



Safer Recruitment Policy

Introduction:

The safe recruitment of staff and babysitters is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. SafeCircle is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its member families and children in connections with the service. As a placement agency, SafeCircle expects all staff and babysitters to share this commitment.

In line with recent legislation including the Children Act 1989/2004 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. SafeCircle takes very seriously its duty of care for all member family children. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its members, SafeCircle is committed to a thorough and consistent Safer Recruitment Policy.

Aims and Objectives:

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse or harm children or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff and babysitters.

This is achieved through the following points;

- SafeCircle has a principle of a competitive approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicants for the role. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the expectations of SafeCircle's Code of Conduct.
- The recruitment and selection of staff and babysitters will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner.
- If a member of staff or babysitter involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant they must declare as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
- This policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for a role as a SafeCircle Sitter.

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the management team to:

- Ensure that SafeCircle has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and babysitters in accordance with Ofsted guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the SafeCircle staff's and babysitters compliance with them.
- Ensure that SafeCircle operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and babysitters who work on their behalf.
- To monitor any contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Recruitment and selection process:

Advertising: To ensure equality of opportunity, SafeCircle will advertise all roles to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible.

Any advertisement will make clear SafeCircle's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Application forms: SafeCircle uses its own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

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' will not be accepted.

All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies (eg: Health and Care Professions Council in England).

References: References for applicants will be sent for immediately after interview. Two professional/character references must be provided. These will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

SafeCircle does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives.

Interviews: There will be a face-to-face interview for every post. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the role and adhere to policy and procedures. It will enable the interviewer opportunity to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Only original document will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed following at the end of the recruitment programme.

All applicants (where appropriate) who are invited to interview will also be required to undertake a basic knowledge test to support the interviewer in the decision for appointment. This test will assess their base level of knowledge of basic childcare.

Offer of registration:

The appointment of all new employees and babysitters is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Certificate, references, medical checks (if required), copies of qualification and proof of identity. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained. The checklist will be retained on personal files. The head office will contact the successful applicants to confirm that all paperwork has been received and a start date can be agreed.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974: The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to children and young people. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any position with SafeCircle.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate (formally CRB): All staff and babysitters at SafeCircle require an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of their role.

It is SafeCircle's policy to re-check staff and babysitters DBS Certificates every three years and in addition any staff or babysitters that takes leave for more than three months (ie: maternity leave, career break etc.) must be re-checked before they return back to work. This will be done through the production of a new DBS check under 1 year or alternatively all SafeCircle babysitters will be requested to enrol with the DBS update service and consent to head office completing a check every 3 years.

Members of staff and babysitters at SafeCircle aware of their obligation to inform head office of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

Dealing with convictions: SafeCircle operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- 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 formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the directors which includes the lead professional for safeguarding. A decision will be made following this meeting.

Proof of identity, Right to work in the UK and qualifications and/or professional status:

All applicants invited to attend an interview will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have actually obtained any academic or vocational qualification claimed in their application form.

Medical fitness: Anyone appointed to a post involving regular contact with children must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before any appointment offer is confirmed. All applicants are required to declare any medical history and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

Record retention and data protection: SafeCircle will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie: shredded). The 6 month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow SafeCircle to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made.

All information retained on employees and babysitters are kept centrally in the head office on a secure file system.

Leaving registration of SafeCircle Sitters: Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee or babysitter (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse ie: physical, sexual and emotional and neglect) the agency's Allegations Against Professionals policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, SafeCircle will inform the appropriate agencies of the circumstances why the employee or babysitter is leaving SafeCircle's employment/registration.

Monitoring and Evaluation: The staff at head office will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the agency. This will be undertaken through formal reviews of each staff members and babysitter on a 3 yearly pattern.

Useful contacts:

Named person for child protection and deputy: Keeley Black Tel: 0203 811 0445

Local police -

Tel: 101

NSPCC –

Tel: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine –

Tel: 0800 1111 (textphone 0800 400 222)

Acknowledgements:

These procedures have been created with resources and guidance from SafeNetwork.org.uk (an NSPCC organisation).

This procedure is consistent with the government guidelines set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, HM Government, March 2013, and with the Children's Workforce Development Council's publication, *Recruiting Safely: Safer recruitment guidance helping to keep children and young people safe*, CWDC, 2009.