



AFC Totton Development Program Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction

AFC Totton DP aims to provide a safeguarding culture and environment where students feel confident to raise issues and disclose incidents relating to their welfare and safety knowing that staff will respond appropriately to these.

This policy sets out how AFC Totton DP will ensure this through safe recruitment practices that ensure only those suitable to work with children are recruited and by holding expectations of high standards of personal and professional conduct from staff.

Safe recruitment: general principles

AFC Totton DP recognises safer recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe learning environment and will carry out the processes set out in this policy to ensure those who are not suitable to work with children are identified during recruitment processes and prevented from taking up posts.

When recruiting staff, AFC Totton DP will follow Part 3 of the Keeping children safe in education guidance (DfE 2023). Keeping children safe in education 2023 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

AFC Totton DP will carry out extensive checks and enquiries on applicants for all positions, including voluntary and support roles.

No staff member, volunteer or anyone involved in AFC Totton DP will be allowed to be unsupervised in their role until all checks and enquiries required for that position have been satisfactorily completed.

Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service will be carried out at the level appropriate to the candidate's role in the provision (see section 4.3).

Staff who are involved in recruitment will receive Safer Recruitment training offered through an accredited training provider and no interview should go ahead unless at least one member of the panel has undertaken safer recruitment training.

Although the provision leader will have day-to-day responsibility for the recruitment of staff, the directors will ensure that they maintain an overview of recruitment systems in order to scrutinise practise and ensure all statutory checks are carried out.

Staff with responsibility for carrying out recruitment checks will ensure they have a copy of any relevant documents or take relevant issue numbers from documents as proof that the document has been seen.

Checks will be taken out on existing staff where concerns arise regarding their suitability to work with children or a person moves into a post that is a regulated activity.

The AFC Totton staff will be responsible for keeping a single central record of all staff and volunteers who work at the provision and any checks taken out. The records will include details of all checks carried out and the outcome of these checks or any certificates obtained and will be recorded using the template shown at appendix 1.

Where staff are recruited via third parties such as employment agencies, the directors will:

- Seek written confirmation from the agency that the agency has carried out all necessary checks on the individual
- Request written confirmation of the outcome of all checks
- Request written confirmation that an enhanced DBS certificate has been received by the agency
- Request a copy of any DBS certificate where information has been disclosed
- Check the identity of agency staff when they first present for work to ensure they are person against whom the checks were taken out.

Advertising and recruitment

When recruiting, AFC Totton DP will ensure that all advertisements for posts are clear that the role is a safeguarding role for which successful candidates should be considered suitable to work with children and that successful applicants will be expected to agree to undergo DBS and other checks as part of safer recruitment practices.

AFC Totton DP will only accept applications using the correct application form in order to capture important information about the candidate to enable AFC Totton DP to make informed decisions about their suitability for the role. A CV may be submitted with a completed application form but will not be sufficient for an application.

Advertisements

AFC Totton DP will ensure the following information is included in any advertisement:

- A statement of AFC Totton DP's commitment to safeguarding and that all applicants will be subject to checks
- Information about the role (job description/person specification) and the safeguarding responsibilities that are part of the role
- The skills, experience, knowledge, abilities, attitudes and behaviours required
- The safeguarding requirements of the role, including level of contact with children and whether the post involves regulated activity
- Whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (where specific spent convictions must be disclosed).

For further guidance on exemptions please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance>

Application forms

AFC Totton DP will ensure all candidates for posts are able to access AFC Totton DP's Safeguarding policy online so that they are aware of our approach to safeguarding and safer recruitment and the expectations on staff in implementing these.

Application forms will ask for the following information:

- Personal details of the candidate including current and former names, current address and national insurance number;
- Details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving;
- Full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment;
- Qualifications, the awarding body and date of award;
- Details of referees/references;

- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that the candidate believes are relevant to their suitability for the post and how they meet the person specification.

Interview and selection

One of the key purposes of the interview is to establish whether the candidate is suitable to work with children. For this reason, AFC Totton DP will structure interviews to enable a full exploration of the candidate's knowledge, skills and experiences of teaching and working with children as well as their attitudes and motivations to safeguarding.

The interview will also explore any unexplained gaps in employment or frequent changes of employment, any information on allegations or disciplinary actions, or any other areas of concern.

Checks and vetting for AFC Totton Staff

AFC Totton DP will take out checks in order to verify the following information for all new staff:

- The applicant's identity must be verified from their passport, birth certificate or other photographic ID and proof of address must be provided. The school/college will follow government guidance.
- The applicant's right to work in the UK must be evidenced through documentation. Only original documentation will be accepted and its validity checked in the presence of the applicant. AFC Totton DP will follow government guidance.

Where the applicant will be involved in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check will be taken out, including information from the barred list. If the applicant will begin work before an enhanced DBS check can be completed, they will be supervised.

In the case of teaching staff, checks will be made on the applicant's academic and vocational qualifications and further checks made on the TRA Teacher Employer Access Service system to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching under a teacher prohibition order.

Where the applicant has been living abroad, similar enquiries will be made in the country of origin relating to the applicant's qualifications and suitability to teach, including DBS checks. For criminal records checks abroad, the school/college will follow government advice.

AFC Totton DP will keep copies of the following documents on staff personnel files:

- Documents used as proof of identity such as passports or driving licences;
- A summary of the DBS certificate
- Documents that prove the staff member's right to work in the UK

References

- Applicants will be asked to provide a full employment history and details of at least 2 referees, including previous and recent employers, and who should be a senior member of staff with the authority to provide references. References from colleagues will not be acceptable.
- All references will be taken up prior to starting the role and will be requested directly from the referee, including references for internal candidates.
- Any information provided by applicants as part of an application process will be verified with independent sources and any reference received electronically will be checked to verify the originating source.

- Referees will be contacted to resolve any issues that emerge from the references provided, for example to clarify and verify information provided by the applicant and explore any discrepancies from the information provided on the application form.
- References will be taken up from current employers only; if the applicant is not currently employed, verification of will be sought from their previous school/college as to the dates the applicant was employed and the reasons for leaving the post.

DBS checks

In order to ensure that people who work in AFC Totton DP are suitable to do so and are not barred from working with children, AFC Totton will apply to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for police checks and other barred list information as part of the recruitment process.

The relevant DBS check will be taken out according to the role of the individual and their level of unsupervised contact with students.

Enhanced DBS checks including police information and children's barred list information will only be taken out on individuals who are involved in regulated activity. This is defined as:

- Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children (including driving vehicles only for children)
- Working in AFC Totton DP on a regular basis giving opportunities for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or healthcare within the provision

Full DBS checks with barred list checks will also be carried out on unpaid volunteers who regularly work unsupervised at AFC Totton DP and whose work means they have an opportunity for regular contact with children.

Other staff, contractors and supervised volunteers who have opportunities for regular contact with children but do not carry out a regulated activity will be subject to an enhanced DBS check but **not** barred list checks.

Decisions on whether a person is carrying out a regulated activity or whether their role provides opportunities for regular contact with children requiring a DBS check will be made by AFC Totton Directors

AFC Totton DP has robust procedures for day to day staff management and supervision and clear procedures for reporting and acting on concerns. Staff carrying out roles involving regulated activity will be suitably supervised on a regular basis by other staff.

AFC Totton DP will expect successful candidates to provide a DBS certificate as soon as practicable following appointment so that information on the disclosure can be considered.

AFC Totton DP will consider any disclosures to decide if the candidate is suitable to work with children and will take into account the number and nature of disclosures, their seriousness and when offences occurred. Decisions not to appoint following DBS disclosure will be carefully recorded giving details of how the decision was reached.

AFC Totton DP will follow the DBS code of practice available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers>

AFC Totton DP ensure that all DBS checks carried out on staff are renewed after 3 years of the original DBS disclosure.

Checks for volunteers

The directors will ensure that the following are carried out in relation to unpaid volunteers such as parents who accompany students on school outings or provide help in the provision:

- All volunteers will be required to undergo a recruitment process, with references, DBS and other checks and interviews taken out as appropriate and proportional to the duties assigned to them.
- The directors will carry out a risk assessment to establish whether a volunteer will be carrying out a regulated activity and decide what level of checks are needed in relation to their proposed role.
- Volunteers who are carrying out a regulated activity, for example being left unsupervised with children or providing personal care to children will be subject to an enhanced DBS check, including barred list information.
- New volunteers who are not carrying out regulated activity but who have an opportunity for regular contact with children will be subject to an enhanced DBS check but not a barred list check.
- For other volunteers who are not carrying out regulated activity and do not have regular contact with children, the directors will carry out a risk assessment to decide whether standard DBS check should be carried out depending on:
 - The nature of the role
 - What information is already known about the volunteer
 - What references from work or volunteering activity the volunteer has provided regarding suitability
 - Whether the role is eligible for an DBS check.
- AFC Totton DP will ensure that all volunteers are competent to carry out the duties assigned to them and are only assigned duties that are suitable to their qualification and experience.
- Volunteers carrying out regulated activity but for whom a DBS check has not been carried out will be suitably supervised by staff at all times at a level that ensures the safety of students.
- All volunteers will be fully inducted in relation to all school policies and procedures.

Induction and training

- AFC Totton DP directors will ensure that all staff are fully inducted so that they are aware of AFC Totton DP's commitment to the safety and welfare of students and have a full understanding of their safeguarding role.
- As part of their induction, staff will be expected to read and be aware of their role in implementing the following:
 - Part 1 or Annexe A of the statutory guidance *Keeping children safe in education (2023)*
 - "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused" guidance (DfE 2015)
 - The safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures
 - AFC Totton DP's behaviour policy
 - The staff code of conduct
 - The *Children missing or absent from education* policy.
- Staff will be asked to confirm in writing that they have received and read all relevant staff policies.
- The designated safeguarding lead will ensure that all staff are fully inducted with regard to AFC Totton DP's child protection procedures and that they receive safeguarding and child protection training on a two-yearly basis.
- The director will keep a central record of all statutory and other training undertaken by staff members and volunteers.
- AFC Totton DP staff will receive multi-agency safeguarding training.
- As well as basic safeguarding training, the designated safeguarding lead and their deputy will receive specific training on their role and other relevant multi-agency training courses.
- AFC Totton DP staff will receive regular and timely updates on child protection and safeguarding issues via the designated safeguarding lead in order to ensure they remain up to date with new legislation.

Conduct and safe teaching practice

AFC Totton DP staff and volunteers will always set a good example to students through their own conduct and behaviour and aims to protect them from the risk of allegations being made against them by ensuring they maintain high standards of professionalism and appropriate boundaries.

AFC Totton DP expects staff to:

- Put the welfare of the student first at all times
- Take any complaints or disclosures by students seriously and act on them accordingly
- Take advice from the designated safeguarding lead when deciding on what action to take
- Challenge inappropriate or discriminatory language and behaviour by students

- Be aware of the increased risk to vulnerable students such as those with SEND
- be vigilant to:
 - Bullying and abuse between students (child on child abuse) and take the view that it may be happening even though it is not reported
 - Any bullying or peer abuse taking place online or out of provision
 - Any risks to students from extra-familial harm, criminal or sexual exploitation or serious violence.

Dealing with concerns and allegations regarding staff

AFC Totton DP has additional policies that set out what action is to be taken where concerns arise or an allegation is reported in relation to members of staff, agency staff, volunteers and contractors.

Dealing with low level concerns

A low-level concern involves incidents that do not reach the threshold of harm but which may indicate inappropriate behaviour that is inconsistent with expected standards of staff conduct.

Where staff conduct falls below expected standards giving rise to concerns about appropriate boundaries and professional conduct, these should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead who will liaise with the directors or other relevant members of staff to take appropriate action under safeguarding and staff conduct policies in order to help the staff member address issues and improve conduct. It is for the directors to decide on what action will be taken in consultation with the designated safeguarding lead or any other relevant member of staff.

Concerns about supply teachers or contractors will also be reported to the designated safeguarding lead who will liaise with their agency so that any patterns of behaviour may be identified and appropriate action taken.

Examples of behaviour and conduct that may be dealt with under these procedures include being over-friendly with students, using inappropriate language, contacting students via their social media sites or other behaviour that could be misinterpreted and lead to allegations against the staff member.

In the interests of openness and transparency, AFC Totton DP will also encourage staff members to raise incidents where they felt their actions may have fallen below expected standards and may have been misinterpreted or compromising so that they have an opportunity to reflect on their behaviour.

The designated safeguarding lead will keep a record of all low-level concerns about staff members in order to identify patterns of behaviour so that appropriate action can be taken in a timely manner, for example referral to the DOFA.

Records will include the nature of any complaint or concern, the name of the person raising the concern (unless they request anonymity) and the action taken. The records will be confidential and information may be included in any reference.

Where it is unclear whether the threshold of harm has been reached with regard to an incident, the designated safeguarding lead may contact the DOFA for advice on a “no names” basis in order to decide if concerns meet the harm threshold and should be referred to the DOFA and dealt with under the allegations procedures (see below). AFC Totton DP may also refer to the DOFA network

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thresholds document for guidance on what incidents may require a referral to the DOFA.

Dealing with allegations

An **allegation** involves incidents that may have met the threshold of harm where the person has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or:
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or:
behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children and/or:
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

In the event that an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, including a member of staff who is not directly employed by AFC Totton DP such as a supply teacher or contractor, and the allegation involves possible harm to a student or raises questions about the suitability of the staff member to work with children, AFC Totton DP will follow "*Guidance for schools on dealing with allegations against a member of staff*".

Date of review February 2025