

Safer Recruitment Policy



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AIMS OF THE POLICY:

Skylark Plus Limited is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. To achieve this commitment we will ensure the continuous development, improvement and review of robust safeguarding processes and procedures that continuously promote a culture of vigilance in respect of safeguarding within our organisation.

This policy sets out the minimum requirements of our recruitment process, taking in due consideration of the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) that aims to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and adults at risk;
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and adults at risk.

All relevant Skylark Plus staff will be briefed on this policy before selecting applicants for interview or interviewing.

PROCEDURES

INVITING APPLICANTS

All recruitment advertisements will if a DBS disclosure is required include the statement:

“Skylark Plus is committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk. All appointments are subject to receipt of satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure”.

Prospective applicants will be supplied as a minimum with the following:

- Job description and personal specification (where available);
- Application form including - including self-declarations as required by Keeping Children Safe in Education

2 SHORT LISTING AND REFERENCES

Short-listing of candidates will be against the personal specification for the post, or where this is not available against criteria, which has been agreed in advance of the role being advertised.

Where requested and where possible dependent on timescales, references will be obtained before the final selection stage, so that any discrepancies can be probed during the final selection stage.

References will be sought directly from the referee. References or

testimonials provided by the candidate will not be accepted. Skylark Plus will

require a minimum of two satisfactory references in order to ascertain suitability to work with vulnerable groups. References **must be** obtained from the current or most recent employer (school/college/university). Where the candidate has worked in either care/education establishments within the last 5 years references must also be sought from these employers. Where the candidate is applying for a post in a children's home all references where the candidate has worked with children in education or care will be requested and responses pursued.

2.4 Where deemed necessary, previous employers who have not been specifically named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify a reason for leaving or any anomalies or discrepancies that have been identified.

A detailed written note will be kept of such actions.

2.5 Referees will always be asked specific questions regarding:

2.5.1 The candidate's suitability for working with children and adults at risk;

2.5.2 Any disciplinary warnings or sanctions, including time-expired warnings, that relate to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk:

2.5.3 The candidate's suitability for the post that they have applied for.

2.6 An online check will be carried out against the candidates' names prior to interview to review any adverse online articles that may be connected to safeguarding or that will impact on the candidate's suitability to work with children or adults at risk. If anything adverse is found this should be discussed by the interview panel.

3 THE SELECTION PROCESS

3.1 Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the

vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates.

3.1.1 All shortlisted candidates will attend a face-to-face interview (Video interviews may be carried out for first stage interviews but will always be followed by a face to face interview prior to any offer of employment being made.

3.1.2 All job descriptions and personal specifications will have reference to safeguarding.

3.2 Safeguarding questions will be included within the question plans that will be issued to the interview panel members. These must be asked at interview to identify how aware applicants are of safeguarding practices, to set the agenda for any future training needs (if their application is successful) and also to help in determining their suitability for the post they have applied for.

3.3 Candidates will always be required to:

3.3.1 Explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment from the age of 16 and leaving statutory education;

3.3.2 Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the recruiting panel;

3.3.3 Declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure; 3.3.4 Declare if they have been barred from working with children

3.3.5 Declare if there are any other countries that they have resided in for a

period of three months or more;

3.3.6 Demonstrate their capability and commitment to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and adults at risk.

3.4 Skylark Plus will:

3.4.1 Confirm the outcome of the interview to the applicant within a reasonable timescale;

3.4.2 Give detailed feedback following an interview if requested by the applicant;

4 HEADHUNTING

Skylark Plus may on occasion choose to use headhunting as the recruitment method of sourcing the most suitable candidate for a role. This will only be done with the approval of the Director to ensure that there is still due consideration for the Safer Recruitment practices. Any applicant who is selected via this method must still provide all evidence required under SAFER Recruitment and undergo the same rigorous vetting as all other applicants.

5 EMPLOYMENT (VETTING) CHECKS

5.1 All successful applicants are required to:

5.1.1 Provide proof of identity (to include photographic evidence);

5.1.2 Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK;

5.1.3 Complete a DBS disclosure application and receive satisfactory clearance (subject to the requirements of the role, see section 5.2 below);

5.1.4 Produce police checks from all countries that they have resided in for a period of more than 3 months since the age of 18;

5.1.5 Provide original certificates of qualifications they claim to hold;

5.1.6 Complete a confidential health questionnaire (only after any offer of employment has been made) and receive satisfactory clearance to ensure that they are mentally and physically fit to carry out their work responsibilities;

5.1.7 Assist Skylark Plus in gaining a minimum of two references that are satisfactory.. More references are required depending on candidates work history and role applied for see clause 2.3) These references will be reviewed and if deemed necessary there will be follow up discussion prior to the appointment being confirmed.

5.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check, which includes barred list information, will be required as the majority of staff will be engaging in regulated activity. In summary, a person will be considered to be engaging in regulated activity if, as a result of their work, they:

5.2.1 Will be responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or

5.2.2 Will carry out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children; or

5.2.3 Engage in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once.

For all other staff who have an opportunity for regular contact with children who are not engaging in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS certificate, which does not include a barred list check, will be appropriate. This would include contractors

who would have the opportunity for contact with children and who work under a temporary or occasional contract.

For clarification, a supervised volunteer who regularly teaches or looks after children is not in regulated activity.

Skylark Plus encourages all staff to join the DBS Update Service and will pay the annual cost for this certificate on the condition that the Trust is then able to check on a regular basis that no new information has been added to the certificate since its issue. This Trust will undertake this check on a minimum of a three-yearly basis.

For those staff appointed to work in Scotland, a Disclosure Scotland check will be required at the appropriate level depending on the role appointed to.

5.3 Additional Prohibition Checks

In addition, anyone who is appointed to carry out teaching work will require an additional check to ensure that they are not prohibited from teaching.

For those engaged in management roles in independent schools an additional check is required to ensure that they are not prohibited under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. This includes members of the governing body and the proprietor.

For those working or in a management role of a childcare provision or a school with children aged 7, additional checks will be made to ensure that the individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.

6 AGENCY STAFF

Skylark Plus must ensure that they have obtained written notification in the form of a Certificate of Compliance from any agency, providing details of the vetting checks carried out on an individual who will be working within the provision. These checks are at the same level as Skylark Plus Ltd would obtain for its own direct employees.

Skylark Plus must also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. This will be validated via photographic identification, evidence of the workers original DBS certificate and evidence of their home address.

7 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers who may undertake unsupervised work will be required to undertake the same level of vetting as members of staff.

Where a volunteer is only attending the provision for a short period of time (less than 2 weeks), then a decision will be made as to the level of vetting that must be undertaken through a safeguarding risk assessment, and if not all vetting is to take place then they must be supervised at all times. It should be noted that this supervision requires that;

7.1 they must be supervised by a person who is in regulated activity;

and

7.2 the supervision must be regular and day to day;

and

7.3 the supervision must be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of the students”

8 INDUCTION AND PROBATION

- 8.1 All new staff will undergo an induction that will include our Safeguarding policy and clear guidance on safe working practices.
- 8.2 All new staff will be subject to a probation period as detailed in the probation policy, which provides a formal framework for ensuring that the standards of performance set by Skylark Plus are fully communicated and that required standards are being met and maintained. During the probationary period, the individual's practice in respect of safeguarding will also be monitored. Any areas of concern will be highlighted and addressed with the individual.
- 8.3 Only in exceptional circumstances will a member of staff be permitted to start work prior to their full clearances being in place. Such a decision will be taken by the provision lead and will be subject to a full safeguarding risk assessment being conducted and mitigating actions identified, which will include as a minimum supervision of the member of staff at all time. Working under **a risk assessment will not be permitted for any staff working directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults.**

9. MODERN SLAVERY

Measures to detect Modern Slavery.

Skylark Plus is committed to improving our practices to combat **slavery** and human trafficking. Skylark Plus Limited recognises that slavery and human trafficking is a real yet hidden issue in our society and are practices that will not be tolerated in our organisation.

Skylark Plus pays full regard to the latest version of DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.' We ensure that all appropriate measures are applied in relation to everyone who works i who is likely to be perceived by the students as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers, self-employed and employed staff. Safer recruitment practice has been fully encompassed in Skylark Plus' Safer Recruitment Policy and its procedures. Safer recruitment practice includes scrutinising applications and original copies of evidence of identity and qualifications, obtaining professional and character references, checking previous employment history and ensuring that a candidate has the health and physical capacity for the job. It also includes undertaking rigorous selection procedures and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and other checks.

Our Payroll Department will ensure all payments for salaries are paid into the employees bank account.

SKYLARK