

Safer Recruitment Means Safer Children Guidance

Safe practice in recruitment - A well planned and structured recruitment procedure and process is vital in ensuring the best person is recruited for the role, and to determine whether someone is suitable to work with children. Safer recruitment is your responsibility as laid out in statutory guidance **Working Together 2023, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance-groups and school provision and childminders.**

Remain vigilant – Never think that enough has been done to ensure a safeguarding culture

- Ongoing suitability needs to be checked regularly
- Safeguarding training must be regularly completed and knowledge and understanding checked during team meetings
- Set acceptable standards of behaviour (Code of Conduct policy)
- Take prompt, appropriate action to any concerns raised
- Ensure safeguarding and child protection is a regular agenda item at team meetings, development sessions and one to one's
- Have clear procedures for reporting concerns, ensuring everyone knows what they are and that they're responsible for following them.

Three stages to safer recruitment

1. Deter

- Have a clear and rigorous recruitment process
- Have a code of conduct policy
- Stop unsuitable people from applying by sharing your recruitment policy
- Send out clear messages in job adverts, and application handbook.

2. Identify and decline

- During the interview process cross reference and screen applicants carefully
- Ask insightful questions to clarify anything you are concerned about
- Listen to your gut.

3. Prevent and decline

- Have a rigorous probation period
- Have regular supervision
- Get feedback from the team already working with you
- Remember you have the right to dismiss someone who isn't suitable.

Pre-interview, application

- **Ensure interview panel have received robust safer recruitment training**
- Request application form as well as an up to date CV
- Request two references; check validity with a phone call
- If current employer can not be contacted then a character reference to be obtained, this must be from a professional who has known the applicant for at least five years
- Additional criminal records check for anyone living overseas in the last five years <https://bit.ly/49OcZMk>
- Check they have the right to work in the UK
- Consider having children and families in the recruitment process
- Run internet and social media checks on candidates.

Interview

- Ask for proof of identification, check and check again
- Ask for proof of training and qualifications
- Check on any gaps in service from application form, enable the candidate to expand on the gaps
- Check number of posts held in the last two years and ask for reasons for leaving
- Explain an enhanced DBS check will be requested
- Ask if there is likely to be a flag on the DBS
- Make it clear that if an enhanced DBS is not successful the job will not be offered.
- Ensure safeguarding is high on your interview agenda
- Ask open questions to gain candidates level of knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and child protection.

Appointment and probation period

- Have a robust induction process in place
- Provide a staff handbook with clear safeguarding policies and procedures
- Staff file to be kept which includes:
 - Job description
 - References
 - Disclosure number and date of issue
 - List of qualifications
 - training matrix
- Ensure arrangements for regular documented supervision and support are in place
- Discuss any issues, particularly concerning children's development and well-being
- Provide safeguarding training as part of your induction process and ongoing training on a regular basis.