

Safer Recruitment Guidance

Introduction

Any organisation that employs people to work with children is required by law to safeguard children. Robust recruitment policies and procedures minimises the risk of employing someone who poses a risk to children. Those responsible for recruitment need to demonstrate their understanding of safer recruitment practices and ensure these are followed when employing **all staff**.

Organisations and agencies should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation or agency permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018



Features of a safer recruitment process

- The single most important principle to apply in any appointment decision is to search for and appoint the best person for the role.
- The decision to appoint needs to focus on the essential criteria to undertake the role measured against the person specification.
- All roles, working with children, should require an application from, role description and person specification.
- Details within the job description and specification should be reflected within the advertisement and the specification therefore needs to be completed prior to advertising.

Things to consider...

Job title: this must clearly reflect the type of work.

Job/role description: this is a management document that sets out the main features of the position. It should contain the following:

Overall purpose: a short, accurate statement of why the role exists e.g. 'to supervise small groups of children during activities'.

Main responsibilities: statements of the main areas in which the role must undertake in order to achieve its purpose.

The characteristics of main responsibilities:

- Represent all the key outputs of the job.
- Focus on results, not duties, or activities. They tell 'what' the job entails, not the 'how' the role is carried out.
- Describes an explicit area in which results must be achieved by the jobholder's action.
- Relate clearly and realistically to the job and not to the line manager's job or to the organisation as a whole.
- State who the jobholder is responsible for (where applicable).

Person specification: is a statement of the attributes and characteristics necessary to do the role. It aims to provide a clear picture of the person required and is drawn up from a critical examination of the role description.

The factors should be listed under two headings 'Essential' and 'Desirable'. Only relevant and measurable factors should be included. Two questions need to be asked:

- What attributes **must** the applicant have = essential
- What attributes **would be useful** for the applicant to have = desirable



Adverts should...

- Contain details of the job description and person specification.
- State whether a standard or enhanced DBS check is required for the post.
- Explain why the post is not covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- Set out the safeguarding statement, for example '*Our organisation is committed to safeguarding children and expects all staff to do the same*'.



Interview and selection

All candidates must be assessed consistently against the job specification during the selection procedures.

Without a proper structure in place there is a far greater risk of an inappropriate decision being taken and a risk of unsuitable persons being appointed to work with children.

Pre-Employment Checks

The following pre-employment checks must be carried out before an applicant takes up a position.

- Evidence of the right to work in the UK (employees only)
- Standard or Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check
- Proof of Identity
- Evidence of relevant qualifications/accreditation
- Medical clearance (pro-forma)
- Employment history
- References from current and/or most recent employment, form tutor or work experience referee, or professional colleague.



Any offer made to the applicant MUST be subject to the completion of satisfactory checks.



Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

As the majority of staff will be engaging in **regulated activity (see below)**, an **enhanced DBS certificate**, which includes **barred list information**, will be required for most appointments.



‘Regulated Activity’

A person will be considered to be engaging in **regulated activity** if, as a result of their work, they:

- Teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children
- Work for a limited range of establishments (‘specified places’), with opportunity for contact: e.g. schools, children’s homes, childcare premises. Not work by supervised volunteers.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for **regular contact** with children who are **not engaging in regulated activity**, an **enhanced DBS certificate**, which **does not include a barred list check**, will be appropriate.

Regular is defined as:

- Teaching, training or instruction of children, carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period, or overnight
- Care or supervision of children if carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period or overnight
- Day to day management or supervision on a regular basis of a person providing this activity which would be regulated if unsupervised



Safer Recruitment Checklist for Managers

Recruitment & Selection Process	Safer Recruitment Step	Completed?	Date	Notes
Refer to your Recruitment Policies/ Procedures	Check your policies to ensure you are following a consistent and safe process re roles working with children.			
Prepare the job description and person specification	Include full job description and person specification. Include safeguarding responsibilities.			
Agree selection panel	Agree dates for short-listing and interviews with the panel.			
Advertise the vacancy	Include safeguarding message to deter unsuitable applicants. Advise it will be subject to DBS checks. Advise of interview/ closing date and application process.			
Short-listing applications	Devise short-listing criteria based on essential criteria. Reject applicants who do not meet all essential criteria. Invite those short-listed for interview. Inform those who have been unsuccessful and thank them for applying.			
References	Take up ALL available references on those short-listed, ideally covering a 5 year period. Check for gaps/inconsistencies between application form and references.			

Recruitment & Selection Process	Safer Recruitment Step	Completed?	Date	Notes
Interviews & Assessment	<p>Plan a range of assessments:</p> <p>Interview questions that probe attitude to safeguarding and motivation to work with children.</p> <p>A relevant task, with children if possible or to prepare a presentation relevant to the role.</p> <p>Involving children in the interview if applicable.</p> <p>Probe and confirm any gaps exposed on application form.</p>			
Recruitment Decision	<p>Issue verbal offer to successful candidate. Reinforce it is subject to all required checks, DBS etc.</p>			
Pre-employment checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence of the right to work in UK ✓ DBS check ✓ Proof of Identity ✓ Evidence of relevant qualifications ✓ Medical clearance ✓ Employment history ✓ References from current and/or most recent employment <p>NB your new worker should not begin work until the DBS has been returned and you are satisfied with the outcome.</p>			
Plan induction period	<p>Agree start date & probationary period.</p> <p>Highlight safeguarding responsibilities, culture of vigilance and process for reporting concerns about children/colleagues.</p>			

References and further information



Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Regulated Activity in relation to Children:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550197/Regulated activity in relation to children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550197/Regulated_activity_in_relation_to_children.pdf)

Rehabilitation of offenders act

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974>

NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/safer-recruitment-training/>