

SCA POLICY

Safer Recruitment

Version Control

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Safer Recruitment

In order to make safer, more robust recruitment decisions for all staff and volunteer posts in within SCA (both paid and voluntary) there are key stages the agency must follow:

Deter: promote messages to deter unsuitable applicants at every stage of the recruitment process, by providing clear messages about SCA's vigilance relating to safeguarding responsibilities.

Reject: seek to reject unsuitable applicants through adopting a robust approach to:

- Selecting the right candidates to interview, including pre- interview references where appropriate, employment history checks and appropriate selection techniques
- Providing a well-prepared and properly trained selection panel made up of the SCA director and two other members of the senior management team-

Prevent: prevent unsuitable people from gaining employment or volunteering for the agency by undertaking the right combination of pre-employment /volunteer checks, a rigorous code of conduct for staff and volunteers, strong protection for whistle blowers, and an open but vigilant staff/volunteer ethos.

Introduction

SCA takes responsibility for the safe recruitment and selection of paid and voluntary staff, and for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy. The recruitment and selection process will ensure the identification of the person best suited to the role based on the applicant's abilities, qualifications, experience and merit as measure against the role description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of paid and volunteer workers will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance (including the Prevent Duty Guidance). If a paid or voluntary worker involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision.

The agency aims to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information about the applicant applying for paid or voluntary work with the agency.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the CEO to:

- Ensure the agency has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DFE guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the agency's compliance with them

It is the responsibility of the CEO to lead and take decisions about all staff and volunteer appointments.

Definition of Regulated Activity and Frequency

Any position undertaken at, or on behalf of, SCA will amount to 'regulated activity' if it is carried out:

- Frequently, such as once a week or more
- Overnight, meaning between 2am and 6am
- Provides the opportunity for contact with children

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, SCA will advertise all positions vacant in the area the person is needed. When recruiting Agency Managers with the role of supporting childminders, the knowledge of the local area and community is needed and therefore will be advertised in a given geographical area. Priority will be given to individuals in the area most of the time. Any person involved in the selection and interview processes who has a conflict of interest should declare it immediately to their manager/supervisor.

Roles that cover the whole of SCA's geographical area will be externally advertised as widely as possible. Any advertisement will make it clear the agency commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All documentation relating to the application will be confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act (including GDPR) 2018.

Application Forms

The agency uses its own application form and all applicants for paid and voluntary work will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment. In addition, all applicants are required to account for gaps or discrepancies in employment history. Incomplete application forms will not be processed.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

CV's will not be accepted.

It is unlawful for the agency to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the agency.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or a role being withdrawn (if the applicant has been selected) and a referral made to the police and /or the DBS.

Role Descriptions and Person Specifications

A job description is a key document, and must be finalised prior to taking any steps in the recruitment process, it will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the role. The person

specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experiences, abilities and expertise that are required to do the role.

References

References for short listed applicants will be sent for immediately, unless the applicant requests the agency does not contact the referee at this stage. In such cases, the references will be taken up immediately after interview if the applicant is successful. All offers for volunteers or paid roles will be subject to a minimum of three references which are considered satisfactory by the agency. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. References should be obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the role for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that that the applicant is unsuitable. Referees should also be asked when appropriate, to confirm that the applicant has not been radicalised and that they do not support terrorism or any form of extremism.

There will be no questions asked about health or medical fitness prior to any role being offered. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. The agency will contact the referee directly for clarification. The agency does not accept open reference, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews

Interviews will be face to face or held over a secure video link. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the role description and meet the person specification. It will enable any anomalies or gaps in employment that have been identified to be clarified.

- 1) The interview will be conducted by two members of staff and thorough notes taken-
- 2) All questions asked will be directly relevant to one or more of the selection criteria that have been identified for the position-
- 3) No assumptions will be made nor will questions about the applicant's personal circumstances be made-

Once the interview has taken place and the decision has been made, we will contact the successful individual and arrange the start date for the position.

If at any point during the recruitment process, any issues arise, then you should report your concerns to the lead interviewer who will review your concerns.

At least one person making decisions on recruitment must have attended a safer recruitment or refresher course. All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of the identity address and qualification. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed 6 months after the recruitment programme.

INTERNAL RECRUITMENT

It is important that we recruit well experienced people that will deliver a high standard of service to our clients. We take the recruitment, development and promotion of our staff seriously and we do this by following a fair and non-discriminatory process.

Any opportunities for promotion will be advised and open to all members of staff and those who feel they have the skills and experience to bring to the role are welcome to apply.

Role Offered to Applicant/Volunteer

A role/job agreement is signed. Agency Managers who support childminders will sign their role description and role specification to form an agreement of behaviours and services.

The three references will have been received and be acceptable. ID and LA and DBS checks (and updates) must have been completed.

DBS checks will still be requested for applicants with recent periods of overseas residence and those with little or no previous UK residence.

Verification of professional qualifications will have been taken.

Any further checks should be carried out as necessary as a result of the applicant having lived or worked outside the UK.

All evidence of suitability will be recorded on a single entry recording sheet. Personal files will be set up electronically. All paper copies will be scanned onto the computer and paper copies kept for 7 years.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This does not apply to individuals applying for positions which work with or have access to children. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered SPENT must be declared.

Portability of DBS Certificate Checks

Paid and voluntary applicants will need a DBS which is on the update service and a Local Authority check. SCA will check the DBS. If they are unable to access the DBS information the applicant will have to apply for an up to date DBS.

Dealing with Convictions

If a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions, consideration will be given to: -

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence
- How long ago the offence occurred
- One-off or history of offences
- Changes in circumstances
- Decriminalisation and remorse

A further face to face meeting will take place to discuss the conviction and the CEO will evaluate all of the risk factors before offering the paid or volunteer role.

Proof of identity, right to work in the UK Verification of Qualifications and professional status

All applicant must have an identity check before they are given their username and password to apply for their DBS. Proof of ID requires applicants to show their documents such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. as proof of identity /eligibility to work in the UK. Where an applicant claims to have changed their name by deed poll or any other means (marriage, adoption, and statutory declaration) the agency will require documentary evidence of the change.

Qualifications

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have obtained academic or vocational qualifications legally, as claimed on their application form.

Medical Fitness

SCA will request the applicant completes a health form be signed by the doctor. This information will be reviewed against the role description and person specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements. SCA is aware of the Equality Act 2010 and no job will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustment while maintaining the safety of children.

Overseas Checks

Applicants who have lived/travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a criminal records check in the relevant country. SCA will not process applications until overseas information has been received and considered satisfactory. SCA will follow the support and guidance and the government website and seek support as needed. If an applicant is a national of a non EEC SCA will seek advice from the home office via the government website and will not process applications until all clearances and paperwork is in place.

Induction

All paid and volunteer workers working for the agency will be given an induction programme that includes access to the policies. All members and volunteers supporting others will receive appropriate training which includes the agency policies, ethos and principles including the promotion and understanding of British Values throughout their setting to enable them to become a quality inclusive provider.

Single central record for members, staff, volunteers, associates

In addition to the various staff records kept by the agency (on individual members, volunteer, staff files etc.) a single centralised record of recruitment and vetting checks is held. This is kept up to date with random checks carried out via the update service.

Record Retention/Data Protection

In accordance with the EU Data Protection Regulation, unsuccessful applications to the agency will be kept for 6 months, after this time they will be confidentially destroyed (i.e. shredded). The Director is responsible for ensuring this policy is monitored, updated and evaluated through the yearly Safer Recruitment evaluation audit.

Signed on behalf of Suffolk Childcare Agency

Dated

Print Name

Review Date