

Introduction

The directors of the company are fully committed and support the implementation of this policy and consider the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults to be of paramount importance. The aims of this policy are to:

- Inform all employees, contractors and third parties of their responsibilities when recruiting and working with members of the public;
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the recruitment of ex-offenders in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice;
- Ensure that disclosure applicants who have criminal records are treated fairly are not discriminated against because of a conviction or other information revealed;
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the secure storage, handling, use retention and disposal of disclosure and disclosure information.

The policy does not form any part of an employee's contract of employment; however, failure to comply with it may lead to disciplinary action.

Principles

This policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the public is of primary concern, particularly children and those who are in a vulnerable situation.
- All people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to safeguarding from abuse;
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse to their manager and the Designated Safeguarding Officer (this role is fulfilled by the People Department). Concerns may be investigated and, if appropriate, referred to the Social Services Department and the Police to conduct, where appropriate, a joint investigation;
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998;
- The DBS Code of Practice will be followed;
- Should there be any concerns; in the first instance an individual should raise these with their line manager and the People Department as appropriate.

Responsibilities

All individuals are required to take shared responsibility for the safety of any members of the public with whom they come into contact.

Management Responsibilities

Responsibility for any programme of work or project rests with the appointed manager leading on that work. This person is expected to:

- Ensure that the work is planned, organised and delivered in accordance with the national government guidelines surrounding Safeguarding. Further information can be obtained at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/disclosure-and-barring/leaflet-england-wales?view=Binary.
- Ensure that at tender stage of the bid process, a risk assessment is undertaken to determine whether the contract requires DBS checks to be completed.

- Determine whether there is a client and/or Company requirement for DBS checks to be completed.
- Ensure that everyone involved in the programme of work or contract knows who is responsible for safeguarding and how to report any concerns.
- Arrange appropriate checking, training, induction and guidance and for all staff to ensure that they are able to identify risks and signs of possible problems.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer and complete the appropriate documentation.
- Complete a health and safety risk assessment.
- The HR Director has overall responsibility for the Safeguarding Policy with delegated responsibility to the Head of the People Department.

Employee Responsibilities

All employees are expected to follow a common sense approach that both reduces opportunities for abuse and helps to protect employees from any false allegation. We would expect all individuals to:

- Treat all people with respect, and respect their right to personal privacy.
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is a parent, guardian or carer present when working around children aged under 18 years of age.
- Exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues.
- Ensure there is no physical contact apart from an acceptable greeting i.e. a handshake.
- Challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- Keep parents, guardians and carers fully informed of all anticipated activities where relevant.

Employees should not:

- Spend time alone with children under the age of 18 years of age away from others, unless supervising work experience and or training programme for young people. In such cases due diligence should be taken.
- Make over-familiar or sexually suggestive comments or approaches even as a joke.
- Let allegations, over-familiar or sexually suggestive comments or approaches go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature that a person is able to do for themselves.
- Take photographs, videos or other images of people without the express written permission of the person in question or their parent, guardian or carer where relevant.

Disclosure and Barring Service

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and, effective from 01 December 2012, merges the functions previously carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Its primary role is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children.

It is a requirement of the DBS that all Registered Bodies must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and do not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. Please see the DBS Policy and Procedure for further information.

Review

This policy and procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the People Department.

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on safeguarding, disclosure and barring.
- Following and issues or concerns raised about safeguarding.

Questions and Further Advice

Please contact the People Department should you have any queries.