

Setting the Scene:

An important part of Table Tennis England's (TTE) commitment to creating a safer sport for all in line with our Level the Table strategy is to ensure that there is a robust recruitment procedure in place for all volunteers and staff who are working with both children and adults at risk in our sport.

Aims:

These guidelines try to ensure that people with a history of relevant and significant offending are prevented from contact with children or young people and do not have the opportunity to influence policies of practice with them. TTE acknowledges that many people who offend against children and young people are not caught, and that offending can be undetected for many years. In view of this the Association urges all its staff, volunteers and anyone who is in anyway involved with the sport to follow and adopt its safeguarding policies and guidelines and to maintain a vigilant approach to the welfare of children and young people.

Safer Recruitment:

The majority of people involved with and working within our sport are well motivated and our clubs and leagues could not operate without them. There are some individuals who will seek employment (paid or unpaid) to gain access to children and adults at risk. TTE will uphold checks and regulations to try and limit these individuals' access to our sport using the safer recruitment process.

Where appropriate to the role TTE will use DBS checks to screen people's backgrounds. A DBS check is only part of the process but it does provide information regarding a person's criminal convictions and also whether they are barred from working with children or adults at risk. In terms of the roles within table tennis requiring a check TTE will require all checks to be 'Enhanced'.

All candidates applying for a position within in TTE will be recruited by conducting a formal interview. Detailed background checks will be made and references contacted to ensure the safeguarding guidelines are adhered to. It is recommended that clubs should put in place a similar process for those roles with direct responsibility for children.

Regardless of whether the position is paid or unpaid, all volunteers, coaches and staff are governed by the safer recruitment process.

The Guidelines:

These guidelines have been agreed by TTE as best practice in respect of all staff and volunteers working with children and young people – for the purposes of these guidelines children and young people are defined as under 18s. They relate to all coaches, club and league welfare officers, staff and volunteers whose role meets the criteria for regulated activity or supervision or anyone who may be in a 'protected' role. Anyone falling into regulated activity must have an enhanced DBS check, carried out every 3 years in order to continue in that role.

This could include people (including parents unless it is their own children) transporting players who are aged under 18 years to local league matches, local and national competitions and coaching sessions on a regular basis.

The Process:

TTE do not carry out the checking process 'in house'. In order to assist our members an arrangement has been agreed with Know Your People, an Umbrella Body registered with the DBS, for them to process checks on the behalf of the TTE.

Risk Assessments:

TTE is committed to recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers, and to their fair treatment in line with our Level the Table strategy or offending background. It further recognises that a mix of talent, skills, potential background, knowledge and experiences are important amongst its staff and volunteers so that children and young people are provided with a wide range of role models and people to provide support. We will ensure that all people involved in making decisions or recommendations on its behalf are themselves subject to similar vetting, where appropriate, and are properly trained with full knowledge of all the relevant statutory requirements and codes of practice.

Where there is evidence shown on the DBS check of convictions, the following process will be undertaken:

1. A member of the TTE's Safeguarding Team will ask the person concerned to provide a written statement regarding the circumstances surrounding the conviction/s plus any other relevant supporting evidence.
2. If the person decides to withdraw from the process at this point without providing a statement or evidence TTE retains the right to hold the decision on a case file as a recruitment decision.
3. All the relevant information will be forwarded to the TTE's Safeguarding and Disciplinary Case Management Group who will take any decisions regarding employment of the individual, in the case of a coach the Head of People will also be included in the process.
4. A criminal record will not necessarily stop a person from working with children and young people in table tennis, but TTE has a responsibility for the welfare of children and adults within the sport and will make all decisions in good faith, taking into account:
 - Whether the conviction, or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question.
 - The seriousness of any offence or other matter occurred.
 - The length of time since the offence or other matter occurred.
 - Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matters.
 - Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters.
 - The circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation offered.
 - The person concerned will be advised if any actions are deemed necessary by the Table Tennis England's Safeguarding Team.
 - If the recommendation is that the applicant should be suspended from the sport the Safeguarding and Disciplinary Manager will liaise with TTE's Disciplinary Committee.
 - Any appeals will be heard by TTE's Appeal Panel.

<https://www.tabletennisengland.co.uk/about-us/equality-and-diversity/level-the-table/>