DERBYSHIRE DRAGONS MARTIAL ARTS

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY – VOLUNTEERS AND COACHES

Policy owner: Derbyshire Dragons Martial Arts
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Date of last review: 10 November 2026
Review date: November 2027
Applies to: All volunteers, assistant coaches, coaches and lead coaches.

1. Purpose of this policy

Derbyshire Dragons Martial Arts is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and positive environment for all children, young people and adults participating in club activities.

This policy establishes the procedures for recruiting, selecting, appointing and supervising volunteers and coaches.

Our aim is to ensure that:

- All individuals working within the club are suitable for their responsibilities.
- Children and young people are protected from harm.
- Recruitment decisions are fair, consistent and appropriate.
- All volunteers and coaches understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Appropriate checks, training and supervision are in place.
- Young people are given opportunities to develop leadership and coaching skills safely.

This policy applies regardless of whether an individual is paid or unpaid.

2. Recruitment categories

Derbyshire Dragons recognises the following roles:

Junior Volunteer (Under 18)
A young person assisting with club activities, equipment, demonstrations or general class support.

Junior Assistant Coach (Under 18)
A young person helping deliver elements of a class under the supervision of an approved adult coach.

Adult Volunteer (18+)
An adult assisting with club activities, administration, events or general class support.

Assistant Coach
An individual assisting with teaching, demonstrations, class management and student development.

Coach
An individual authorised to deliver coaching sessions or allocated sections of training.

Lead Coach
An individual with overall responsibility for the safe running of a class, venue or training session, including the supervision of other coaches and volunteers.

The responsibilities assigned to each individual must reflect their age, experience, qualifications and suitability.

3. Recruitment of under-18s

Derbyshire Dragons actively encourages young people to develop leadership, confidence and coaching skills through volunteering.

However, additional safeguards must be in place when recruiting individuals under the age of 18.

Before commencing their role:

- Permission must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian.
- Their suitability, maturity and experience must be assessed.
- Their responsibilities must be clearly explained.
- They must receive appropriate safeguarding induction and guidance.
- They must agree to follow the club's Code of Conduct.
- They must understand how to report safeguarding concerns.

Supervision requirements

Under-18 volunteers and assistant coaches:

- Must be supervised by an appropriate adult coach.
- Must never be left solely responsible for a class or group of children.
- Must not undertake unsupervised one-to-one coaching.
- Must not be responsible for safeguarding decisions or handling allegations.
- Must not be placed in situations beyond their experience or maturity.
- Must be given clear boundaries regarding communication with students.

DBS requirements for under-18s

The club will follow the legal DBS eligibility framework.

- Individuals under 16 cannot apply for a DBS check.
- Individuals aged 16 or 17 may be required to obtain an appropriate DBS check where their actual duties meet the legal eligibility criteria.

- A DBS check will not be requested simply because an individual volunteers or holds an assistant coaching title.
- Where a junior volunteer does not undertake activities that qualify for a DBS check, no DBS application will be requested.
- All junior volunteers must remain subject to the club's safeguarding and supervision arrangements regardless of DBS eligibility.

Insurance

Junior volunteers and assistant coaches are not required to hold individual coach insurance.

They must operate within the club's authorised arrangements and the club must ensure its organisational insurance covers their involvement.

4. Recruitment of adults aged 18 and over

All adults wishing to volunteer or undertake coaching responsibilities must complete the club's recruitment and suitability process.

This includes:

- Completion of an application or volunteer/coach registration form.
- Confirmation of identity.
- Discussion of relevant experience and qualifications.
- Consideration of previous coaching, teaching or childcare experience.
- Declaration of relevant safeguarding information.
- Agreement to follow club policies and procedures.
- Completion of appropriate safeguarding induction.

References may be requested where appropriate, particularly for individuals taking on positions of greater responsibility.

DBS requirements for adults

Derbyshire Dragons will comply with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) eligibility framework applicable in England.

A DBS check is not automatically required simply because someone is aged 18 or over.

The appropriate level of check will be determined by the individual's actual duties, the people they work with and the frequency of their activities.

For roles involving coaching children, the following framework applies:

A. Regulated activity with children

Where an adult coach or volunteer teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children on more than three days within a 30-day period, they will generally be undertaking regulated activity with children.

The same applies where the relevant activity takes place overnight between 2am and 6am with the opportunity for face-to-face contact.

For these roles, the appropriate check is:

- Enhanced DBS check.
- Children's Barred List check.

This applies to both paid and unpaid individuals.

B. Coaching children more than once but below the regulated activity threshold

Where an individual undertakes eligible coaching activities more than once but does not meet the regulated activity frequency requirements, they may be eligible for:

- Enhanced DBS check without Children's Barred List information.

C. Occasional volunteers and other supporting roles

Individuals who do not undertake eligible teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision activities will not automatically qualify for an Enhanced DBS check.

A Basic DBS check may be considered as part of the club's recruitment process where appropriate.

D. Adult volunteers

The same DBS eligibility requirements apply to adult volunteers as to paid coaches.

Since 1 September 2026, the previous supervision exemption for qualifying volunteer activities with children has been removed. Regularly undertaking regulated activity cannot be exempted simply because another coach is supervising the volunteer.

Important: Standard, Enhanced and Barred List checks must only be requested where the role is legally eligible. The club will assess each role before submitting an application.

Where a DBS check is required under the club's recruitment arrangements, the individual must complete it before undertaking the relevant duties.

5. Recruitment and selection process

All new volunteers and coaches must follow the club's recruitment process.

Stage 1 – Expression of interest

The individual should express an interest in volunteering or coaching.

The club should establish:

- Why they wish to volunteer or coach.
- Their martial arts experience.
- Previous coaching or teaching experience.
- Their preferred responsibilities.
- Their availability and commitment.

Stage 2 – Suitability assessment

The club will consider:

- Attitude and behaviour.
- Reliability and commitment.
- Ability to work appropriately with children and adults.
- Understanding of boundaries and safeguarding.
- Maturity and suitability for the proposed role.

Stage 3 – Checks and approval

Before commencing their duties:

- Identity must be confirmed.
- Appropriate DBS checks must be completed where legally eligible and required.
- Parent or guardian consent must be obtained for under-18s.
- Relevant registration documentation must be completed.
- The individual must receive approval from club management.

Stage 4 – Induction

All successful applicants must receive an induction covering:

- The club's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- The club's Code of Conduct.
- Appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.
- Reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Emergency procedures.
- Communication with students and parents.
- Their individual responsibilities and limitations.

6. Supervision and responsibilities

All volunteers and coaches must work within their approved responsibilities.

Role	Supervision requirements
Under-18 volunteer	Direct supervision by an approved adult coach.
Under-18 assistant coach	Direct supervision; cannot independently take responsibility for a class.
Adult volunteer	Supervision appropriate to assigned duties.
Adult assistant coach	Works under the direction of an authorised coach or lead coach.
Coach	Delivers allocated training within approved responsibilities.

Lead coach	Responsible for class delivery, safety and supervision of assistants.

No volunteer or coach should:

- Place themselves in inappropriate or unnecessary one-to-one situations with children.
- Exchange inappropriate personal messages with students.
- Use personal social media to establish inappropriate relationships with students.
- Undertake physical contact beyond what is necessary and appropriate for martial arts coaching.
- Ignore or fail to report safeguarding concerns.
- Allow an individual to undertake responsibilities beyond their approved role.

7. Insurance requirements

Derbyshire Dragons operates a designated lead coach system.

The club's individual insurance requirements are:

Lead Coaches

- Must hold appropriate individual coach insurance.
- Must ensure their insurance covers the activities they deliver.
- Must provide evidence of appropriate insurance to club management.
- Must maintain valid cover throughout their appointment.

Assistant Coaches and Volunteers

- Are not required to hold individual coach insurance.
- Must operate within their authorised responsibilities.
- Must work under the club's supervision and insurance arrangements.

Club responsibilities

Derbyshire Dragons must maintain appropriate organisational insurance and ensure that its policy covers its activities and the involvement of volunteers, assistant coaches and coaches, including any applicable age restrictions and exclusions.

8. Safeguarding and reporting concerns

Every volunteer and coach has a responsibility to protect children and young people.

Any concerns involving:

- Inappropriate behaviour.
- Bullying, harassment or discrimination.
- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

- Neglect.
- Breaches of professional boundaries.
- Behaviour that could place a student at risk.

Must be reported immediately to the club's Safeguarding Lead.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mr Iwan Eley

Email: safeguarding@derbyshiredragons.com

All concerns must be taken seriously and handled in accordance with the club's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

No volunteer or coach should investigate allegations themselves or promise confidentiality to anyone reporting a concern.

Where a child is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted.

9. Ongoing suitability and review

Safer recruitment does not end when someone is appointed.

Derbyshire Dragons will:

- Monitor the conduct and suitability of all volunteers and coaches.
- Provide ongoing safeguarding guidance and training.
- Review responsibilities when roles change.
- Address concerns about behaviour or suitability promptly.
- Review supervision arrangements regularly.
- Ensure relevant changes in circumstances are reported to club management.

Any individual whose suitability is questioned may have their duties restricted or suspended while concerns are considered.

Where a person is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left, because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to children, the club will consider and fulfil any applicable legal duty to refer the individual to DBS.

10. Leaving a role

When a volunteer or coach leaves the club:

- Access to club systems and communication channels must be removed where appropriate.
- Any club property must be returned.
- Access to student information must be withdrawn.
- Outstanding safeguarding concerns must be addressed in accordance with club procedures.

11. Policy approval and review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, safeguarding guidance or club operating arrangements.

All volunteers and coaches are expected to read, understand and comply with this policy.

Failure to follow the policy may result in removal from volunteering or coaching duties.

12. Recruitment requirements summary

Requirement	Under 18	Over 18
Application/registration	Yes	Yes
Identity confirmation	Yes	Yes
Parent/guardian consent	Yes	No
Suitability assessment	Yes	Yes
DBS check	If legally eligible (16+)	If legally eligible
Safeguarding induction	Yes	Yes
Supervision	Direct adult supervision	Appropriate to role
Individual coach insurance	No	Lead coaches only
Club Code of Conduct	Yes	Yes

13. Legislative and guidance references

This policy has been prepared with reference to the following UK guidance applicable in England:

- Disclosure and Barring Service – DBS Checks in Sport: Working with Children (updated September 2026).
- Disclosure and Barring Service – Regulated Activity with Children (updated September 2026).
- Disclosure and Barring Service – Eligibility for Roles Working with Children (September 2026).
- DBS Guidance for Employers, Voluntary Organisations and Third Parties (updated October 2026).
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended.
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Exceptions Order 1975.
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- Data Protection Act 2018.

Policy statement: Derbyshire Dragons Martial Arts is committed to safer recruitment, responsible coaching and the protection of every child and young person involved in the club.