

- their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in particular.

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

OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

Offers of appointment should be conditional upon satisfactory checks, including:

- CRB, as appropriate to the role,
- DCSF List 99, and/or the DoH POCA List,
- verification of the candidate's medical fitness,
- verification of any relevant professional status and whether any restrictions have been imposed by a regulatory body,
- and satisfactory references

All checks should be confirmed in writing and retained on the candidate's personnel file, together with copies of any documents used to verify identity and qualifications.

CRB 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 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 candidate's 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 calls into question the candidate's suitability to work with children, or where a candidate has provided false information, the facts should be reported to the Police and/or the DCSF Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit.

INDUCTION

All newly appointed staff and volunteers should be made aware of the organisation's:

- child protection policy and procedures, including the identity of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities,
- personnel procedures, and
- whistle-blowing policy.

New staff should also be provided with information about safe practice when working with children, and given a full explanation of their role and expected standards of conduct.

Produced by:

**Medway Safeguarding Children
Board
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
ME4 4TR**

phone: 01634 336 329
e-mail: mccb@medway.gov.uk
website: www.mccb.org.uk



SAFER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF ADULTS WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN



Guidance for Employers

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Medway Safeguarding
Children Board



INTRODUCTION

All employers should demonstrate a commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for children. This includes having robust recruitment arrangements in place which ensure, as far as possible, that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. The aim of this leaflet is to raise awareness of the key factors that constitute 'safer recruitment'.

SCOPE

Safer recruitment practice should include paid and unpaid staff who may or may not have direct contact with children, but because of their presence will be seen as safe and trustworthy. Employers should monitor their arrangements with contractors and agencies providing staff to work with children to ensure:

- the principles of safer recruitment are included in the terms of contracts, and
- the provider does not sub-contract to personnel who have not been part of a safer recruitment process.

TRAINING

All organisations should ensure that designated staff involved in the selection of adults to work with children, undertake safer recruitment training. Advice on training programmes can be sought from the Medway Safeguarding Children Board.

RECRUITMENT MATERIAL

Information given to applicants should highlight the employer's commitment to safeguarding and protecting children by including a policy statement to this effect. It should stress the importance placed by the employer on rigorous selection and make it clear that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked thoroughly and that s/he will be required to complete an application for a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure.

Job descriptions should set out the extent of the relationship with, and degree of responsibility for, children with whom the person will have contact.

Person specifications should explain:

- the qualifications and experience required, and
- the competences and qualities that the applicant should be able to demonstrate, as well as how these will be tested and assessed during the selection process.

Application forms should ask for:

- full personal information, including any former names by which the applicant has been known in the past, and
- a full history of employment, both paid and voluntary, since leaving school, including any periods of further education or training, and
- details of any relevant academic and/or vocational qualifications, and
- a declaration that the applicant has no convictions, cautions, or bind-overs, or details in a sealed envelope.

REFERENCES

Application forms should require both professional and character references. One should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer.

Additional references may be requested where appropriate e.g. where an applicant is not currently working with children, but has done so in the past.

Wherever possible, references should be obtained prior to the interview so that any issues of concern raised by the reference can be explored with the referee and taken up with the candidate during interview.

Use of a reference pro-forma should help to gather objective verifiable information. This should include questions relating to the candidate's suitability to work with children.

The referee should be asked to confirm whether:

- the applicant has been the subject of any disciplinary sanctions,

- the applicant has had any allegations made against him/her or concerns raised which relate to either the safety or welfare of children and young people or about the applicant's behaviour towards children or young people,
- details of the outcome of any concerns, allegations and disciplinary matters, confirmed by the referee, should also be requested.

Best practice suggests that it is appropriate to telephone and confirm the identity of referees.

SHORT LISTING CANDIDATES

In addition to normal short listing practices, "safer recruitment" means that applications should additionally be scrutinised:

- to ensure that they are fully and properly completed or, if not, that they are returned to the applicant for completion,
- for anomalies or discrepancies in the information provided,
- for gaps or repeated changes in employment, or moves to supply work.

Candidates for interview should be told to bring documentary evidence that verifies their:

- identity, (e.g. full birth certificate, passport or photo-card driving licence),
- address (e.g. a utility bill),
- and, if applicable change of name.

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

INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

Questions should be set which test a candidate's:

- specific skills and abilities to carry out the job applied for,
- his/her attitude toward children and young people in general and