

SPARK ACADEMY

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Safer Recruitment Policy is to ensure that all recruitment, selection and vetting procedures within Spark Academy Tutoring promote the safety and welfare of children and young people.

Spark Academy Tutoring is committed to safeguarding children and young people and maintaining robust recruitment practices designed to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children. Recruitment and vetting procedures are undertaken in accordance with relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and safer recruitment principles.

Spark Academy Tutoring primarily engages tutors on a self-employed/freelance basis rather than as employees. Regardless of employment status, all tutors engaged to deliver education on behalf of Spark Academy Tutoring are required to successfully complete our safer recruitment and vetting procedures before commencing work.

No tutor will be permitted to work with a child or young person until the required pre-engagement checks have been satisfactorily completed.

2. Recruitment and Selection

All prospective tutors undergo a structured recruitment and selection process to assess their suitability to work with children and young people.

This includes:

- Reviewing the applicant's qualifications, experience and employment history.
- An interview with Spark Academy Tutoring to assess their suitability for the role, professional experience, approach to working with children and young people, safeguarding awareness and professional conduct.
- Reviewing employment history and identifying any unexplained gaps in employment.
- Discussing and seeking clarification regarding gaps in employment where appropriate.
- Obtaining and verifying two professional references.
- Completing identity and Right to Work checks.
- Completing the required DBS and Children's Barred List checks.
- Completing a prohibition from teaching check.
- Verifying relevant professional qualifications.
- Completing overseas checks where appropriate.

Any concerns or discrepancies identified during the recruitment and vetting process will be explored before an individual is approved to provide tuition.

The Director has completed Safer Recruitment training and oversees Spark Academy Tutoring's recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that appropriate safeguarding and safer recruitment standards are consistently applied.

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3. Identity, Address and Right to Work Checks

Tutors are required to provide appropriate documentation to confirm their identity. This may include a valid passport, driving licence or other acceptable photographic identification. Appropriate documentation is also obtained to verify an individual's address where required. Spark Academy Tutoring verifies that individuals have the appropriate Right to Work in the UK before they are approved to provide services on behalf of the organisation. Relevant evidence of these checks is securely maintained as part of the tutor's recruitment and compliance records.

4. Employment History and References

Spark Academy Tutoring reviews the employment history provided by prospective tutors as part of the recruitment process.

Any unexplained gaps in employment are identified and discussed with the applicant. Where necessary, further information or clarification will be requested before the recruitment process is completed.

Two professional references are obtained and checked as part of the safer recruitment process. References are used to support the assessment of an individual's suitability, professional conduct and experience.

Any concerns or inconsistencies arising from a reference will be considered and investigated as appropriate before the tutor is approved.

5. DBS and Children's Barred List Checks

All tutors working on behalf of Spark Academy Tutoring are required to hold an Enhanced DBS check which includes a Children's Barred List check.

Tutors must either:

- Hold an appropriate DBS certificate dated within the previous three years; or
- Be registered with the DBS Update Service, with an appropriate status check completed and recorded by Spark Academy Tutoring.

Where a tutor is registered with the DBS Update Service, Spark Academy Tutoring carries out and records a status check annually.

Where a tutor relies on a paper DBS certificate rather than the Update Service, the certificate must be dated within the previous three years. A new appropriate DBS check will be required before this period expires.

Evidence of DBS checks is recorded securely within Spark Academy Tutoring's compliance records and Single Central Record.

A tutor will not be permitted to undertake tuition where the required DBS and Children's Barred List requirements have not been satisfactorily met.

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6. Prohibition from Teaching Checks

Spark Academy Tutoring completes a prohibition from teaching check for all tutors as part of its safer recruitment procedures.

The outcome of this check is recorded within the tutor's compliance records and Single Central Record.

Where an individual is prohibited from teaching or otherwise considered unsuitable to undertake the proposed work, they will not be approved to provide tuition on behalf of Spark Academy Tutoring.

7. Qualifications and Professional Status

All tutors engaged by Spark Academy Tutoring are required to hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), regardless of the type of tuition or educational provision they are delivering.

As part of the safer recruitment process:

- Evidence of each tutor's QTS is obtained and verified before they are approved to provide tuition.
- Relevant teaching qualifications and professional credentials are checked as part of the recruitment and vetting process.
- Evidence of these checks is securely retained within the tutor's compliance records.
- QTS verification is recorded on Spark Academy Tutoring's Single Central Record.

This requirement ensures that all tuition delivered through Spark Academy Tutoring is provided by appropriately qualified teaching professionals who have met the required professional standards.

8. Overseas Checks

Where an applicant has lived or worked outside the UK and additional checks are considered appropriate, Spark Academy Tutoring will seek relevant overseas criminal record or other appropriate safeguarding checks where these are available and proportionate. Any information obtained will be considered alongside the other safer recruitment checks when determining an individual's suitability to work with children and young people.

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9. Single Central Record

Spark Academy Tutoring maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) containing details of the relevant recruitment, identity, safeguarding and vetting checks completed for tutors.

The SCR records relevant information including, where applicable:

- Identity checks.
- Right to Work checks.
- Enhanced DBS and Children's Barred List checks.
- DBS certificate/check dates and Update Service status.
- Prohibition from teaching checks.
- Qualification and QTS checks.
- Reference checks.
- Overseas checks where applicable.

The Single Central Record is securely maintained and regularly reviewed and updated by Spark Academy Tutoring's administrative team to ensure recruitment and compliance information remains accurate and current.

Access to the SCR is restricted to authorised personnel.

10. Induction, Policies and Procedures

Following successful completion of the recruitment and vetting process, tutors receive Spark Academy Tutoring's relevant policies, procedures and professional expectations as part of their induction and onboarding.

Tutors are expected to read, understand and work in accordance with the organisation's safeguarding requirements, policies and procedures throughout their engagement with Spark Academy Tutoring.

Safeguarding responsibilities and expected professional standards are reinforced through induction, communication and ongoing compliance arrangements.

11. Data Management and Confidentiality

Personal information obtained during recruitment, including identification documents, DBS information, references, qualification evidence and other vetting information, is handled securely and confidentially in accordance with Spark Academy Tutoring's Data Protection and Information Management Policy.

Access to recruitment and safeguarding records is restricted to authorised personnel who require the information to perform their role.

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12. Ongoing Compliance and Monitoring

Although tutors are predominantly engaged by Spark Academy Tutoring on a self-employed/freelance basis, they are required to maintain appropriate safeguarding and professional credentials throughout their engagement.

Spark Academy Tutoring monitors relevant recruitment and safeguarding information through its Single Central Record and administrative compliance processes.

DBS Update Service checks are completed annually for tutors registered with the service. Where a tutor relies upon a paper DBS certificate, an appropriate certificate must be dated within the previous three years.

Tutors are expected to inform Spark Academy Tutoring of any change in circumstances that could affect their suitability to work with children or their ability to meet the organisation's safeguarding requirements.

Where required checks or documentation are no longer satisfactory or current, the tutor may be suspended from providing tuition until the matter has been appropriately resolved.

13. Sharing Information

Relevant evidence of recruitment, safeguarding and qualification checks may be shared with schools, Local Authorities, commissioning bodies or other appropriate educational partners where there is a legitimate safeguarding, commissioning or legal reason for doing so.

Information will only be shared where necessary and appropriate and in accordance with applicable data protection requirements and Spark Academy Tutoring's Data Protection and Information Management Policy.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to statutory safeguarding guidance, legislation or Spark Academy Tutoring's recruitment procedures.

Reviewed by: Becky Kowalski

Position: Director, Spark Academy Tutoring

Review Date: August 2026

Next Review Date: August 2027