application (where they have not been previously verified).

*Hair at the Academy is not permitted to check the Children's Barred List unless an individual will be engaging in "regulated activity". Hair at the Academy is required to carry out an enhanced DBS check for all staff, supply staff and Trustees who will be engaging in regulated activity. However, Hair at the Academy can also carry out an enhanced DBS check on a person who would be carrying out regulated activity but for the fact that they do not carry out their duties frequently enough i.e. roles which would amount to regulated activity if carried out more frequently.

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Whether a position amounts to "regulated activity" must, therefore, be considered by Hair at the Academy in order to decide which checks are appropriate. It is however likely that in nearly all cases Hair at the Academy will be able to carry out an enhanced DBS check and a Children's Barred List check.

A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal 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 children. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' **must** be declared when applying for any position at Hair at the Academy.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check (formerly known as CRB Disclosure)

Hair at the Academy applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS and a check of the Children's Barred List (now known as an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity) in respect of all positions at Hair at the Academy which amount to "regulated activity" as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended). The purpose of carrying out an Enhanced Check for Regulated Activity is to identify whether an applicant is barred from working with children by inclusion on the Children's Barred List and to obtain other relevant suitability information.

It is Hair at the Academy's policy that the DBS disclosure must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

It is Hair at the Academy's policy to re-check employee's DBS Certificates every two years and in addition, any employee that takes leave for more than three months (i.e., maternity leave, career break, etc) must be re-checked before they return back to work.

Members of staff at Hair at the Academy are aware of their obligation to inform the Director of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence.

Portability of DBS Certificates

Checks Staff may wish to join the DBS Update Service if they are likely to require another check in the future. Applicants may sign up to the Service if their check was issued after 17 June 2013, for a fee of £13 per annum, which is payable by the applicant.

DBS Certificate

The DBS no longer issues Disclosure Certificates to employers, therefore employees/applicants should bring their original Certificate to the Director within seven days of issue or applicants before they commence work or any project involving regulated activity.

Dealing with convictions

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Hair at the Academy 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 also:

- 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 Director. A decision will be made following this meeting. In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, the Director will evaluate all of the risk factors above before a position is offered or confirmed.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, Hair at the Academy may, where practicable and at its discretion, defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

Proof of identity, Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status.

All applicants invited to attend an interview at Hair at the Academy will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence, etc. 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 identity checking guidelines. Hair at the Academy does not discriminate on the grounds of age.

Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) they will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

Medical Fitness

Hair at the Academy is required to verify the medical fitness of anyone to be appointed to a post at Hair at the Academy, **after** an offer of employment has been made but **before** the appointment can be confirmed.

All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role.

Hair at the Academy is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

Overseas checks

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Applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than three months within the previous year will need to obtain a criminal records check from the relevant country. The applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by Hair at the Academy

Induction Programme

All new employees will be given an induction programme which will clearly identify Hair at the Academy's policies and procedures, including the Child Safeguarding Policy, the Code of Conduct, and make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Register of Members of Staff and Volunteers

In addition to the various staff records kept in Hair at the Academy and on individual personnel files, a record of recruitment and vetting checks is kept. This is kept up-to-date and retained by Hair at the Academy's management. The Register will contain details of the following:

- all employees who are employed to work at Hair at the Academy;
- all others who have been chosen by Hair at the Academy to work in regular contact with children.

This will cover volunteers, Trustees, people brought into the charity to provide employment contracted services.

Record Retention / Data Protection

Hair at the Academy is legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, if an applicant is successful in their application, Hair at the Academy will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and qualifications. Medical information may be used to help Hair at the Academy to discharge its obligations as an employer e.g. so that Hair at the Academy may consider reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability or to assist with any other workplace issue.

This documentation will be retained by Hair at the Academy for the duration of the successful applicant's employment with Hair at the Academy. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in the management office, in a locked and secure cabinet.

The same policy applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers involved with Hair at the Academy activities.

Hair at the Academy will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (i.e., shredded). The six-month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Ongoing Employment

Hair at the Academy 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. Hair at the Academy will, therefore, provide ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the Annual Review/appraisal procedure.

Leaving Employment at Hair at the Academy

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Despite the best efforts to recruit safely, there will be occasions when allegations of serious misconduct or abuse against children and adults at risk are raised. This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion of safer recruitment and details the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed. While these are pre-employment checks Hair at the Academy also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS in circumstances where an individual:

- has applied for a position at Hair at the Academy despite being barred from working with children or adults at risk;
- has been removed by Hair at the Academy from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid);
- has resigned prior to being removed, because they have harmed, or pose a risk of harm to, a child or adult at risk.

Volunteers

Hair at the Academy will request an enhanced DBS disclosure and Children's Barred List information on all volunteers undertaking regulated activity with children or adults at risk at or on behalf of Hair at the Academy (the definition of regulated activity set out above will be applied to all volunteers).

Under no circumstances will Hair at the Academy permit an unchecked volunteer to have unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk.

It is Hair at the Academy's policy that a new DBS certificate is required for volunteers who will engage in regulated activity but who have not been involved in any activities with Hair at the Academy for one year or more. Volunteers on break are asked to declare any new convictions since their last DBS check within the one-year period. Those volunteers who are likely to be involved in activities with Hair at the Academy on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits Hair at the Academy to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

In addition, Hair at the Academy will seek to obtain such further suitability information about a volunteer as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. This may include (but is not limited to the following):

- formal or informal information provided by staff and other volunteers;
- character references from the volunteer's place of work or any other relevant source;
- an informal safer recruitment interview;
- online background checks.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Director will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated. This will be undertaken through formal audits of job vacancies and a yearly Safer Recruitment Evaluation audit.

Safeguarding at Hair at the Academy

Safeguarding is paramount, and we are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our children and adults at risk.

We believe that children and adults at risk have a right to be in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant

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for signs of any child or adult in distress and are confident about applying the processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.

If any behaviour is a concern in relation to safeguarding Hair at the Academy's procedures and processes will be followed at all times in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

Any concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and reported to the Director.

Review

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Director

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