

2.3 Safer Recruitment

This chapter was added into the manual in February 2018

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1. Introduction

Safer recruitment is a term that describes a set of processes that are designed to ensure as far as possible that all staff, volunteers and other agents of, Bryn Melyn Care Ltd working with children and vulnerable adults will not pose a threat to service users by

- Undertaking appropriate back ground checks to ensure that there are no issues in someone's past to take account of at recruitment stage that may compromise the safety of service users;
- Undertaking appropriate post-employment processes to gain assurance on the individuals suitability to work with vulnerable service users.

Safe recruitment practice should include those persons who may not have direct contact with children, but because of their presence and familiarity in certain settings will still be seen as safe and trustworthy.

2. Values

Bryn Melyn Care seeks to comply with and exceed all benchmarks related to the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, whether these are of a legal nature or a matter of good practice. It is an absolute duty for staff to consider the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults in all aspects of our work.

Bryn Melyn Care is committed to promoting the health, education, safety, inclusion and welfare of children and vulnerable adults. We seek to do whatever is possible to ensure their right to engage with our services in a positive and safe environment

The failure of staff to abide by this policy, any related procedure and / or failure to reasonably safeguard children and vulnerable adults could be interpreted as gross misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

3. Legal Framework

- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- The Children Act(s) 1989, 2004;
- The Protection of Children Act 1999 (POCA);
- The Human Rights Act 1999;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Department of Health Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) scheme 2004 (incorporated into the 2006 Act);
- Data Protection Act 2018, (GDPR);
- The Equality Act 2010.

4. The Policy

The principles of safer recruitment will be included in the terms of any contract drawn up between Bryn Melyn Care and contractors or agencies that provide services for children for whom Bryn Melyn Care is responsible. Bryn Melyn Care will monitor compliance with the contract, which should also include a requirement that the provider will not sub-contract to any personnel who have not been part of a safer recruitment process.

Senior management will ensure that designated staff undertake safer recruitment training as approved by The Local Safeguarding Children Board and any other relevant training. All interview panels will consist of at least one safer recruitment trained individual.

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

- Advertising and information for applicants;
- References;

- Other checks before interview;
- Selection of candidates;
- Interviewing short-listed candidates;
- Offer of appointment to successful candidate;
- Induction and supervision of newly appointed staff.

Advertisements and Information for Applicants

All recruitment advertising material contains a policy statement to this effect. All information given to the interested applicant should highlight the importance placed by Bryn Melyn Care on rigorous selection processes.

The information should stress that the identity of the candidate, if successful, will need to be checked thoroughly, and that where a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check is appropriate the person will be required to complete an application for a DBS Disclosure straight away.

The job description should clearly set out the extent of the relationship with, and the degree of responsibility for, children with whom the person will have contact. The person specification should explain:

- The qualifications and experience needed for the role;
- The competencies and qualities that the applicant should be able to demonstrate;
- How these will be tested and assessed during the selection process.

The application form should ask for:

- Full personal information, including any former names by which the person has been known in the past;
- A full history of employment, both paid and voluntary, since leaving school, including any periods of further education or training. This should include start and end dates explanations for leaving and gaps in employment, education or training;
- Details of any relevant qualifications;
- A declaration that the person has no convictions, cautions, 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.

Curriculum vitae, drawn up by applicants in place of an application form are not acceptable because these will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details. Where applicants are sought via recruitment agencies, all applicants will be required to complete a formal application prior to an offer of employment being made.

References

The application form should request both professional and character references, one of which should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. Additional references will be asked for where appropriate. For example, where the applicant is not currently working with children, but has done so in the past, a reference from that employer should be asked for in addition to that from the current or

most recent employer if this is different. Where character referees are provided in place of an employment reference, employment confirmation directly from the employer will also be requested.

References should be sent wherever possible to business addresses, not a home address.

References should contain objective, verifiable information and in order to achieve this, a reference pro-forma with questions relating to the candidate's suitability to work with children should be provided.

References should include:

- In what capacity the person has known the applicant;
- Post held with dates, salary and reasons for leaving;
- Ability and suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Any current disciplinary investigation and/or sanction;
- Any allegations and/or disciplinary investigations relating to the safety or welfare of children and young people and the outcome of these (including where any sanction has expired). Where information is received in relation to this, all individuals will partake in a risk assessment process in order to determine their suitability to work with the company;
- Whether any referrals have been made to appropriate authorities in relation to the individuals conduct whilst within employment;
- If the referee would re-employ the applicant and, if not details of why

Open references or testimonials will not be accepted.

Selection of Candidates

There are standard procedures for short listing to ensure that the best candidates are selected fairly. All applicants should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation. Safer recruitment means that all applications should additionally be:

- Checked to ensure that they are fully and properly completed. Incomplete applications should not be accepted;
- Scrutinised for any anomalies or discrepancies in the information provided;
- Considered with regard to any history of gaps, or repeated changes, in employment, or moves to supply work, without clear and verifiable reasons.

All candidates should be instructed to bring to the interview documentary evidence of their identity and physical likeness, either a full birth certificate, passport or photo card driving license and additionally a document such as a utility bill or bank statement that verifies the candidate's name and address. Where appropriate, change of name documentation must also be brought to the interview.

Successful candidates should also be asked to bring original or certified copies of documents confirming any necessary or relevant educational and professional qualifications.

Interviewing Short-listed Candidates

Questions should be set which test the candidate's specific skills and abilities to carry out the job applied for.

If the job involves dealing with children and vulnerable adults then the candidate's attitude toward children and vulnerable adults in general should be explored and also their commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

Any gaps and changes in employment history should be fully explored during the interview, as should any discrepancies arising from information supplied by the candidate or by the referee.

Offer of Appointment to Successful Candidate

An offer of appointment should be conditional upon pre-employment checks being satisfactorily completed, including:

- A DBS check appropriate to the role. Any positive disclosures are to be fully risk assessed by the safe guarding lead prior to being deemed acceptable;
- Verification of any relevant professional status and whether any restrictions have been imposed by a regulatory body;
- Satisfactory evidence being presented regarding candidates right to work in the UK;
- Satisfactory employment references.

All checks should be confirmed in writing and retained on the candidate's personnel file, together with photocopies of documents used to verify his/her identity and qualifications.

A record should be kept of the date the DBS disclosure was obtained and who by, the level of the disclosure and the unique reference number.

A record should be kept of evidence to show that such checks have been carried out in respect of supply staff and volunteers.

Satisfactory references must be kept on the candidate's personnel file or, in the case of supply staff or volunteers not recruited through an agency, on a central record within the organisation.

Risk Assessments

There may be instances where pre-employment checks identify inconsistencies in information, concerns regarding an individual previous disciplinary record and receive a positive DBS disclosure.

Individuals will not be automatically discounted or barred from working with Bryn Melyn Care. All individuals in these circumstances will participate in a robust risk assessment process where the responsible individuals will explore the circumstances, timescale, re-offence history and review those in conjunction with the requirements of the role. Safeguarding is at the forefront of this notice and the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people in our care will always guide the decision.

If there are legal reasons that prevent an individual from working with the organisation a risk assessment will not be completed, however the candidate will receive confirmation as to why they have failed to meet the expected levels of pre-employment checks.

When an individual who is barred from working with Children and Young People applies to work with the company, Bryn Melyn Care will inform regulatory bodies or authorities as appropriate.

Induction and Supervision of Newly Appointed Staff

The induction of all newly appointed staff should include an introduction to the organisation's child protection policies and procedures. This should include being made aware of the identity and specific responsibilities of those staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities.

New staff members should be provided with information about safe practice and given a full explanation of their role and responsibilities and the standard of conduct and behaviour expected. They should also be made aware of the organisation's personnel procedures relating to disciplinary issues and the relevant whistle blowing policy.

The programme of induction should also include child protection training at a level appropriate to the member of staff's work with children. Senior managers should ensure that their staff are adequately and appropriately supervised and that they have ready access to advice, expertise and management support in all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection.

All staff will have a probation period of not less than 6 months. During the new employees' probation period, their fitness to work with children and vulnerable adults will be assessed and form part of the decision to confirm the appointment or not. Should there be any doubt of this at 6 months the probation period will be extended and or the employment terminated.

Revision History

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

Date of release: December 2018

End