



Safer Recruitment Guidance

Experience over many years shows that it is important for organisations that provide services to children to incorporate into their recruitment and selection procedures, measures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, or who are otherwise unsuited to work with them. Making safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children an integral part of human resources (HR) management in organisations that work with children is an essential part of creating safe environments.

The need for this was illustrated by the Soham case and the findings and recommendations contained in Sir Michael Bichard's report into that case (2004).

It is vital that organisations create a culture of safe recruitment and, as part of that, adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. Organisations must act reasonably in making decisions about the suitability of the prospective employee based on checks and evidence including criminal record checks (DBS checks), barred list checks and prohibition checks (if relevant) together with references and interview information.

CRB Checks (DBS Checks)

The level of DBS check required, and whether a prohibition check is required, will depend on the role and duties of an applicant. *NB: Prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16-19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England (please see para 54, Keeping Children Safe in Education (April 2014)).*

The Government definition of a regulated activity can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/316179/Regulated_Activity_in_relation_to_Children_DfE.pdf . If engaging in a regulated activity an enhanced DBS check with barred list information will be required.

References

It is essential that wherever possible references, or confirmation that there is no information or reason that might cast doubt on a person's suitability to work with children known to the referees, is available before interview. It can then be taken into account and, if necessary, issues explored further before or at the interview. This must be explained in the information sent to applicants and on the application form. Very careful consideration will need to be given to any request by an applicant to delay seeking references until it is known whether he or she is to be offered the post. Such a request should only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

Why do we need Safer Recruitment?

Sir Michael Bichard, in his summing up of the Soham murder case stated: "For those agencies whose job it is to protect children and vulnerable people, the harsh reality is that if a sufficiently devious person is determined to seek out opportunities to work their evil, no one can guarantee that they will be stopped. Our task is to make it as difficult as possible for them to succeed...."

How do we ensure our setting is practicing Safer Recruitment?

Safe Recruitment is much more than merely DBS checking. At least one person on each interview panel for a post involving work with children must be accredited in safe recruitment. There are currently 2 ways to obtain accreditation. Firstly, the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) runs a half day course delivered by trainers accredited by the NCSL and CWDC enabling you to engage in useful discussions with other agencies and employers. There is a cost of £50 for this course including the complete training pack. If you would like to book a place, please visit <http://www.gscb.org.uk/article/113325/Safer-Recruitment-Accreditation> . Secondly, an on-line course is available through the NSPCC at a cost of £30 per delegate. The course takes approximately 4 hours to complete. For more information please visit <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/safer-recruitment-education-course/>