


Title: Policy for Safe Recruitment Practice		 <p>Salford Safeguarding Children Board</p> <p>Keeping children safe IN Salford</p>
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Policy Statement

This policy has been prepared to support all organisations who engage people as employees, volunteers, contractors or via agencies to work with children and young people. It has been designed to help ensure safe and effective recruitment and selection decisions are made in line with minimum regulatory and legal requirements (Working Together, The Bichard Report, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education) and is supplemented by the safe recruitment guide which provides practical suggestions and sample templates of good practice.

Executive Summary

Organisations who work with or on behalf of children and young people need to be vigilant in their recruitment and selection of staff. Abusers will target these organisations and be extremely skilled at presenting themselves as caring and trustworthy individuals. Some indicators of abusive behaviour can emerge through inappropriate attitudes or inconsistent reactions and a vigorous recruitment and selection process provides important opportunities to identify these and deter and prevent offenders from gaining access to children and young people through their work.

Safe environments do not happen by accident. They are purposefully built and carefully maintained. Safe recruitment and selection processes are essential if organisations who work with or on behalf of children are to attract the best staff and deter or reject those who may pose a risk to children or who are unsuited to work with them.

1. Roles and Responsibilities:

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 states that 'organisations 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 will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check.

Salford LSCB will do this by:

- Making clear the standards to which it expects all member agencies to work.
- Providing means by which they and other organisations can produce or review a structured and systematic approach to recruitment and selection procedures.
- Monitoring these arrangements and offering support and challenge to ensure organisations remain vigilant in their employment practices

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where these relate to safeguarding the welfare and interests of children and young people.

2. Standards

Salford LSCB expects that all organisations who work with or on behalf of children and young people in Salford will ensure that:

- There is a designated management team/nominated person who is vigilant in ensuring that all recruitment and selection systems, processes and procedures are examined from a child/staff protection focus.
- The organisation makes explicit its commitment to the provision and maintenance of a safe and supportive environment for children and young people, staff, volunteers and visitors.
- All applicants, short listed candidates, contractors, service providers and volunteers are advised about and understand the necessity of robust recruitment and selection practices.
- Staff and volunteers are advised about personal and professional boundaries, and are clear about what is proper and expected behaviour, and managers are vigilant in pursuing inappropriate, unprofessional or abusive behaviour.
- Child protection strategies include disciplinary procedures and appropriate reporting mechanisms which deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with the organisation's policies to safeguard children.
- Managers and/or commissioners paying for, or using services satisfy themselves that those services have in place appropriate and effective arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children.
- There is an effective recruitment and selection policy and robust procedures in place, which are regularly reviewed and in line with the guidance contained in this document.

3. Protocol

Safer recruitment practice should be applied at all stages of the recruitment process:

- Advertisements
- Job Description and Person Specification
- Application Process
- Short Listing
- Interviews
- References

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- Pre-Employment Checks
- Appointment
- Induction
- Training
- Supervision

Advertisements

All recruitment advertising material should demonstrate the organisation’s commitment to safeguarding and protecting children and young people and should indicate that successful applicants will be subject to identity checks and criminal record and barred list checks where appropriate, prior to commencement of employment.

Job Description and Person Specification

There should be a job description produced for all paid and voluntary positions which should clearly set out the duties and responsibilities of the role, including the extent and nature of the contact the person will have with children and young people.

The person specification should indicate the qualifications and experience required for a position relating to children and young people and the competencies and qualities that applicants should be able to demonstrate. It is also necessary to indicate how these will be tested and assessed during the selection process.

Application Process

All applicants seeking to work with children and young people must be asked to provide the key information below:

- Full personal information, including any former names by which the person has been known in the past.
- A full history of time spent since leaving school including periods of paid and voluntary work, further education or training, giving start and finish dates, reasons for leaving and an explanation of any gaps.
- Details of any relevant academic/vocational qualifications.
- A declaration that the person has no convictions, cautions, warnings, reprimands or bind-overs, including those regarded as spent. This should also include referral to or inclusion on any government list or regulatory body restricting or preventing them from working with children or vulnerable adults.

The use of curriculum vitae is not advised as these will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

Short Listing

All applications should be scrutinised to ensure they provide full and complete information which is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies. All applicants should be assessed equally by members of the interview panel against the criteria indicated in the person specification.

Interviews

All short listed applicants should undergo a face-to-face interview with at least two interviewers to assess their suitability against the job requirements and to explore their attitude towards and motivation for working with children and young people. Any gaps in employment or any discrepancies in the information provided should be fully explored during the interview.

References

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support employment decisions. References should contain verifiable information and in order to achieve this, a reference pro-forma with questions relating to the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people should be provided. It is necessary for one reference to be from the applicant's current or most recent employer and they should always be sought directly from the referee.

All reference requests should ask:

- About the referee's relationship with the applicant, how long they have known them and in what capacity.
- Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the applicant has the ability to undertake the role and is suitable to work with children and young people (a copy of the job description should be provided).

Reference requests from current or previous employers should also ask for:

- Confirmation of details of the applicant's current/previous post(s) including salary, job title, dates of employment, reason for leaving and recent sickness record.
- Specific verifiable and relevant comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct.
- Details of any disciplinary sanctions the applicant has been subject to or any allegations/concerns that have been raised about the applicant which relate to the safety and welfare of children and young people or about the applicant's behaviour towards children and young people.

Any concerns raised on a reference in relation to performance, conduct, work history or attendance should be taken up with the individual prior to a formal offer of employment.

Pre-Employment Checks

An offer of appointment should be conditional upon pre-employment checks being satisfactorily completed. This should include verification of entitlement to work in the UK (Asylum & Immigration Act), criminal record and barred list checks, qualification/professional body checks, medical clearance/verification of fitness to undertake the role and receipt of satisfactory references. This also applies to internal appointments, in that staff should not transfer to a post requiring clearances and checks until this can be evidenced.

- **Identification**

All candidates/volunteers must provide documentary evidence of their identity in accordance with the new identity checking guidelines introduced by the DBS on 1st September 2012. The categories of acceptable documents can be found on the Home Office website at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/CRB/crb-application-form-guidance/id-checking-guide>

- **Disclosure and Barring Service Checks**

The Government has made a number of changes to the criminal records and barring arrangements from 10th September 2012 and a new definition for regulated activity relating to children has been introduced. This is now focused on work which involves unsupervised activities with children and work in specified places with the opportunity for contact with children (the latter doesn't include supervised volunteers). The activities and work which have been taken out of regulated activity will still be eligible for enhanced criminal record checks but they will no longer be eligible for barred list checks.

Further guidance can be found on the Home Office website at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb/about-crb/crb-pofa-2012/>

The Disclosure and Barring Service is responsible for making independent barring decisions following referrals from employers/organisations and the notification of relevant (automatic barring) offences. The DBS can only bar a person from working within regulated activity with children or adults if they believe the person is, has been, or might in the future, engage in regulated activity. The only exception to this is where a person is cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring) offence and is not eligible to submit representations against their inclusion in a barred list. Where a person is cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring) offence with the

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right to make representations, the DBS will ask the person to submit their representations **before** making a final barring decision.

Any person barred by the DBS cannot work or volunteer with the group or groups from which they are barred. There are no circumstances in which a person may be allowed to commence work or volunteering where an enhanced criminal record check and/or barred list check is required and cannot be evidenced.

All employees/volunteers working with children and young people must be made aware that they have the responsibility to declare to a designated person within the organisation, any convictions, cautions, warnings, reprimands or bindovers that they incur subsequent to obtaining their disclosure.

- **Qualifications**

Applicants should also be asked to bring original or certified copies of documents confirming any necessary or relevant educational and professional qualifications. If the successful applicant cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his/her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

Appointment

Following the receipt of confirmed checks and clearances, an appointment letter and statement of particulars should be sent to the successful candidate and a signed copy returned. The appointment should be subject to the new employee satisfactorily completing a probationary period to assess their suitability in the role and to ensure their performance, conduct and attendance are acceptable.

Induction

All newly appointed staff and volunteers should receive an induction into the organisation in terms of their role, responsibilities, expected codes of behaviour and safe working practice. Managers should provide guidance on the organisation's policies and procedures relating to the wellbeing and safety of children and young people and ensure that new staff and volunteers have access to advice, expertise and support.

Training

All organisations involved in the selection of employees/volunteers to work with children and young people should ensure that designated staff undertake specific safe recruitment training. They should also undertake any other recruitment and selection training specific to their organisation.

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Endorsed by:		
Committee Chair	Position of Endorser or Name of Endorsing Committee	Date
Sally Rees	Executive Committee SSCB	15/04/13

Record of Changes to Document					
Changes approved in this document by - SSCB Policies and Procedures Sub Group					
Section Number	Date	Amendment (<i>shown in bold italics</i>)	Deletion	Addition	Reason

Diversity & Equality Screening Questionnaire

Organisations are legally required to ensure that all new policies and documents are assessed for their impact both positive & negative on equality target groups ; religion/beliefs, disability, age, gender, religion & sexual orientation & transgender.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this assessment process please contact the Equality Advisor, HR dept.

Name of policy, document or leaflet; Policy for Safe Recruitment Practice
Whom is this document or policy aimed at ? All partner agencies of Salford Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)
Is this document a specific user group? if yes, why ? (what are the demographics of your target audience?) No How will you ensure that this policy is cascaded to the target group ? Via the SSCB website
Is there any evidence to suggest that different groups have different needs in relation to this policy or document (positive or negative; for example; elderly, patients with disabilities, issues on gender etc) ? No
If you a revising a policy are any the changes to this policy likely to impact on any groups? No
Have you undertaken any consultation/involvement with service users or other groups in relation to the new policy ? Yes If yes, what format did this take? face/face or questionnaire? (please attach evidence of this) Consultation took place with People Development Consultants, Local Authority Designated Officers and the Policy was agreed by the SSCB Executive Committee Were service users who may require additional support (e.g. visually impaired) involved ?

No

Has any amendments been implemented as a result of this exercise?

Are you aware if a request has been made for the policy to provided in alternative formats?

No

If yes, how/was this achieved?

Does the document require any decision to be made which could result in some individuals receiving different treatment, care, outcomes to other individuals (could any group be excluded for any reason)?

No

On what basis would this decision be made ?

Could this impact on any particular group ?

Are you aware of any complaints from service users in relation to the application of this policy ?

No

If yes, how was the issue resolved ?

Looking at the above points does this indicate that any of the groups listed below have different needs, experiences or priorities groups in relation to the document ?

	Yes	No	unsure
Age		X	
Disability		X	
Gender		X	
Marital Status		X	
Racial group		X	
Religious belief		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Transgender		X	
Low Income		X	

Any additional comments

If any impact has been highlighted by this assessment, you will need to undertake a full equality impact assessment:

Will this policy require a full impact assessment? No (delete)
(if yes please contact Equality Advisor, HR for further guidance)