



Severn Mentoring Safer Recruitment Policy *(Community Mentoring & Alternative Provision – September 2025)*

1. Policy Statement

At **Severn Mentoring**, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is central to everything we do.

We recognise that our mentors and tutors work closely with vulnerable children and young people, often in community or one-to-one settings, and that robust safer recruitment practices are vital to keeping those learners safe.

Our recruitment procedures are designed to deter, identify and prevent individuals who may pose a risk from working within our provision. We follow the core principles of safer recruitment as outlined in:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2025)* – as best practice for all child-facing providers
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975)*
- *Equality Act 2010*
- *Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR*

This policy applies to all staff, mentors, tutors, volunteers, and contractors engaged in Severn Mentoring's operations across Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Monmouthshire.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Severn Mentoring recruits only individuals who are suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Recruitment processes are consistent, transparent, and legally compliant.
- Every stage of recruitment reflects our safeguarding responsibilities.
- Appropriate checks and supervision are in place for all staff and volunteers.

This policy covers:

- Permanent and fixed-term staff
- Mentors and tutors (sessional, part-time or contracted)
- Volunteers
- Anyone providing services on behalf of Severn Mentoring

3. Our Commitment to Safer Practice

Severn Mentoring is committed to:

- Recruiting and retaining staff who share our values of safeguarding, respect and opportunity.
- Embedding safeguarding and child protection awareness in all recruitment materials and discussions.
- Ensuring all staff understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Creating an open culture where concerns can be raised and acted upon swiftly.

All recruitment materials must include the following safeguarding statement:

"Severn Mentoring is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All appointments are subject to safer-recruitment checks, including enhanced DBS clearance, verified references and qualification checks."

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Management Team (SMT):

- Has overall responsibility for ensuring safer-recruitment procedures are followed.
- Approves all appointments and oversees the Single Central Record (SCR).

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Ensures that safeguarding considerations are embedded throughout recruitment.
- Oversees and risk-assesses any disclosures from the DBS or references.

Recruitment Leads / Line Managers:

- Conduct interviews, verify information, and maintain appropriate documentation.
- Ensure that at least one member of every interview panel has completed **accredited Safer Recruitment Training**.

All Staff Involved in Recruitment:

- Must be familiar with this policy and uphold confidentiality, fairness and equal-opportunity principles.
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5. Recruitment Process

5.1 Vacancy Identification

Before advertising any role:

- A clear job description and person specification will be created.
 - The job description must include explicit reference to safeguarding and promoting welfare.
 - All roles are risk-assessed to determine if they involve **regulated activity** under the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*.
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5.2 Advertising and Promotion

- All adverts will include Severn Mentoring's safeguarding statement.
 - They will specify that an enhanced DBS and references are required.
 - Adverts will reflect equality and diversity commitments under the *Equality Act 2010*.
 - Job adverts may be shared publicly (e.g. social media, job boards) or privately via partner schools/councils.
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5.3 Applications

- Candidates must complete a full **Severn Mentoring Application Form**.
- CVs alone are **not accepted**.

- Applications require:
 - Full employment history with explanations for any gaps.
 - Two professional referees (one being the most recent employer).
 - Declaration of any criminal convictions, cautions or investigations (including those that are 'spent', if the role is exempt under the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*).

Incomplete forms or gaps in history will trigger further enquiry.

5.4 Shortlisting

- Shortlisting is conducted by at least two staff, one trained in Safer Recruitment.
 - Candidates are assessed against the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification.
 - Employment gaps, discrepancies, or unclear information are flagged and followed up at interview.
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5.5 Interviews

- At least two interviewers will be present.
- At least one interviewer must hold up-to-date **Safer Recruitment Training** certification.
- Interviews will include:
 - Questions exploring motivation for working with young people.
 - Situational safeguarding questions.
 - Discussion around professional boundaries and confidentiality.
 - Clarification of employment gaps or references.

Notes are recorded for transparency, and decision-making is evidence-based.

6. Pre-Employment Checks

No offer of employment or engagement will be confirmed until all the following checks are satisfactorily completed.

6.1 Identity Verification

- Candidates must provide original documents confirming identity (photo ID and proof of address).
- Details must match those provided on the application form.

6.2 Right to Work

- Original documentation confirming the right to work in the UK must be provided.
- A copy is retained securely on file.

6.3 Enhanced DBS Check

- All staff and volunteers in regulated activity must hold an **Enhanced DBS certificate** (including barred list check if relevant).
- Where a DBS reveals information, a formal **risk assessment** will be completed by the DSL before any decision is made.
- No staff may begin unsupervised work until DBS clearance is confirmed.

6.4 Written References

- A minimum of **two written references** are obtained before appointment.
- One must be from the most recent employer.
- References must be verified by direct contact (phone or email) with the referee.
- References are checked for consistency with the application and any discrepancies are explored.

6.5 Qualification and Experience Verification

- Original certificates for all relevant qualifications must be seen and copied for the personnel file.
- If verification is delayed, provisional evidence may be accepted pending formal confirmation.

6.6 Employment History and Gaps

- Gaps or anomalies are investigated and documented, with explanations required from candidates.

6.7 Prohibition or Suitability Checks (where applicable)

- For teaching or tuition roles, Severn Mentoring may conduct Teaching Regulation Agency checks or ensure individuals are not barred from working with children.

6.8 Medical Fitness

- Candidates must confirm that they are physically and mentally fit to perform their role safely and effectively.
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7. Induction and Probationary Periods

All new staff:

- Receive a structured **induction** including safeguarding policy training, reporting procedures, and professional boundaries.
- Are introduced to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their line manager.
- Complete a **probationary period** (normally 3–6 months), during which:
 - Conduct, performance, and safeguarding awareness are reviewed.
 - Support, supervision, and feedback are provided.
 - Any concerns are addressed immediately with the DSL or senior management.

Staff are not confirmed in post until the probation period is successfully completed.

8. Ongoing Safeguarding Training and Supervision

- All staff must complete **initial safeguarding and child protection training** as part of induction.
 - **Annual refresher training** is mandatory.
 - Additional training is provided on areas such as Prevent, mental health, online safety, and managing disclosures.
 - Mentors and tutors receive **regular supervision**, focusing on reflective safeguarding practice and learner wellbeing.
 - Training is tracked and recorded on the central training log.
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9. Record Keeping and Single Central Record (SCR)

Severn Mentoring maintains a secure **Single Central Record (SCR)** which includes:

- Identity and right to work verification
- DBS certificate number and issue date

- References received and verified
- Qualification checks
- Date of Safer Recruitment training for interviewers
- Record of safeguarding and Prevent training

All information is handled in accordance with the *Data Protection Act 2018* and *UK GDPR*. Files are retained securely and accessed only by authorised personnel.

10. Agency and Supply Staff

If Severn Mentoring engages agency or supply staff:

- The supplying organisation must provide written confirmation of completed vetting checks (including DBS and references).
 - Identity and DBS details will still be verified directly by Severn Mentoring before the individual begins work.
 - Agencies used must comply with DfE and REC safer recruitment standards.
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11. Volunteers and Work Placements

Volunteers or work placement students are subject to:

- Completion of an application and interview.
 - Two references and a risk assessment.
 - A DBS check (enhanced if in regulated activity).
 - Induction and supervision by a designated mentor.
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12. Data Protection and Confidentiality

All recruitment information is processed lawfully under the *Data Protection Act 2018* and *UK GDPR*.

Personal data is stored securely, used only for recruitment purposes, and retained in accordance with Severn Mentoring's Data Protection Policy.

Applicants have the right to access and correct their data.

13. Monitoring and Review

- The policy is reviewed **annually** or following legislative or organisational changes.
 - Recruitment processes are audited to ensure compliance and continuous improvement.
 - Feedback from staff and external partners is considered in each review cycle.
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14. Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
 - **Whistleblowing Policy**
 - **Code of Conduct**
 - **Data Protection and Privacy Policy**
 - **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy**
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15. Policy Ownership

Policy Lead: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Rich Kear

Deputy DSL: Jack Fowler + Josh Carter

Approved by: Severn Mentoring Senior Management Team

Review Date: 01/09/2025

Next Review Due: 01/09/2026