

Policy Number	POL-020	Version Number	1	
Policy Name	Safer Recruitment Policy			
Effective Date	16 July 2026	Review Date	16 July 2027	

This policy relates to YMCA Cheshire. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes all trading names used by YMCA Cheshire, including YMCA Crewe, YMCA Cheshire, and YMCA Macclesfield.

YMCA Cheshire will be referred to as "YMCA Cheshire" throughout this document.

1. Purpose and Statement of Intent

YMCA Cheshire is committed to ensuring that all recruitment and selection processes are safe, robust, and effective in safeguarding children, young people, and adults.

Safer recruitment is a critical safeguarding control within the organisation's wider governance and quality framework. It forms part of the organisation's duty to prevent harm, reduce risk, and ensure that only suitable individuals are appointed to roles where they may have access to children, young people, and adults.

In line with the organisation's governance and compliance framework, YMCA Cheshire will:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults at all stages of recruitment
- Ensure recruitment decisions are informed, proportionate, and risk-based
- Embed safeguarding considerations throughout recruitment, selection, and onboarding
- Maintain clear accountability, oversight, and auditability of recruitment decisions
- Ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, and statutory requirements
- Promote a culture of vigilance, transparency, and professional curiosity

This policy provides the strategic framework through which safer recruitment is implemented and assured across the organisation, in alignment with the Quality Management System (QMS).

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All recruitment activity undertaken by YMCA Cheshire
- All roles including employees, workers, volunteers, agency staff, and trustees
- All services, including:
 - Supported accommodation for children aged 16–17
 - Housing and support services for young people and adults
 - Community and charitable activities
- All individuals involved in recruitment and selection processes

This policy forms part of the organisation's policy framework and is supported by procedures which define how safer recruitment is implemented in practice.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Safer Recruitment	A systematic approach to ensuring that only suitable individuals are recruited, reducing the risk of harm to children, young people and adults
Suitability	The extent to which an individual is safe, appropriate, and capable of working with children, young people, or adults
Pre-Employment Checks	Mandatory checks including identity, references, DBS, and right to work

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Term	Definition (<i>Continued</i>)
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service check confirming an individual's criminal record status
Regulated Activity	Roles requiring enhanced safeguarding checks under relevant legislation

4. Policy Principles

Safer recruitment within YMCA Cheshire is underpinned by the following core principles:

Safeguarding and Welfare

The safety and wellbeing of children, young people (including those aged 16–17 in supported accommodation), and adults is paramount and must be the primary consideration in all recruitment decisions.

Prevention and Risk Reduction

Recruitment processes must actively identify, deter, and prevent unsuitable individuals from entering the organisation.

As part of this, YMCA Cheshire is committed to ensuring the suitability of all successful candidates. The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken as a minimum:

- Full education and employment history
- Scrutiny of gaps in employment
- Identity verification
- Confirmation of right to work in the UK
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as determined by the role
- Two verified references
- Overseas checks where required

Ongoing Suitability

YMCA Cheshire recognises that safer recruitment extends beyond the point of appointment. The organisation is committed to maintaining appropriate arrangements to support the ongoing suitability of employees, volunteers, agency workers, and trustees who work with or may have access to children, young people, and adults.

Individuals engaged by YMCA Cheshire are expected to act with honesty and integrity and must promptly disclose any matter that may affect their suitability to undertake their role or work with children, young people, or adults. This includes, but is not limited to, criminal investigations, cautions, charges, convictions, barring decisions, regulatory investigations, or other safeguarding-related concerns.

YMCA Cheshire will maintain appropriate arrangements to review and monitor workforce suitability and will take proportionate action where concerns are identified, in order to safeguard children, young people, adults, staff, volunteers, and the wider organisation.

Robustness and Consistency

All recruitment activity must follow a structured, consistent, and auditable process which ensures fairness and safeguarding integrity.

Professional Curiosity and Challenge

Managers and HR must critically assess information provided by candidates, including gaps, inconsistencies, and disclosures, and must not accept information at face value.

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Proportionate and Defensible Decision-Making

All recruitment decisions must be:

- Proportionate to the level of risk
- Clearly documented
- Capable of withstanding internal and external scrutiny

Transparency and Accountability

Recruitment decisions must be clearly recorded, justified, and subject to appropriate governance and oversight.

Compliance with Legal and Regulatory Requirements

All recruitment activity must comply with:

- Disclosure and Barring Service requirements
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance

Continuous Improvement

Recruitment practice must be monitored, reviewed, and improved through quality assurance, audit, and learning.

5. Legal and Regulatory Context

YMCA Cheshire operates within a framework of legal and regulatory requirements which inform safer recruitment practice.

These include:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Disclosure and Barring Service requirements
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018

These frameworks collectively establish expectations for:

- Safe recruitment practices
- Suitability of staff and volunteers
- Safeguarding responsibilities
- Defensible and auditable decision-making

Safer recruitment forms part of the organisation's wider compliance obligations and contributes to meeting inspection and regulatory expectations.

YMCA Cheshire will maintain appropriate arrangements to support the ongoing suitability of employees, volunteers, agency workers, and trustees. This includes the review of safeguarding-related information, criminal record status, and other matters that may affect an individual's suitability to work with children, young people, or adults, where required by organisational procedures, risk assessment processes, legal requirements, or safeguarding concerns.

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6. Roles and Accountability

Board of Trustees	Responsible for: - Ensuring appropriate systems and controls are in place for safer recruitment - Maintaining oversight of safeguarding and recruitment risks - Scrutinising assurance relating to recruitment practice
Nominated Individual (NI)	Responsible for: - Providing oversight and assurance that safer recruitment arrangements are effective, compliant, and safeguarding-led - Acting as the primary point of contact with the regulator (Ofsted) - Seeking assurance that recruitment risks, including suitability and safeguarding concerns, are appropriately identified, managed, and escalated - Providing assurance to the Board of Trustees that safer recruitment practice is safe, effective, and compliant
Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	Responsible for: - Ensuring consistent application of safer recruitment across services - Monitoring recruitment practice, risk, and compliance - Ensuring staff involved in recruitment are appropriately trained
Service Managers / Registered Service Managers	Responsible for: - Undertaking recruitment in line with this policy and associated procedures - Ensuring all safeguarding checks are completed - Assessing candidate suitability and risk - Recording and justifying recruitment decisions
Human Resources / People Function	Responsible for: - Providing guidance and oversight - Ensuring compliance with recruitment requirements - Monitoring recruitment practice and supporting audit processes
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Responsible for: - Providing advice where safeguarding concerns arise during recruitment - Supporting risk assessment and decision-making - Contributing to decisions where concerns, disclosures, or risks are identified
All Staff Involved in Recruitment	Responsible for: - Following this policy and associated procedures - Raising concerns promptly - Maintaining confidentiality and professionalism

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7. Monitoring and Assurance

Monitoring and assurance activity forms part of YMCA Cheshire's wider **Quality Assurance and Oversight framework**, ensuring that safer recruitment practice is subject to systematic review, challenge, and continuous improvement.

Safer recruitment forms part of YMCA Cheshire's wider governance, compliance, and quality assurance framework.

The organisation will ensure effective implementation through:

Reporting

- Oversight of recruitment activity at service and organisational level
- Reporting of safeguarding-related recruitment risks

Audit and Review

- Recruitment file audits
- Review of compliance with pre-employment checks
- Review of decision-making and risk assessments

Quality Assurance

- Monitoring consistency and quality of recruitment practice
- Identification of trends, risks, and areas for improvement

Learning and Improvement

- Learning from recruitment decisions, incidents, and concerns
- Continuous improvement of recruitment systems and practice

These arrangements ensure that safer recruitment is not only compliant, but effective in protecting those accessing services.

8. Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents, which support its effective implementation and the organisation's wider governance framework.

Document Number	Document Title
POL-002	Quality Assurance Policy
POL-005	Workforce / Staffing Policy
POL-011	Safeguarding and Protection Policy (Children, Young People and Adults)
POL-012	Allegations Against Staff Policy
POL-019	Incident and Notification Policy
POL-018	Employee Conduct and Professional Standards Policy
POL-030	Probation and Supervision Policy
PRO-014	Managing Allegations Against Staff Procedure
PRO-017	Incident and Notification Procedure
PRO-018	Recruitment and Onboarding Procedure

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9. Review and Version Control

This policy will be reviewed annual or earlier if:

- legislation or guidance changes
- learning from complaints identifies improvements
- Ofsted or external feedback requires updates

Version Control	Details of the change	Date
1	Updated the Safer Recruitment Policy to remove procedural elements and align with the Quality Management System (QMS) structure.	July 2026