

Safer Recruitment and Selection of Staff Policy

Underpinning Legislation:

- Equality ACT 2010
- The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015
- Equal Pay Act 1970/ 2021
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995/ 2010
- The Employment Equality Regulations (religion or belief, sexual orientation, age)
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- The Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007

Governance group and proprietors:

Governance groups and proprietors must create a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of students in their schools or colleges.

Governance groups and proprietors should ensure that those recruiting and employing staff to work with students have received appropriate, safer recruitment training.

Outcome:

There is a careful selection and vetting of staff and volunteers working with students in the home and monitoring of such people to help prevent unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm students.

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues related to child protection, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students at every stage of the recruitment process, and staff management development and training. Throughout the methods of recruitment and selection, it is therefore essential that applicants for positions working with students are aware of the commitment to safer recruitment and safeguarding students in general.

The company makes sure that safeguarding features highly in all the processes, policies, procedures and practice and we hope to send a clear message to all applicants and existing staff and volunteers and helps to deter unsuitable individuals and inappropriate behaviour.

Aims and Values

As an organisation, we recognise the importance of recruiting the right people to work with the students in our care, ensuring that we have a balanced team in terms of gender, ethnicity and age and take stringent steps to maintain the safety of the young people. Vibrance adopts a consistent and thorough process of safe recruitment to ensure that those recruited are suitable to work.

What We Do?

At Vibrance, safer recruitment practices are applied at all stages of the recruitment process. The organisation refers to the Safer Recruitment Guide (2021) for further reference. One staff member on the interview panel must be trained in safe recruitment. All SLTs have this training, and it is required to be updated.

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- Advertising and information for applicants
- Selection of candidates through person specification
- Interviewing short-listed candidates, questions and written exercise
- Linking certificates with application form
- Identity check
- Offer of appointment to successful candidates
- References, written and verbal
- Enhanced DBS Checks
- Check that you can work in the UK and if you have lived outside the UK before. We check your driving licence and passport.
- Induction and supervision of newly appointed staff

All advertisements clearly state the role and responsibilities required for each post advertised.

An application form is sent to the person, along with details on the company, job description and person specification. We only consider applicants if a fully completed application form is returned. The application form asks for:

- Full personal details
- A complete history of employment, both paid and voluntary, since leaving school including any period of further education or training
- Gaps in employment and explanations for these, if any
- Relevant academic and vocational qualifications
- Referee details
- A statement of the personal qualities and experience

Once candidates are shortlisted against personal specifications for positions available, they are contacted and invited for an interview. Candidates will be offered at least one week's notice to attend an interview unless otherwise agreed. The candidates at this stage are asked to bring in information for identity checking and all original certificates and qualifications to link against the application form and information already provided. Shortlisted candidates should be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children.

Wherever possible, students will be involved in the interview stage, whether on the interview panel or by offering guided tours around the home. This allows the candidate's attitude towards students to be viewed and allows students to participate in decision-making. Students will not be left alone with candidates at any time.

Applicants are again asked to discuss any convictions or cautions if declared on the application form, and gaps in employment are discussed to confirm previous information.

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The candidate's fitness to work is asked during the interview stage as part of the interview process.

The Panel will ask agreed questions to candidates relating to the post's requirements. The questions are then graded. This will be explained to the candidate before the interview commences. The interview panel will also explore the candidate's attitude towards students, their ability to support and commit to safeguarding and promoting students, and any discrepancies arising from the information provided.

The interviewee will ask whether the candidate wishes to add anything or ask any further questions.

If interviews are held elsewhere, candidates may be asked to visit the setting. This enables potential candidates to meet staff and students on a sessional basis and ask any further questions. Observation of interaction and character would then be monitored and recorded on feedback completed by staff with support from the student if appropriate, which will further inform a decision.

A decision is made once all applicants have been interviewed on each session, and successful candidates are contacted via email via an offer letter, pending successful references and DBS and other necessary checks (such as the right to work in the UK). A candidate may be invited back for an informal chat regarding the role if a decision has yet to be reached from the first interview, as some areas may not have been demonstrated well or fully covered at the interview.

References are then obtained, with one reference at least being from a current or previous employer. Once the written references are received, verbal references are followed up to confirm the viability of the reference and to allow any further information to begin being passed on that may assist in the decision-making process.

Suppose a candidate provides an existing and precise enhanced DBS less than 18 months old and signs an employment contract stating that no other offences have been committed during this period. In that case, we will allow the successful candidate to begin work under supervision and only work with young people once a DBS has been obtained through the company.

Once all relevant documentation has been verified and approved by the manager, a letter stating such is sent to the successful candidate. This letter should also include a start date and contract of employment. The company will then require that this is sent back signed, along with passport photos for an ID card and personnel file.

The new employee is on probation for six months and will only be confirmed in the post; if performance is not the standard required, employment can be terminated, or an individual action plan can be put in place and the probationary period extended.

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A Recruitment checklist is completed throughout the process to ensure that all information is obtained.

Upon beginning employment, all staff will undergo a thorough induction training programme.

Staff will receive regular supervision.

Agency Staff and Contractors

If agency staff are used to working with students, we will obtain confirmation from the staffing agency that the appropriate checks have been carried out and are satisfactory. We will ensure that the contract or arrangement with the staffing agency imposes an obligation on it to carry out the same checks as the company for its staff. We will also ask if the DBS disclosure contains information and, if so, obtain relevant information from the agency that received it. The same enquiries will be made of any contractor we use to provide services that give rise to the staff having contact with students.