



# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

## Document Detail

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## Recruitment and Selection

### REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

#### England: Quality Standards - The Leadership and Management Standard

#### Regulation 13

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## 1. Job Description and Person Specifications

At the start of the recruitment process it is important to define what the post holder's responsibilities towards children/young people will be, as well as the qualifications and experience needed to perform the job, with particular attention to their duties with such vulnerable groups.

It is also important to confirm our commitment to safer recruitment. It is therefore advisable to ensure that this statement of intent is included on all person specifications.

### All job descriptions must detail:

- Main duties and responsibilities of the post.
- The post holder's specific responsibility towards the promotion and the practice of safeguarding the welfare of children that they come in to contact with through their job.

### Suggested content for person specifications:

- Qualifications required to do the job.
- Professional Registrations (if required).
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure required.
- Define the skills and competencies required.
- Explore issues relating to the safeguarding of children, such as:
  - Motivation to work with children.
  - Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children.
  - Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours.
  - attitude's to use of authority and maintaining discipline.

## 2. The Advert

The advert for a vacancy should demonstrate our commitment to safer recruitment and vetting procedures, protecting every potential applicant from unfair practice and ultimately safeguarding children as much as possible. Promoting commitment to safeguarding and child protection can act as a deterrent to would-be abusers.

When placing an advert, the following statements should be included in the advert:

- The Company Name
- Post Title
- Hours (if full or part time)
- Salary/Rate of Pay

- Permanent, Temporary, Fixed Term (if Fixed Term the duration of the contract should be stated)
- ADVERT TEXT (this should include some reference to the post holder's responsibilities towards safeguarding children)
- The successful applicant will be required to undergo an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. Further details can be found at the DBS website
- Closing date

### 3. Application Packs

The importance of safeguarding and protecting children should be promoted as much as possible throughout the recruitment process in order to deter unsuitable candidates.

It is advised to include the following in an application pack:

- Following short listing in all posts an application form will be completed. It is not good practice to accept a CV drawn up by applicants in place of an application form because this will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may leave out relevant details.
- Job Description / Person Specification Guidance for applicants re DBS. A Disclosure of Criminal Conviction / Cautions form A Pre-Employment Health Questionnaire (although see notes below in this regard)/Relevant information about the Company and the recruitment process.
- A statement of the terms and conditions relating to the post.

Pre-employment health questionnaires must not be used unless they serve one or more of the following purposes: -

- Establishing whether the applicant would be able to participate in an assessment/interview to test his or her suitability for work.
- Establishing whether reasonable adjustments need to be made to the recruitment process, such as an assessment or interview.
- Establishing whether the applicant would be able to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the work concerned.
- Monitoring the diversity of applicants.
- Allowing us to take positive action to enable disabled people to overcome their disadvantage; and
- Establishing whether a person has a disability where having a particular disability is a requirement of the role.

### 4. Vetting and Short Listing

The same selection panel should both short list and interview the candidate. At least one member of the panel should have undertaken safer recruitment and selection training.

- All application forms should be vetted to ensure:

- They are fully and properly completed.
  - The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies.
  - Gaps in employment/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified.
- Incomplete applications should not be accepted.
  - Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this should be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, as well as a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post.
  - All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification.
  - A declaration of any family or close relationships/friendships to existing employees or employers (including members of the board).

The staff member short listing will begin the completion of the safer recruitment scrutiny and short-listing form.

## **5. Interview Process**

### **Interview Panel**

A panel of at least two people is recommended, allowing one member to observe and assess the candidate and make notes, while the candidate is talking to the other. One member of the panel should be trained in safer recruitment practice.

The members of the panel should:

- Have the necessary authority and experience to make decisions about the appointment.
- Meet before the interview to agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification and to prepare a list of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post.
- Identify any issues they wish to explore with each candidate based on the information provided in their application form and in the references.
- Make notes of the applicant's interview answers which should be scored then be collated by chair of the panel and stored.

### **Scope of the Interview**

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the post, the panel should explore:

- The candidate's attitude towards children/young people/vulnerable adults
- The candidate's ability to support the organisation's agenda for safeguarding and promoting welfare
- Any gaps in the candidate's employment history and /or frequent changes in employment/education including reasons for leaving
- Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or referee
- Whether the candidate wishes to declare anything relating to the requirement for a DBS check.
- The interview should also explore issues relating to safeguarding, including:
  - Motivation to work with children/ young people/ vulnerable adults
  - Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries

- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviour's
- Attitudes to use of authority

## **Participation of Children and Young People**

Children and young people can make a valuable contribution to the recruitment process and their participation should be considered for key strategic and managerial posts as well as posts where staff will have a high level of responsibility for children's day to day care e.g., residential staff.

## **6. References**

These should be requested prior to interview and ideally received back prior to interview. One of the two referees must be the candidate's current or most recent employer. If this employment has only been for a short period of time, a reference should be from the employer before that should be sought.

We will contact any previous employers where the applicant has worked with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults to attempt to get a reference and ascertain reasons for leaving. These should be cross referenced with the candidate's application form; any discrepancies need to be explored.

Open references should not be accepted if they are addressed 'To whom it may concern', with no date evidenced or no obvious authorisation, as these may have been forged, or may have valuable information missing if it is out of date. All referees will be asked to complete a reference pro-forma, which ensures that certain questions are asked about all candidates.

When references are received prior to interview it enables the interviewing panel to follow up any discrepancies or issues at interview and to make a decision with reference to all the facts available at the time. Obviously, this relies entirely on the speed referees return them. It may not always allow for them to be seen prior to interview, but it should be aimed for as best practice as it complies with Bichard recommendations. Where references are received after interview, posts will be offered subject to satisfactory references. In the first instance the Registered Manager or the Recruitment Team will check the reference and complete the reference comment form when necessary. The Recruitment Team will verify the reference by telephone to assess the authenticity of the reference and seek any additional information required. Where possible this should be completed before the interview.

The referee should be asked whether they are completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and/or young people and if not, for specific details of the referees concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.

All referees should be asked to comment on any disciplinary investigations or outcomes, including those that are pending. This should be cross referenced with the information provided by the applicant.

References are not accepted from personal friends or relations.

All staff must be aware that only head office personnel are able to complete reference requests for existing staff and that all references should be addressed to HR or the Director of Operations.

## **Employment Gaps**

At interview, gaps in employment history must be discussed with the candidate. If there are gaps in their history, the candidate should provide written details declaring the reasons for their break from work. This should then be

signed by the candidate. Valid reasons for gaps in employment may be: the candidate did not need to work, travelling, bringing up a family, caring responsibilities, family bereavement or a period of sickness. As there could be more sinister reasons for an absence, it is important to ensure that the candidate is able to give as much detail as possible, in order for the panel to make an informed decision and are in receipt of all relevant information.

It is strongly advisable to discuss patterns of repeated change in career or employers at interview, ensuring that the reasons for this are fully explored and satisfy the interview panel.

## **7. Qualification Verification**

All short-listed candidates are required to bring original qualifications or certificates correlating with those specified in the application form and required for the post, with them to interview. Certificates must be verified by reviewing copies of all relevant documentation. Other qualifications stated on the application form may also need to be verified.

A photocopy of all the original qualification certificate(s) should be taken and if the candidate is successful these should be placed on their personal file. If the candidate is unsuccessful, these should be destroyed.

## **8. Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure**

As posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, candidates should disclose any unspent and spent convictions during the application stage.

When applying for the post, candidates should fill out the Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure Form and return it with their application form. If they have not sent it in with their application, it would be advisable to ask the candidates attending the interview if they have any previous convictions either spent or unspent and ensure the form is completed. This gives the candidate a chance to discuss the circumstances surrounding any previous convictions they may have at interview.

Any convictions disclosed should not be given to the short-listing panel prior to short listing. Once the panel have made a short-list and invited them for interview, they should then be made aware of any candidate's criminal disclosure. Disclosing a criminal background should not be used as a reason to not short-list a candidate. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily bar a person from working with children and should not be used to discount applications.

If the candidate is successful, they will be required to complete a DBS Disclosure application form. Once the Enhanced DBS Disclosure Certificate is returned, any conviction information will need to match up with the candidate's original disclosure to the interview panel. This information will not be kept if the candidate is not successful and should be destroyed.

If a person who is banned from working with children applies for a post the information must be provided to the Police, as it constitutes a criminal offence.

## **9. Commitment to Safeguarding Children**

Person specifications allow the Company to explore a potential candidate's views and expectations in relation to working with children/young people. The recruiting panel should seek to identify the candidate's experience or views on the following points:

- Motivation to work with children

- Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours
- Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline

Providing questions that ask candidates to draw on their experience of situations with children will give a good impression of the candidate's understanding of the points above. It will enable the panel to probe issues that the candidate may not discuss, allowing the panel to be aware of issues or lack of knowledge that a candidate may have or refuses to discuss their motivation to work within a school environment or with children.

## **10. Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-appointment checks**

### **References**

This should be a minimum of two references for every employee; one of these references must be from their current or most recent employer. As the post requires working in an environment with children/young people, it is important to have a reference, if available, from an employer or voluntary agency demonstrating the candidate's previous work experience, paid or unpaid, of working with children/young people. This may mean another reference will need to be requested. References should also be obtained from any employer where the candidate has worked with children/young people/vulnerable adults to ascertain reasons for leaving. These should be cross referenced with the candidate's application form; any discrepancies need to be explored.

### **Verification of Candidate's Identity**

It is vital that we evidence the identity of all staff e.g., by requesting an original Birth Certificate and Passport. Candidates are asked to bring photographic evidence to the interview. The chair of the panel or a member of the recruitment team must verify the evidence and a copy taken.

### **Enhanced DBS Disclosure**

This shows previous convictions held on file for a potential employee. Having a conviction will not necessarily bar someone from working in a job with children or vulnerable adults. The severity, nature, circumstances and timing of the conviction will need to be taken into consideration. Candidates will need to be given the opportunity at the application stage to declare any unspent or spent convictions they may have, any declaration they make will be compared with the returned DBS report.

If a DBS report returns with information of previous convictions, the candidate would be asked to meet with the registered manager/service manager of the home and discuss the background and any other information relating to the convictions. The registered manager/service manager will then consider the explanation provided by the candidate, in terms of assessing their suitability for the post. To ensure consistency on decisions relating to adverse information, including criminal convictions, it is advisable that a nominated manager, in consultation with a senior manager from Human Resources, conducts the risk assessment and makes the decision. This should be in line with the company's risk assessment process.

### **Verification of Qualifications**

Any essential qualifications legally required to perform a particular job, such as QCF/NVQ, as stated in the person specification, need to be evidenced by the potential employee. A copy of original certificates should be taken and placed on their personal file and logged on the Central Record. This should ideally be confirmed at the interview stage.



## **Verification of Professional Registration**

Some posts require a professional registration with a regulatory body. This again needs to be evidenced and placed on file if the person specification states it as an essential prerequisite.

## **Right to Work in the UK**

It is a legal obligation that every employer in the UK verifies whether a potential employee has the right to work in the UK.

## **Employment History**

A full chronology of employment since leaving secondary education/training and part time and voluntary work as well as full-time employment, with start and end dates, and reasons for leaving each period of employment. When checking an application form it is important to note any gaps in employment or noticeable patterns when the candidate changed their employment. At interview any gaps will need to be discussed and satisfactory explanations given, in writing by the candidate.

## **Overseas DBS**

If the potential employee has lived or worked overseas within the last five years, or who comes from another country prior to working in the UK, then a UK DBS Disclosure will not give a full picture in respect of any criminal record they may have. In these cases, an overseas Criminal Record Disclosure will need to be applied for as well as a UK DBS Disclosure and details for each countries' equivalent Bureau are available on <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

These checks should be made clear to candidates at interview. Any offer of employment should be a conditional offer subject to satisfactory clearances being received and checked. When a decision has been made and a successful candidate notified, they should be encouraged to contact the recruitment team as soon as possible to start their pre-employment checks.

Only when all of these checks are completed and returned should an offer of employment be confirmed. Do not offer a candidate an unconditional offer at any point.

## **11. DBS or Re-checks**

DBS Disclosures are only a record or a snapshot of the day they were issued. Since a Disclosure was issued staff may have new convictions or warnings that they may or may not have made the Company aware of. It is our policy that every member of staff should have their DBS Disclosure renewed at least every two years. We also require staff to disclose any convictions which may occur during this 2-year period. Failure to disclose this information may result in dismissal from our employment.

The process of renewal or re-checking a person's DBS Disclosure is exactly the same as when applying for an original. There is no fast track. The Company can track the status of a DBS Application with the DBS on-line.

The requirement for a renewal for a DBS Disclosure also applies to all volunteers. The process is the same for all staff.

For instances when a candidate's DBS Disclosure is returned with a Positive Disclosure, the Policy details the process for assessing information recorded on the Disclosure, producing a risk assessment based on the

candidate's post and then making an informed recruitment decision.

## **12. Agency Staff**

As with outside contracted staff, providing services such as support or specific courses that requires staff to work on our premises whilst children are in the home, it is important that the homes have evidence of the necessary checks in relation to these staff.

It is essential to carry out or have evidence of the same standard of checks for all staff even if they are not employed directly by the Company. All outside providers should be requested to provide evidence of the same pre-employment checks that we would complete if they were directly employing the staff themselves. This should be given in writing and in advance of the provider starting work and should be agreed as part of any contract between us and a Provider of Services.

## **13. Contractors**

If there is any likelihood that Contractors may have unsupervised contact with children a Criminal Records Check should be undertaken prior to the Contractor starting work in an establishment with children. Ideally contractors should try and work outside of times when children are present i.e., School time in Residential Children's services, if this is not practicable then the following guidelines should be followed:

### **Building and Maintenance Contractors**

Children should not be allowed in areas where builders are working for Health and Safety reasons, so there should be little opportunity for workers to be unsupervised with children. It is difficult to definitively state that there will not be times when contact with a child occurs. Therefore, all projects with contractors who may come into contact with children on site during opening hours in any establishment should undergo a DBS Enhanced Disclosure. This clearance should be stated in any contract struck and/or tendered between us and a Contractor and paid for by the agreed contracted company.

### **Emergency Call-Out Contractors (not previously checked)**

Contractors that are called out in an emergency may not be a contractor that is checked and known to us prior to the 'call-out'. It is not necessary to obtain a DBS Disclosure for such staff, as they will only have contact with children on an ad hoc or irregular basis and will not be allowed to be left unsupervised with children.

Any contractor, maintenance worker or agency staff coming on to our premises should verify their identity, providing documents such as a passport or driver's license along with company ID.