



**523 – RECRUITMENT,
SELECTION & VETTING
POLICY**

Reviewed by: Tracey Ford (December 2015 – V5)
Next Review Due: December 2018

POLICY STATEMENT

The Senior Management Team are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and adults within The Shires' care across all provisions and expect all staff and volunteers to share and demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

The Shires is committed to safer practice in recruitment and ensuring that there is a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants to ensure that all persons appointed are suitable to work with our children and adults and that all applicants are fully aware of the importance for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our vulnerable children and adults.

POLICY AIM

The aim of this policy is to set out the procedures that ensure that the appointment of all Employees, supply/agency staff and volunteers are made on merit and in accordance with the provisions and principles of Employment Law, Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings, The Children's Homes Regulations 2015 Care Quality Commission Essential Standards of Quality and Safety Outcome 12, Regulation 21 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010 and The Shires' Equality Policies.

ADEQUACY OF STAFFING

The Senior Management Team of The Shires regards staff as an important asset. It is the policy of The Shires to ensure that it meets the requirements of both The Children's Homes Regulations and Adult Provisions' Regulations as above to ensure that there are a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working at each of the children's home or within the adult's provisions.

DELEGATION OF APPOINTMENTS

The Director of Care and Education is ultimately responsible for all staff appointments. However they may delegate some of this responsibility to the Deputy Director of Care and Education, Registered Manager's, the Human Resources Manager or the appropriate line managers. All staff involved in making appointments are required to undertake training in Recruitment and Selection and Equality Policies, including awareness of good practice guidelines provided in line with the documents listed in the aim of the policy.

PROCEDURE

The Shires' procedure is designed to promote safer recruitment across all provisions and may change from time to time in line with good practice. The main elements of the recruitment and vetting processes are as follows:

- obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants;
- following up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies;
- obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with our young people and/or adults;
- conducting a face-to-face interview and where applicable job-related assessments;
- verifying all successful applicants' identities and eligibility to work in the UK;
- verifying all successful applicants' academic or vocational qualifications;

- checking candidates' previous employment history and experience, ensuring any gaps in employment are adequately explained;
- ensuring medical fitness to carry out the duties and requirements of the post;
- undertaking an Enhanced DBS Check (formerly known as CRB) application for all posts against both the Children's and Adult's Barred List's; and there after regular checks through the DBS update service;
- additional checks for Teachers with the National College for Teaching & Leadership;
- additional checks if the candidate has lived or worked overseas.

ADVERTISING

All vacancies are normally advertised internally prior to external advertising, with any exceptions to this being agreed by the Director of Care and Education and/or Deputy Director of Care and Education and the HR Manager. Prior to advertising details of where to advertise, method of selection and timescales will be agreed. Any current member of staff who wishes to apply for any role advertised and is suitably qualified is considered in line with this procedure.

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Successful recruitment is a two way process and all applicants are provided with comprehensive information, via the HR Department, including:

- a job description outlining the duties and location of the post together with an indication of where the post fits into the organisational structure;
- a person specification indicating the qualifications, skills and types of experience which The Shires regard as essential or desirable in relation to the job;
- an Application Form;
- a Recruitment Monitoring Form;
- other general information including;
- The Shires prospectus;
- reference to the Statement of Purpose;
- a copy of the Recruitment, Selection and Vetting Policy;
- the name of any person who will be available to provide additional information about the post;
- pay scale information;
- terms and conditions relating to the post;
- guidance on the Enhanced DBS check process and the employment of ex-offenders;
- reference to The Shires' website for further information.

SHORT LISTING

Only completed Shires' application forms are to be considered for short listing and CVs will not be accepted as a replacement for any part of this form. All application forms are scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed. Incomplete application forms will not be accepted and will be returned for completion.

All candidates are assessed equally against the criteria contained within the person specification without exception or variation.

During the screening/short listing process, any gaps and/or queries arising from the application form is noted to be raised at interview.

The short listing process will be undertaken by at least 2 people and is co-ordinated by HR.

REFERENCES

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. All references are sought directly from the referee, as The Shires does not solely rely on provided open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern".

A minimum of two references are sought on all short listed candidates, including internal appointments, if appropriate, and where possible references are obtained before interview so that any issues of concern can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview. One reference will always be obtained from an applicant's current or last employer. For teaching appointments references will be taken up and verified before any interview takes place without exception.

Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, any offer of appointment is conditional upon satisfactory receipt. Any issues highlighted on receipt of references will be discussed with candidates in a separate discussion.

All references are verified upon receipt by means of a follow up phone call and checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. Further information on the candidate's suitability to work within a residential setting with either vulnerable children and/or adults will be obtained. If the follow up call raises any queries candidates may be asked to supply an additional referee.

INVITATION TO INTERVIEW

For short listed candidates, an interview may be arranged by means of phone call and confirmed in writing, or arranged through an 'invitation to interview' letter.

The letter will detail the time and place, directions to the venue and the membership of the interview panel and will normally be sent out at least a week before the interview date.

The invitation to interview letter stresses the need for The Shires to check the identity of the successful candidate and includes the request that all candidates bring with them to interview the following documentation, which will be authenticated, copied and returned:

- proof of entitlement to work in the UK;
- original documents to support a DBS application;
- current DBS/CRB (if applicable);
- certificates (training, qualifications, etc., and QTS for Teaching posts).

Please note that this documentation does not form part of the decision making process and, for unsuccessful candidates, is destroyed in line with Data Protection legislation.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications will be kept on their personnel file.

INTERVIEWS AND ASSESSMENTS

Interviews aim to assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements and to explore each candidate's suitability to work with challenging young people and/or adults.

Interview panel members meet prior to the interview to agree questions and assessments relevant to the post. The initial interview will normally consist of the following:

- a tour of the building and grounds;
- an opportunity to meet key staff;
- where practicable, children and/or adults are involved in the recruitment of staff in the homes;
- an opportunity to learn more about The Shires and the vacant post;
- a face-to-face interview with the appropriate line manager and at least one other. The format will normally consist of:
 - a series of structured questions;
 - the opportunity for candidate to ask questions and/or declare any information;
 - details of the terms and conditions of the post;
 - any assessment as appropriate to the role.

The interview panel will give full consideration as to whether to appoint or not. Comprehensive notes of the interview are kept together with the reasons for any offer of appointment, invitation to a second stage or refusal of appointment.

Candidates may be shortlisted to a second stage of selection and if so will be invited to visit The Shires to meet members of the team, students or residents (if appropriate to the position applied for) and undertake any further assessment, if applicable. For example; candidates applying for a care/support worker role would normally be required to attend an observation shift/ work trial in which they observe experienced staff carrying out their normal duties. The information and observations made will be taken into account in the appointment decision. This process is also to ensure that candidates know and understand, as far as possible, the nature of the post for which they are applying.

All candidates, both successful and unsuccessful, will be contacted as soon as possible with the outcome of the panel's decision. All candidates will be given the opportunity to receive constructive feedback.

CONDITIONAL OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

Any offer of appointment to the successful candidate is conditional upon the following:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references (one of which should be the current or last employer);
- verification of the candidate's identity;
- an enhanced DBS check that includes a check against the Disclosure and Barring Services Children's Barred List information and Adults' Barred List information and will be specific to the employment at The Shires;
- commitment to on-going DBS status checks through the DBS update service
- verification of the candidate's medical fitness both mentally and physically;
- verification of original qualifications;
- verification of professional status where required;
- verification of Teaching status where required;
- proof of entitlement to work in the UK;
- if applicable, further police checks and/or a Certificate of Good Repute/Letter of good conduct will need to be obtained from the home embassy/home country for candidates that have lived and worked outside the UK.

A start date will only be agreed between The Shires and the successful candidate once all the above pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed.

SUPPLY/AGENCY STAFF

It is important that thorough checks are made on anybody who works at The Shires including volunteers, agency/supply staff and consultants. Therefore the same range of checks that is necessary for permanent staff is also obtained for supply/agency staff, including those employed via employment agencies. All individuals will be asked to provide photographic evidence to confirm their identity on their first visit. All supply agencies are required to observe The Shires' Agreement for Supplying Agency Staff in terms of checking employees' fitness and suitability to work at The Shires.

We always seek written confirmation from any agency that supplies staff to The Shires that up-to-date checks have been completed and that copies of those checks are forwarded to The Shires for our records. It is also required that agencies share details about any individual supplied to The Shires in relation to convictions or other information on the disclosure.

MONITORING AND RECORDING

The Shires' recruitment process is monitored by the Director of Care and Education, Deputy Director of Care and Education, Registered Manager's and the Human Resources Manager to ensure that the policies and practices are adhered to and to allow for continuous improvement within our recruitment processes.

The HR department maintains The Shires' recruitment information including the logging of all enquiries, communication with applicants and the progress of applications.

All notes taken during the recruitment process form part of the formal record of why candidates were or were not selected for posts and for unsuccessful candidates are only retained for six months; after which they are destroyed.

Central registers, both electronic and paper copy, are maintained by the HR department on all staff, including agency and supply staff, ready for inspection by the relevant bodies and contain copies of verified documents and the dates of when checks were made and by whom.

The Shires' reserves the right to review this policy from time to time and in line with legislation and relevant good working practices.