STEP IN SUPPORT SERVICES

Safer Recruitment, DBS & Staff Suitability Policy

Supporting Reintegration Every Step of the Year

Policy owner	Step In Support Services Directors
Approved by	Directors
Version	1.0
Effective from	October 2026
Review due	October 2027 or earlier if guidance/legislation changes

1. Purpose and scope

Step In will recruit and deploy people who are suitable to work with children and young people and will maintain proportionate, documented checks before unsupervised work begins.

This policy applies to all Step In directors, employees, sessional practitioners, associates, volunteers and contractors. It applies to work delivered in schools, homes, community venues, online where agreed, and other off-site locations.

Step In supports young people aged 11-18 through bespoke reintegration programmes combining attendance and engagement work, therapeutic/wellbeing support, educational support, social and personal development, family liaison and multi-agency working.

2. Core requirements

- Roles involving direct work with children will have a clear role description, safeguarding responsibilities and person specification.
- Identity, right to work, employment history and relevant qualifications will be checked and recorded.
- References will be obtained and scrutinised, with gaps or inconsistencies explored.
- Enhanced DBS checks, including barred-list information where the role is eligible and constitutes regulated activity, will be obtained before unsupervised work.
- Where relevant, overseas checks and additional suitability checks will be considered.
- At least one interviewer/decision-maker will have safer recruitment knowledge appropriate to the organisation's activity.
- Self-disclosure and ongoing duty-to-report arrangements will be used to identify changes that may affect suitability.

3. Contractors, associates and volunteers

The level of checking will reflect the role and legal eligibility for checks. Step In will not rely solely on another organisation's assurance where it is responsible for deployment; written evidence of relevant checks will be obtained and retained where appropriate.

4. Recruitment process

1. Advert/role information states Step In's commitment to safeguarding.
2. Application/CV history is reviewed and gaps explored.
3. Interview assesses values, boundaries, safeguarding judgement and suitability for 1:1/outreach work.
4. Identity, qualifications, references and required vetting are completed.
5. Induction includes safeguarding, conduct, lone working, data protection and reporting procedures.
6. No practitioner undertakes unsupervised work until required checks and risk controls are confirmed.

5. Ongoing suitability

- Annual safeguarding declarations and policy refreshers.
- DBS Update Service checks where used and lawful.
- Supervision/management oversight, including discussion of boundaries and concerns.
- Prompt review of allegations, low-level concerns, complaints, conduct issues or information that may affect suitability.
- Immediate restriction or suspension from direct work where necessary to protect children while concerns are assessed.

6. Recruitment records

Step In will maintain a secure central record of required checks for its workforce, proportionate to its status and commissioning requirements. Schools/commissioners may receive written safeguarding assurance confirming that appropriate checks have been completed; unnecessary copies of sensitive identity documents will not be shared.