

Safer Recruitment Policy



Open Arms Support Services

Open Arms Support Services Ltd Safer Recruitment Policy

Reader Information Box	
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Statement and purpose of policy

When recruiting new employees, Open Arms Support Services LTD (OASS) have a responsibility to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Quality Care Commission (CQC), Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and the Department of Education - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). This means that before employing a staff member, including on a voluntary basis, we will complete safer recruitment checks. These include carrying out Enhanced Disclosure and Barring checks (DBS) and checking whether the person being employed is barred from practicing.

This policy is in place to give guidance on the process of safer recruitment and to ensure that those responsible for the recruitment of employees carry out all of the necessary checks prior to, during and after employment commences.

We work within a variety of settings, including schools and have to ensure that we comply with their requirements. Prior to entering a new setting, it will be expected that your disclosure and barring information will be passed on to them so that they can update their records.

Information about your disclosure and barring will also be held on the OASS Single Central record (SCR).

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Clinical Director and the Business Coordinator to complete the recruitment process from start to finish and to ensure that their safer recruitment training is up to date. They will also ensure that the policy is implemented, and full training is given should any other employees become involved in the recruitment process.

The Business Coordinator will also ensure that each setting has the required information on the safer recruitment checks that we have carried out and will ensure that if any further information is required it is collected and passed onto that setting within the given timescale.

The Business Coordinator is also responsible for maintaining the SCR. Information contained within this record will include, in compliance with KCSIE 16/18 (carrying out regulated activities within schools) and Department of Health 2012 (carrying out regulated activities with adults), the results of the Enhanced DBS with barred list check, your right to work in the UK, your qualifications and registrations along with other personal information. Only the Business Coordinator and Clinical Director have access to the SCR.

All employees have a responsibility to safeguard the children, adults and vulnerable groups that we work with, for further information please refer to our 'Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults Policies.

Overall accountability for recruitment lies with the Clinical director.

Safer recruitment process

Managing a vacancy

When a new position arises within the business the Clinical Director and Business Coordinator will work together to create the job description and person specification. We are committed to employing a fully skilled workforce and providing opportunities for development, therefore upskilling our current staff will be considered prior to putting together the job description, person specification and advertising the position.

Job description and person specification

A job description will be in place for each post, setting out the principal duties and responsibilities of the job along with the requirements for recruitment and barring checks.

The person specification will state the qualifications, skills and experience needed to fulfil the role. It will be specifically related to the job, objective and will not be unnecessarily restrictive.

Application

OASS will only accept applications from those who have followed the correct application process.

OASS will make all candidates aware that there is some degree of responsibility for safeguarding, although the extent of the responsibility will vary according to the nature of the position applied for.

Checks will be made on a candidate's previous employment to confirm satisfactory reasons for any gaps in employment. These checks will be checked against references and any discrepancies will be discussed with the candidate.

As the position that a candidate will be applying for may involve substantial opportunity for access with children, vulnerable adults and young people, it is important that candidates provide accurate answers to OASS. Upfront disclosure of a criminal record may not impact on the application as the Clinical Director and Business Coordinator will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and at what age the offence was committed and any other relevant factors. Information on any disclosures beforehand should be submitted in writing to either the Clinical Director or Business Coordinator, if a candidate would like to discuss their disclosure/s then a meeting can be arranged in advance by calling OASS head office.

Any unspent convictions, reprimands or warnings must be disclosed to the Clinical Director and/or Business Coordinator. However, amendments to Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are "protected" and are not subject to disclosure and therefore cannot be taken into account when applying for a position. Guidance and criteria on this can be found on the Disclosure and Barring Service website.

Any successful candidates will be required to complete a disclosure application form with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for the position applied. All successful candidates are required to inform the Clinical Director or Business Coordinator if there are any reasons why they should not work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Failure to declare any convictions (that are not subject to DBS filtering) may disqualify the candidate from appointment or may result in a disciplinary offence if the discrepancy comes to light after appointment. If this is the case, then the Disciplinary Policy will be followed.

If the candidate is currently working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, on either a paid or voluntary basis, the Clinical Director or Business Coordinator will ask their current employer about any disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults (irrelevant of whether the offence is current or expired) and whether the candidate has been the subject of any child protection concerns or allegations and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure.

If the candidate is not currently working with children, young people or vulnerable adults but has done in the past, the Business Coordinator will ask that previous employer about any issues or concerns. Where neither the current or previous employment has involved working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the Business Coordinator will still ask the candidates current employer about their suitability to work with these groups. Where a candidate has no previous employment history, the Business Coordinator may request a character reference which may include references from the candidate's university or placements.

All candidates should be aware that giving false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal by OASS if they have already been appointed in position, and a possible referral to the police or DBS.

All information obtained as part of the DBS will be treated as confidential.

Invitation to interview

The Clinical Director and Business Coordinator will shortlist candidates according to the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities to the role. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to attend a formal interview at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail.

All formal interviews will include as a minimum the Clinical Director and Business Coordinator, however dependent on the position applied for, there may be other relevant members of management present. Both the Clinical Director and the Business Coordinator have undertaken safer recruitment training and are therefore qualified to carry out the interview process.

The interview will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include the candidate's suitability to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All candidates invited to interview must bring with them the original documents which confirm any professional qualifications that are relevant to the job. If the originals are not available, then the successful candidate must provide written confirmation of the relevant qualification/s from the awarding body.

OASS requests that all candidates bring the following to interview with them:

- A current photographic driving licence or a passport or a full birth certificate;
- A utility bill or financial statement issued within the last three months showing the candidate's current name and address;
- Where appropriate any documentation that confirms a change of name;
- Where the candidate is not a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area or Switzerland, proof of entitlement to work and reside in the UK;
- Qualification certificates

Please note that originals of the above are necessary, photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient and will not be accepted.

Candidates with a disability who are invited to interview should inform the Business Coordinator of any adjustments or arrangements to assist them in attending the interview.

Selection methodology

The following are all criteria that can be used within the selection process alongside the formal interview. The Clinical Director will decide which, if any, of the following are utilised. No appointment will be solely based on any one of the following methodology; they are measures to add to the overall picture of the candidate.

- Presentations and written submissions - to test the ability of the candidates;
- Psychometric testing - a test made to measure the candidates psyche. There are two categories, those associated with ability and those that assess personality;
- Assessment day and group exercises - a way to assess candidate's communication and interpersonal skills as well as seeing how they work in a team and group exercises.

Equality and Diversity

OASS are an equal opportunities employer and as such promote an efficient, effective, fair and consistent recruitment and selection process for all employees and potential employees. It is our policy to recruit the best person for each vacancy regardless of age, disability, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity or marriage and civil partnership.

As an organisation we value difference, and recognise the value that different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of individuals bring to the organisation.

Please refer to our Equal Opportunities Policy for more information.

Conditional offer of employment

Pre-Appointment checks

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

1. Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received);
2. Verification of identity and qualifications including evidence of the right to work in the UK;
3. A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS;
4. Verification of professional qualifications, where appropriate; and
5. Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas, such checks and confirmations as OASS may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered;

References

OASS will seek references as mentioned previously for all shortlisted candidates and may approach previous employers for verification to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview. If the candidate does not wish OASS to take up references in advance of an interview, they should notify OASS at the time of applying.

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and open references or testimonials will not be accepted. OASS will also verify the authenticity of any reference received.

OASS will ask all referees if the candidate is suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Once received, OASS will compare the references against the information the candidate has given on their application. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.

Criminal Records Policy

OASS will refer to the Department for Education Keeping- Children Safe in Education (KCSIE - and any updated versions), Department of Health - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA) and as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (POFA) in carrying out the DBS checks.

OASS complies with the DBS Code of Practice, a copy of which may be obtained on request or accessed here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

The trigger for a check is based on the position applied for and the type of contract the candidate will have with vulnerable groups. It is not based on the job title, which may vary considerably.

External candidates will be required to pay for any DBS check required, with the option to pay in instalments via their salary.

DBS Update Service

Where a candidate subscribes to the DBS Update Service the candidate must give permission for OASS to check that there have not been any changes since the issue of a disclosure certificate. If the original check did not include barring information for the children and vulnerable adults workforce, a separate Barred List check will be obtained.

In addition, before OASS use the Update Service, they will:

- Check that the certificate matches the individuals identity;
- Examine the original certificate to ensure that it is appropriate for the workforce and level of check, e.g. enhanced certificate/enhanced including barred list information;

If disclosure is delayed for any reason it may delay the commencement or continuation of a candidate's employment.

If any checks received are not satisfactory to OASS, an offer of employment may be withdrawn.

Data Protection

Recording checks

Prior to issuing an unconditional job and the candidates commencement of employment offer letter, the Business Coordinator will carry out a final check of the recruitment/personal file to ensure that evidence of all the pre-employment checks have been carried out and are securely stored.

All checks carried out are stored on a pre-employment checklist and this checklist will be kept in the personnel file of the person being recruited.

Checks undertaken throughout employment

Professional registration and right to work checks (where appropriate) will be undertaken on employees throughout their employment with OASS.

Enhanced, including the barred list DBS checks will be completed on OASS staff every three years. Employees are expected to self-fund these checks. Failure to do so will be considered gross misconduct.

Responsibility for ensuring ongoing employment checks are completed rests jointly with the Clinical Director and Business Coordinator. In instances where the employee fails to satisfy any of these checking procedures it may be necessary to put restrictions on the employee's work, take disciplinary action, and/or refer the matter to statutory organisations to investigate further.