

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

Document information

Title	Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure
Version	BS248a
Updated	October 2021
Approved by	Anne Kent-Taylor (interim Charity Director); Carrie-Ann Black (Lead Trustee for Safeguarding)
Date of next review	October 2023

Definitions

Charity	Blue Smile Registered address: 47-51 Norfolk Street, Cambridge CB1 2LD Registered charity number: 1139279 Registered company number: 7411348
Staff	means salaried employees, contractors, trustees and volunteers

Related policies

	Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy Data Protection Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
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Policy statement

Blue Smile is committed to the safety and wellbeing of the children we work with, and we operate a safer recruitment policy which ensures that our employees, contractors, volunteers and trustees are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in line with statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/108004/7/KCSIE_2022_revised.pdf

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Blue Smile's recruitment practices ensure that employees, contractors, volunteers and trustees are suitable to work with children and to outline the HR processes which support Blue Smile's ongoing commitment to child protection and safeguarding.

Scope

This policy applies to Blue Smile employees, contractors, volunteers and trustees.

Aims and objectives

The aims of the Charity's recruitment practices are:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position
- To identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- To ensure that all job applications are considered equally and consistently
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, family status or disability.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislations, recommendations and guidance including statutory guidance and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- To ensure that the Charity meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Employees who are involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

Recruitment and selection procedure

Inviting applications

The Charity invites applications through our website and internal and external advertising depending on the role.

Adverts for roles that include working with children include a statement about Blue Smile's commitment to keeping children safe.

Prospective applicants will, as a minimum, be supplied with, or have access to through our website:

- Role description and person specification
- Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Safer recruitment policy and procedures
- Charity's privacy statement

All applications must be in writing using a Blue Smile standard application form and the relevant criminal record declaration form for the role.

Short-listing and interviews

Short listing of candidates takes place with reference to the application form, role description and person specification, by two members of staff, one of whom has safer recruitment training.

Blue Smile may carry out an online search on short-listed candidates as part of due diligence to identify any issues relating to their suitability for working with children which may then be explored at interview. Online searches will not be undertaken on areas of people's lives outside of this remit.

Interviews will be conducted face-to-face (in person or online) and a minimum of two interviewers will be present.

The interview process aims to:

- Explore the applicant's ability to carry out the role and meet the person specification
- Explain satisfactorily any gaps in the candidate's employment
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the application
- For clinical roles, allow the candidate to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people. For non-clinical roles ensure there is an awareness of the importance of safeguarding in the charity as a whole

Questions written by children will be included in our interviews wherever possible.

Pre-employment checks/requirements

If the Charity makes an offer of employment following the formal interview, we will undertake the following pre-employment checks:

References

All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references. One reference should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer, or course tutor in the case of trainees.

Referees are asked to confirm that they believe the candidate is suitable to work with children.

The Charity will follow up any discrepancies, concerns or vague statements on the reference.

Criminal records check

Clinical roles within Blue Smile are classed as a 'regulated activity' and require an enhanced DBS check including a Children's Barred List. Work in a school will not begin until clearance has been received or an online check has been made if the applicant is registered with the DBS Update Service.

If the applicant has been resident overseas, as an adult, for three months or more over the past five years a police check from that country should be obtained.

Further pre-employment checks undertaken are:

- The signing of the Charity's terms and conditions, contract for services or role agreement
- Verification of the applicant's identity
- Verification of professional qualifications and professional indemnity insurance for some clinical roles
- Proof of eligibility to work in the UK
- Clinical roles within Blue Smile are required to complete a Level 2 or 3 CPD certificated online Safeguarding course prior to starting work with children

If a check raises concerns about a person's history the Charity will assess whether or not they are suitable to work with children and young people and any formal offer of appointment will be put on hold until the Charity has investigated further.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from working with Blue Smile. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (England and Wales), Rehabilitation of Offenders Order 1978 (Northern Ireland) and Offenders Act Exceptions Order (Scotland 1974 - Amendment 2003) were introduced to ensure that ex-offenders who had not re-offended for a period of time since their conviction are not discriminated against when applying for jobs. Unless a position is exempted from the Acts, employers are not allowed to discriminate on the grounds of spent convictions. Please refer to our Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy for further information.

Induction

Although not all roles within Blue Smile involve working with children a consistent induction process aims to ensure that everyone in the organisation has an awareness of the Charity's safeguarding policies and procedures.

All new staff will be given an induction which will clearly identify the Charity's policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy and will be asked to sign an Information Sharing and Confidentiality agreement.

An induction pack with all relevant paperwork will be sent out in time for new staff to read the relevant documents and it is made clear which documents they will be asked to sign, including the Safeguarding Children and Adults and Blue Smile Practice Standards (for clinical roles).

An induction checklist is used to ensure that all areas have been covered.

The induction is also designed as a chance for new staff to talk through any areas of the role and organisation that they may have questions about to foster an environment of open communication from the outset.

For clinical roles, a second induction takes place in school with the School Clinical Lead.

Ongoing awareness

Staff are kept up to date with any changes that are made to safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

Clinical staff are required to acknowledge by email that they have re-read safeguarding policies and Blue Smile Practice Standards at the start of the new school year.

Employee Handbook updates are sent to salaried office staff and a copy is available on our online HR system.

Register of staff

Blue Smile keeps a single central record of staff which includes a record of pre-employment safer recruitment checks. The Clinical Administration and Recruitment Manager has responsibility for this record.

Record retention/data protection

If an application is successful, the Charity will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This documentation will be retained by the Charity in a locked and secure cabinet in line with our Data Protection Policy.