

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

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1 Legislative Framework and Guidance

England

- Regulation 6: The quality and purpose of care standard

- Guide to the quality and purpose of care standard
- Regulation 31: Staffing of children's homes
- Regulation 32: Fitness of workers
- Regulation 33: Employment of staff

Wales

- Regulation 35: Fitness of staff
- Regulation 36: Supporting and developing staff
- Regulation 37: Compliance with employer's code of practice
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

2 Outcome

Safer recruitment is central to the safeguarding of children/young people. We have a duty to safeguard and promote children/young people's welfare. This includes ensuring the Company undertakes safer recruitment and selection procedures which prevent unsuitable persons from gaining access to children/young people.

3 Responsibility

1. The registered manager/home manager is responsible for operating an effective selection and vetting process for all staff and volunteers working with children/young people in the home, ensuring child protection and safeguarding are at the core of the process throughout. The registered manager/home manager must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does not prevent children/young people from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs.
2. The registered person must ensure that, at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification and any person who works as a nurse at the home is a registered nurse.

4 Policy Overview

The Company is committed to providing the highest quality of care to the children/young people placed. It is therefore important to attract the 'best people' to continue to provide the high level of care that children/young people, parents and Local Authorities have come to expect. The process of recruitment will take into account a range of selection techniques in addition to direct interview.

4.1 Recruitment procedures

1. The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's/young people's safety.
2. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children/young people, allow that individual to work at the home if the individual satisfies the following requirements:
 - (a) The individual is of integrity and good character;
 - (b) The individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;
 - (c) The individual is provided with the support to ensure that that are mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform;
 - (d) Full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.
3. An individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained either:
 - (a) The Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma');
 - (b) Or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.
4. The relevant date is
 - (a) In the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home;
 - (b) In the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.
5. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual:
 - (a) Does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period;
 - (b) Works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis.

4.2 Recruitment Process

1. All vacancies will be advertised internally, advertised on chosen job boards online, placed in local job centres and where appropriate in local newspapers as well as using online recruitment sites to ensure demographics do not restrict the equality and diversity of applicants. Applicants are managed through a separate recruitment department. Child protection and safeguarding issues highlighted in applications can be removed from the shortlist as a first stage.
2. Applicants will be sent an information pack, made up of a job description, person

specification and a job application form. It is also important to confirm our commitment to safer recruitment. Therefore the job description details:

- (a) Main duties and responsibilities of the post;
 - (b) The post holder's specific responsibility towards the promotion and the practice of safeguarding the welfare of children/young people that they come in to contact with through their job;
 - (c) Qualifications required to do the job;
 - (d) Professional Registrations (Currently Wales only);
 - (e) Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks required;
 - (f) Defines the skills and competencies required;
 - (g) Explores issues relating to the safeguarding of children/young people, such as:
 - (i) Motivation to work with children/young people;
 - (ii) Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children/young people;
 - (iii) Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours;
 - (iv) Attitudes to use of authority and maintaining discipline.
 - (h) Whistle blowing and complaints policies and procedures.
3. The recruitment department will shortlist those applicants to be sent an application form. The registered manager/home manager/operations manager will then shortlist those applicants who fill in the application form to be invited for an interview after they have read all the applications. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this should be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, and discussed at interview. Also taken into account should be a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post, which is the responsibility of the registered manager to check
4. Invitations will be sent to all applicants who have been shortlisted for an interview. The interview will involve a minimum of two staff members, one being a registered manager and the the other an operations manager. The candidate will be asked questions surrounding the post that they have applied for, with an agreed scoring structure in place. If they do not reach the bench mark they are contacted and feedback is given over the phone by the home manager
5. If the applicant is successful at formal interview an offer of employment is made by the home manager, subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) satisfactory report and references, a minimum of 1 work reference which must be the last/current employer and 2 personal. Where the applicant has worked in many care companies, every attempt must be made to obtain references from these organisations. This must be approved by the Head of Service before an offer letter is sent. The applicant will be placed on a 6 month induction

period, which can be extended up to 1 year if the applicant probation appraisal is not satisfactory.

6. Where any applicant has disclosed any criminal convictions or otherwise, the interviewing panel must discuss the matter at interview, completing a DBS risk assessment form in as much detail as possible. The applicant must comment upon the full context of any offence, matter, outcome and any lessons arising. This statement must be reviewed and questioned during interview and latter cross referenced to references and a Disclosure and Barring Service . Following the risk assessment, the form must be signed off with the managers decision of whether to employ; this must then be forwarded to recruitment who will need to get sign off from the Head of Service and Managing Director.

4.3 Overseas Applicants

If the potential employee has lived abroad for 5 years or comes from another country prior to working in the UK, then a UK Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure will not give a full picture in respect of any criminal record they may have. In these cases an overseas Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure, or Certificate of Good Conduct will need to be applied for as well as a UK Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure. Details for each country's equivalent Bureau are available on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

4.4 Interviews

During the selection process two members of full-time staff will conduct staff interviews. All of these staff will have a strong understanding of safer recruitment issues and be appropriately trained to conduct interviews. The interview assessment sheet will pay particular attention to our values and child protection and safeguarding issues, and will include a minimum of two safeguarding scenario questions. Each interviewer will complete their own assessment sheet of the candidate during the interview. They will score the candidate in terms of perceived abilities and these record sheets will be used in the decision-making process. Those sheets of successful candidates are kept in the employee's personnel record for the whole time they work for the home, if at any time they leave the Company these are archived with all of the individual's other employment records at Head Office in secure locked cabinets fit for the purpose. For those that are not successful, the interview notes are kept for 6 months, then disposed of in a confidential manner

5 Scrutinising and References

5.1 Application Forms

All application forms should be scrutinised by the home manager to ensure:

1. They are fully and properly completed;
2. The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies;
3. Gaps in employment/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified.

Incomplete applications will be noted initially by recruitment, where further information will be requested from the candidate. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this should be noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, as well as a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent to temporary post. All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification, which will be the manager's responsibility upon receiving the application form.

5.2 Qualifications

1. At interview, essential qualifications required for the post including those set by statute must be verified as a minimum, other qualifications stated on the application form may also need to be verified.
2. For homes in England, an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained either:
 - (a) The Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma');
 - (b) Or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.

The relevant date is:

- (a) In the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home;
- (b) In the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.

The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual:

- (a) Does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period;
- (b) Works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. A clear photocopy of all the original qualification certificates should be taken, verified and dated. and if the candidate is successful, these should be placed on their personal file. If the candidate is unsuccessful, these should be destroyed.

3. For homes in Wales, new staff need:
 - (a) to hold Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Children and Young People) Wales and Northern Ireland or a similar qualification recognised by the Care Council for Wales, or a higher qualification, or
 - (b) gain the qualification within 2 years of taking up an appointment in a children's home.

5.3 Identity

It is vital that we evidence the identity of all staff e.g. by requesting an original birth certificate and passport, along with further documents for the DBS checks. The ID documents must be photocopied clearly, signed and dated by the manager to agree that the original ID has been seen and that any photographic ID is a true likeness of the candidate.

5.4 Right to Work in the UK

1. It is a legal obligation that every employer in the UK verifies whether a potential employee has the right to work in the UK. For information about this, <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk>.
2. Checks will be made using the guidelines from <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk> using original documents only, which photocopies must have been taken by the managers for them to verify. If there is any reason for doubt the application will be referred to HR for in-depth investigation before rejecting/accepting the applicant into the shortlist process.

5.5 DBS Checks

Any person who applies to work, or who moves from one post to another within the Company, must be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check.

5.6 References

1. In the application form, the applicant will be asked to provide the names of a minimum of three people to whom we may apply for a reference. One of the referees will be the applicant's current employer, and the timing of our approach will be upon the agreement of the applicant. Should the candidate have worked at a number of care companies, every effort will be made to contact all of the care companies they have previously worked for to request a reference. Internal applicants must provide a reference from their current manager and/or supervisory notes.
2. The request for references will be sent out together with a copy of the job description and person specification. The references will request information about the applicant's suitability to work with children/young people. Former employers will be contacted as well as referees; this will especially be done where there is a gap in the applicant's employment history.
3. In addition to written requests, former employers will be contacted by telephone. When referees are contacted by phone, a written record of this will be kept, this record will be available to the interview panel.

6 Shortlisting

1. A record will be kept of all meetings where shortlisting takes place. Whenever possible the short-list will have at least three candidates.
2. New workers will not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children/young people until they have undertaken the induction programme and the Company has received satisfactory references and a current Disclosure and Barring Service certificate. It must be emphasised that continued employment in such circumstances is subject to the satisfactory outcomes of checks.

7 Physical and Mental Fitness

A health declaration form must be completed and signed by the applicant if successful at interview and after a provisional offer of employment is confirmed, to ensure that all staff have the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness to fulfil their proposed role.

8 Probationary Period

1. All workers will undertake a probationary period. For care workers the probationary period will start at the onset of the employment period and is 6 months. A probationary review meeting will be held with the care worker which will decide either to pass the probation, extend the probation or fail the probation. The registered manager/home manager must discuss with the operations manager any actions prior to the meeting.
2. The probationary period will be used as a way of assessing if the new worker demonstrates the right qualities for working with children/young people.
3. During the probationary period the trainee will undertake a training programme. During the probationary period, registered managers/senior care staff will supervise care workers on a fortnightly basis.
4. If the probationary period does not proceed to both parties' satisfaction, then the contract can be terminated with the usual period of notice given on both sides. This will be governed by employment legislation.
5. The probationary period can be extended. The Trainee will be informed of this during the supervision sessions and this will be confirmed in writing to the Trainee if an extension is required.

9 Induction Training

The registered person must:

1. Ensure each employee completes an appropriate induction;
2. Ensure each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation;
3. Provide each employee with a job description outlining the employee's responsibilities.

A period of induction is crucial for new staff, if they are to make a satisfactory start.

1. All new care staff will undertake a three month induction programme. This programme is orientated to reflect our own specialism as well as the ongoing changes in the requirements of legislation.
2. The induction programme has been designed to equip the new employee with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to quickly enable the employee to contribute to the role of caring for children/young people safely and appropriately;
3. A well constructed induction programme ensures the lessening of errors made by unprepared employees which could result in putting children/young people and staff at risk;
4. The organisation is able to accurately gauge the knowledge and skills the employee has acquired;
5. A period of induction lessens the likelihood of damaging disciplinary and equal opportunity issues arising;
6. A period of induction is a contributory period of preparation for the inductee towards their Level 3 Qualification.

Formal supervision will be undertaken every two weeks for the first six months, then three weekly thereafter. During the Induction Programme the new employee will be required to complete six units of competence; they will gather evidence of their competency by attending formal training; and they will undertake assignments and take part in guided discussions with their mentors.

The new member of staff will also be asked to become familiar with the following documents and where to find the documents:

1. Policies and Procedures;
2. The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015;
3. Child Protection Procedures;
4. The Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 5 Residential Care.

The registered person must ensure that all employees:

1. Undertake appropriate continuing professional development;
2. Receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.

10 Regular Visitors and Volunteers

In respect of regular visitors to the home who are intended to spend unaccompanied time with a child/young person (either in a voluntary or professional capacity), it will always be necessary to undertake a criminal records check or to be provided with evidence that a current enhanced certificate exists. Where appropriate, a full interview and vetting process will be undertaken. Thus, the expectation will be that professional visitors such as advocates from authoritative bodies, solicitors, officers of the placing authority, medical staff etc. will hold the required checks. Staff have a responsibility to satisfy themselves that such professionals should only have access to children/young people if they hold an enhanced criminal record certificate. 'Non-professional' regular visitors or volunteers are required to undertake the same vetting and interview process as recruited staff - see above - and shall not have unaccompanied access to children/young people until the process is complete.

11 Revision History

Date of next review: August 2023

Date of review: August 2022

Date of review: June 2021

Date of review: July 2019

Date of review: June 2018

Date of review: May 2017

Date of review: May 2016

Date of review: April 2016

Date of review: February 2016

Date of release: April 2015