

Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy

Version 1.0 – Effective from 3rd November 2026
Next review due: 3rd November 2027
Approved by: Mama2Mama Board of Trustees

Employees, volunteers, trustees and relevant Café 51 roles

Version	1.0 – New policy
Date	3rd November 2026
Next review	3rd November 2027 (or earlier after a material change)
Status	Approved by Board of Trustees
Policy lead	Zuzana Fratrikova, Founder & CEO
Organisation	Mama2Mama Baby Essentials CIO | Charity No. 1199777
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1. Purpose and commitment

At Mama2Mama, the safety and dignity of the families we support come first. We recruit people carefully, fairly and consistently so that staff, volunteers and anyone working on our behalf understand their responsibilities and are suitable for the role they undertake.

This policy establishes proportionate safer recruitment steps across Mama2Mama's referral-led baby bank, donation warehouse, Café 51 community hub and associated events. It is a new policy, and implementation of each procedure is tracked through the checklist in Appendix B.

2. Scope and guiding principles

This policy applies to recruitment and appointment of employees, casual workers, volunteers, interns, students, trustees and relevant contractors where Mama2Mama controls selection or access to beneficiaries. Contracted organisations remain responsible for their own recruitment, subject to appropriate due diligence and written arrangements.

- Make decisions on role-related criteria and document them; apply the Equality Act 2010 and reasonable adjustments.
- Use proportionate safeguarding checks; do not assume every volunteer or café role is eligible for a DBS check.
- Respect applicants' privacy, confidentiality and rights under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Never allow a person to begin duties requiring mandatory checks or supervision until suitable safeguards are in place.

3. Governance and responsibility

The Board of Trustees retains overall accountability and approves this policy, recruitment arrangements for the CEO and trustees, and any exceptions requiring governance oversight. Zuzana Fratrikova, Founder & CEO, is the primary policy lead and coordinates recruitment practice, supported by relevant managers and trustees.

Where a recruitment decision, concern or potential conflict involves the CEO, an independent, unconflicted trustee must oversee the decision and record the rationale. All recruiting panel members must declare conflicts of interest; conflicted individuals must not participate in the affected decision.

4. Role planning and risk assessment

Before advertising or filling a vacancy, the recruiting lead prepares an up-to-date role description, person specification, reporting line, working location, hours, pay/expenses and safeguarding risk assessment. The assessment considers direct or unsupervised contact with children, adults at risk, confidential referral records, money, stock, driving, food handling and lone working.

A role-based DBS eligibility decision must be recorded before a check is requested. Eligibility depends on the actual activities, frequency and legal criteria, not simply on working for a children's charity or in a café. Where eligibility is unclear, seek appropriate DBS guidance before proceeding.

5. Advertising and applications

Advertisements should describe the role, essential criteria, commitment to safeguarding, selection stages, reasonable adjustments and the checks that are genuinely applicable. Recruitment should use consistent application information, not rely solely on informal introductions or personal recommendations.

Collect only information needed for selection. Give applicants an appropriate privacy notice and explain when references, identity/right-to-work checks or criminal-record checks may be requested.

6. Shortlisting and interviews

At least two suitable people should be involved in selection where practicable, particularly for safeguarding-sensitive or paid roles. Shortlist against published criteria, record reasons and ask consistent competency and safeguarding questions. Explore employment or volunteering gaps where relevant and proportionate, without making unsupported assumptions.

Verify qualifications and professional registration where essential to the role. Document selection outcomes, decision-makers and any declared conflict.

7. References and employment history

Obtain appropriate references before an unsupervised safeguarding-sensitive appointment, normally including a recent employer, supervisor or volunteer coordinator where relevant. A reference from a relative or close friend should not normally substitute for an independent referee. Follow up inconsistencies directly and document decisions.

For people with limited employment history, assess alternative evidence fairly and proportionately; do not automatically exclude applicants who have experienced unemployment or hardship.

8. Identity, right to work and DBS

Verify identity for all appointees as appropriate. Complete and record statutory right-to-work checks before employment begins where required; volunteering arrangements should be assessed correctly and not treated automatically as employment.

Request only the level of DBS check the role is legally eligible for, including barred-list information only where the role qualifies. Assess disclosures individually, confidentially and fairly, considering relevance, seriousness, time elapsed, explanation and role-specific risk. Do not keep DBS certificate copies unnecessarily; retain only permissible check metadata and decisions under an approved retention schedule.

DBS checks are one safeguarding tool, not a guarantee of suitability. Repeat checks or use of the Update Service should be based on role risk, consent and eligibility. Where a person is barred from regulated activity, do not permit them to undertake that activity.

9. Volunteers, placements and trustees

Volunteer roles must have clear duties, named supervision, appropriate references/checks based on risk, induction and boundaries. Volunteers at the donation warehouse should receive manual-handling, stock safety and incident-reporting instructions relevant to their tasks.

For trustee appointments, carry out eligibility and disqualification checks, obtain declarations of interests and follow the charity's governing document and Charity Commission requirements. Enhanced checks are not automatic for all trustees; assess applicable eligibility and any separate legal duties.

10. Café 51 and activities involving children

Café 51 is a community hub and stay-and-play venue. Recruitment checks must distinguish ordinary café customer-facing work from duties involving regulated activity or responsibility for children. Parents/carers normally remain responsible for children at stay-and-play sessions unless a separately authorised supervised activity is arranged.

For facilitators and external activity providers, agree safeguarding responsibilities, supervision, insurance and role-appropriate checks in advance. Confirm food safety training and other competency requirements for food-handling roles. Do not advertise a session as supervised childcare without confirming the relevant legal and operational requirements.

11. Conditional offers and starting work

Offers should be conditional on satisfactory checks relevant to the role. The recruiting lead completes a pre-start checklist and records any risk-based supervision arrangements. If exceptional early commencement is proposed, no unsupervised regulated activity may take place before required checks and approvals, and the exception must be approved and documented by an appropriate senior decision-maker or trustee.

12. Induction, probation and supervision

All appointees receive an induction covering safeguarding, professional boundaries, confidentiality and GDPR, equality and inclusion, health and safety, whistleblowing, complaints, incident reporting, role expectations and who to contact for help.

Employees should receive a documented probation or introductory review consistent with their contract. Volunteers receive proportionate check-ins and supervision. Training, concerns and agreed development actions are recorded securely.

13. Allegations and unsuitable conduct

Any safeguarding allegation or concern about a candidate, employee or volunteer must be managed under the Safeguarding Policy and relevant statutory referral arrangements, not resolved solely through recruitment or disciplinary procedures. Where applicable, seek advice from the local authority designated officer (LADO), police or safeguarding services.

Consider legal duties to refer to the DBS where the relevant conditions are met, and Charity Commission serious-incident reporting where required. Preserve evidence, restrict access to records and avoid prejudging allegations.

14. Equality, reasonable adjustments and confidentiality

Applicants must not be disadvantaged because of protected characteristics. Provide reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and use accessible communications. Sensitive recruitment information is available only to authorised decision-makers and retained according to a documented retention schedule; do not place recruitment files in general volunteer or café folders.

15. Contractors and agency workers

Before engaging an agency or external provider, establish who carries out selection, references, right-to-work and safeguarding checks, and obtain suitable written assurance where relevant. Mama2Mama must still assess on-site access, supervision, safeguarding boundaries and incident reporting.

16. Recordkeeping, monitoring and review

Maintain an access-controlled recruitment record containing the approved role description, shortlisting/interview notes, checks completed, decisions, conflicts, induction and review dates. Review recruitment practice annually for consistency, equality, safeguarding learning and compliance. The Board reviews this policy by 3rd November 2027 or sooner following significant changes or incidents.

Appendix A – Safer recruitment checklist

- ☐ Role description and safeguarding/DBS eligibility assessment approved
- ☐ Recruitment criteria, advert and privacy information prepared
- ☐ Conflicts declared by recruitment decision-makers
- ☐ Shortlisting and interview decisions documented
- ☐ References and essential qualifications verified as appropriate
- ☐ Identity and statutory right-to-work checks completed where required
- ☐ DBS check obtained only if eligible; outcome risk-assessed confidentially
- ☐ Conditional offer confirmed and safeguarding restrictions agreed
- ☐ Induction, supervisor, training and probation/check-in dates set
- ☐ Recruitment record stored securely; retention date recorded

Appendix B – Trustee implementation actions

- [ ] Confirm the independent trustee route for CEO-related appointments (Miroslava Zverbikova, Chair of Trustees)
- [ ] Confirm role-by-role DBS eligibility matrix and safeguarding supervision arrangements
- [ ] Confirm recruitment file storage, privacy notice and retention periods
- [ ] Approve recruitment delegation, offer and reference templates
- [ ] Check Café 51 facilitators' and external providers' written safeguarding responsibilities
- [ ] Brief managers, staff and volunteer coordinators; schedule annual review

Trustee approval record

Approved by the Board of Trustees on: 3rd November 2026

Minute reference: October 2026 trustee meeting minutes

Miroslava Zverbikova

Miroslava Zverbikova
Chair of Trustees
Signed electronically on 3rd November 2026

Agnieszka Derejska

Agnieszka Derejska
Trustee
Signed electronically on 3rd November 2026

Hazel Chawapiwa

Hazel Chawapiwa
Trustee
Signed electronically on 3rd November 2026

Roy Gopaul

Roy Gopaul
Trustee
Signed electronically on 3rd November 2026

Zuzana Fratrikova

Zuzana Fratrikova
Policy owner · Founder & CEO
Signed electronically on 3rd November 2026

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If you have a question about recruitment or volunteering, contact info@mama2mama.org.uk.

