

PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

Safer Recruitment and Selection

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SAFER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

All organisations which employ staff or volunteers to work with children should adopt a consistent and thorough process of safe recruitment in order to ensure that those recruited are suitable.

These procedures comply with the safe recruitment recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry, 2004, but they do not cover all issues relating to safe recruitment and employment issues. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) should, therefore, help and encourage all of their member organisations to implement safe recruitment and selection practices by

1. SELECTION OF CANDIDATES - SHORT LISTING

There are standard procedures for short listing to ensure that the best candidates are selected fairly. All applicants should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

Safer recruitment means that all applications should additionally be:

- Checked to ensure that they are fully and properly completed. Incomplete applications should not be accepted and should be returned to the candidate for completion.
- Scrutinised for any anomalies or discrepancies in the information provided.
- Considered with regard to any history of gaps, or repeated changes, in employment, or moves to supply work, without clear and verifiable reasons.

All candidates should bring with them to interview documentary evidence of their identity, either a full birth certificate, passport or photo card driving licence and additionally a document such as a utility bill that verifies the candidates name and address. Where appropriate, change of name documentation must also be brought to the interview.

Candidates should also be asked to bring original or certified copies of documents confirming any necessary or relevant educational and professional qualifications. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his/ her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

2. INTERVIEWING SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES

Questions should be set which test the candidate's specific skills and abilities to carry out the job applied for.

The candidate's attitude toward children and young people in general should be tested and also their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in particular. At least one member of the interview panel should be trained in how best this can be done.

Any gaps and changes in employment history should be fully explored during the interview, as should any discrepancies arising from information supplied by the candidate or by the referee.

3. OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

An offer of appointment should be conditional upon pre-employment checks being satisfactorily completed, including:

- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check appropriate to the role;
- Verification of the candidate's medical fitness;

- Verification of any relevant professional status and whether any restrictions have been imposed by a regulatory body such as the General Teaching Council (GTC) the General Council Social Care (GCSC) and the General Medical Council (GMC);
- That candidates from overseas are legally able to work in the UK, and equivalent checks are sought from their country of origin.

All checks should be confirmed in writing and retained on the candidate's personnel file, together with photocopies of and documents used to verify his/her identity and qualifications. Under DBS regulations, DBS disclosures can usually only be kept for 6 months, but a record should be kept of the date the disclosure was obtained and who by, the level of the disclosure and the unique reference number.

A record should be kept of evidence to show that such checks have been carried out in respect of supply staff and volunteers whether recruited directly or through an agency.

Satisfactory references must be kept on the candidates personnel file or, in the case of supply staff or volunteers not recruited through an agency, on a central record within the organisation.

Where information gained by the employer from either references or other checks calls into question the candidate's suitability to work with children, or where the candidate has provided false information in support of the application the facts should be reported to the police and/or the relevant department within the DCSF.

4. INDUCTION AND SUPERVISION OF NEWLY APPOINTED STAFF

The induction of all newly appointed staff should include an introduction to the organisation's child protection policies and procedures. This should include being made aware of the identity and specific responsibilities of those staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities.

New staff members should be provided with information about safe practice and given a full explanation of their role and responsibilities and the standard of conduct and behaviour expected. They should also be made aware of the organisation's personnel procedures relating to disciplinary issues and the relevant whistle blowing policy.

The programme of induction should also include attendance at child protection training at a level appropriate to the member of staff's work with children. (ERSCB run a full programme of free training; see the website for information at www.erscb.org.uk)

Senior managers should ensure that their staff are adequately and appropriately supervised and that they have ready access to advice, expertise and management support in all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection.

5. SCOPE

Any concerns that arise through the process of continuing supervision, which call into question the person's suitability to work with children, should be managed according to local procedures such as capability, disciplinary and/or the procedures for the management of allegations against staff (including volunteers).