

Thomas Coram Centre

Safer Recruitment & Employment Procedure

June 2016



Adopted from Camden's
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy for Schools

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1. Introduction

The Thomas Coram Centre is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. We are acutely aware of our responsibility to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that any appointment we make does not create a risk for our service users, especially those who are part of a vulnerable group.

This policy is intended to contribute towards embedding a culture of vigilance throughout the centre and support staff in challenging inappropriate behaviour. For this reason, the accompanying procedure covers not just the checks that we will undertake pre-employment, but also the ongoing checks throughout employment for those working in a safeguarding post. An offender-aware culture will be further enhanced through training, supervision sessions and team meetings, and the induction process for new staff.

We are also committed to reducing inequalities and to creating a more inclusive society. We will use disclosure information fairly and will not discriminate improperly against ex-offenders.

In particular:

We will not unfairly discriminate against the subject (i.e. a job applicant or existing worker) of disclosure information on the basis of a conviction or any other details that may be revealed.

We have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders (see Appendix 1) and will provide a copy of this policy on request to all applicants for positions where a disclosure is required.

In order to reassure applicants of our commitment to fair treatment, we will include in our application pack an explicit statement to the effect that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position with Thomas Coram Centre.

We will ensure that application forms for positions where disclosures will be requested contain a statement to the effect that a disclosure will be requested in the event of successful application.

We will discuss any matters revealed in disclosure information with the person seeking the position before deciding on an appropriate course of action or withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Note that this does not apply to additional information provided in a separate letter by the police.

We will make every subject of a disclosure aware of the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) 'Code of Practice For Registered Persons and Other Recipients of Disclosure Information' (referred to as the DBS Code of Practice from now on) and will make a copy available on request.

This procedure provides guidance to staff involved in recruiting and managing workers who are applying for, or appointed to, a safeguarding post.

For the purposes of this procedure, a safeguarding post is defined as being a role that involves working with children or other vulnerable group, or having access to sensitive information about members of such groups (e.g. address details).

The procedure should always be read in conjunction with the accompanying policy, 'Safeguarding in Employment'.

2. Aims

The main aims of the procedure are:

- To recruit and retain staff of a high calibre who can contribute to creating a centre of high quality that promotes the well being of all young children.
- To reduce risk by laying out the clear standards and robust practices needed to protect vulnerable people.
- To prevent unsuitable people from being employed in positions where they can cause harm.

The procedure applies to all **new** workers being recruited into a post at Thomas Coram Centre, whether full or part time employees, agency employees, or contractors/consultants. The term 'worker' includes both employees and Thomas Coram Centre volunteers.

3. Recruitment Of Staff At Thomas Coram

The governing body has overall responsibility for staffing matters at the centre. The governing body decides the number of staff (both teaching and support staff). Governors will follow the legal requirements and guidance laid out in the *Governors Guide to the Law* and *DCSF Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* during all appointments.

3.1 Head teacher

When a Head teacher is being appointed the full governing body must set up a selection panel of at least three governors. The selection panel must provide the LA with the details of the candidates selected for interview. The panel interviews any appropriate applicants and then recommends one of the people interviewed to the governing body for approval.

3.2 Leadership team

The recruitment of other staff from the Senior leadership team – the Deputy and Assistant Head is led by the governing body steering group. The Head teacher will be part of the selection panel.

3.3 Other staff

The recruitment of all other staff is led by the Resources Committee

3.4 When a member of staff leaves, the governing body will decide whether or not to replace him or her. Once the decision to recruit has been made the head will draw up a draft action plan for the approval of the governing body, steering group or Resources Committee whichever is the relevant group for the particular appointment. The relevant group will agree the recruitment panel and process. The recruitment panel may include governors, staff, parents or others who are not part of the group but have particular skill and expertise related to the particular post. Each panel will have a minimum of two interviewers.

4. Procedures to be followed during recruitment & selection

4.1 Advertisements

The relevant group will devise the advertisement for the post and ensure that it meets current legal requirements and accurately reflects the job. All senior leadership posts must be advertised in the national press and the Camden Web site. Team leader and early year's educator posts will normally be advertised in the national press and the Camden website. All other posts will normally be advertised in the local press and the Camden web site. Posts outside the leadership team *may* be advertised internally if there are staff with the relevant qualifications, skills and experience.

All internal posts will be advertised on the staff notice board and all staff will be informed of the vacancy.

Every advert for a post must contain a clear statement to the effect that the post is designated as a safeguarding post and the successful candidate will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.

4.2 Application packs

The relevant group reviews the job description and person specification for the post to ensure that it meets current legal requirements and accurately reflects the job.

The pack should include a copy of:

- the application form, and explanatory notes about completing the form;
- the job description and person specification;
- any relevant information about the local authority, Thomas Coram Centre and the recruitment process,
- statements of relevant policies such as the centre's policy about equal opportunities, the recruitment of ex-offenders, etc;
- Thomas Coram Centre's child protection policy statement;
- a statement of the terms and conditions relating to the post.

Applicants for teaching posts will be asked:

- to provide their DfES reference number;
- whether s/he has Qualified Teacher status (QTS); and
- whether s/he is registered with the GTC for England.

The application form enables us to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants.

We do not accept curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants in place of an application form.

For each safeguarding post the application form will state clearly that the post is a safeguarding post, that the application form asks for previous names known by and includes a clearly worded warning that falsification will normally lead to withdrawal of offer or dismissal.

Job descriptions & person specifications should clearly state that the post is a safeguarding post and that Thomas Coram Centre will undertake rigorous checks before appointing.

4.2.1 Scrutinising and Short-listing

All applications will be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment. Incomplete applications should not be accepted and should be returned for completion. Any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified by the scrutiny should be noted so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short-list the applicant. As well as reasons for obvious gaps in employment, the reasons for a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work, also need to be explored and verified.

All candidates should be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

4.3 Interviews

The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work with children. The selection process for people who will work with children should always include a face-to face interview even if there is only one candidate. There will be at least one member who has been trained in safeguarding interview techniques. Typically, this will be the chair of the interview panel.

4.3.1 Invitation to interview

In addition to the arrangements for interviews – time and place, directions to the venue, membership of the interview panel – the invitation should remind candidates about how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore including suitability to work with children. The invitation should also stress that the identity of the successful candidate will need to be checked thoroughly to ensure the person is who he or she claims to be, and that where a DBS Disclosure is appropriate the person will be required to complete an application for a DBS Disclosure straightaway. All candidates should be instructed to bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy DBS requirements.

4.3.1. Checks

Candidates should also be asked to bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post, e.g. the original or a certified copy of a certificate, or diploma, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body.

A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file, copies of unsuccessful candidate's documents will be destroyed.

4.3.2 Questions

All candidates will be asked questions relating to the requirements of the post, and additional questions based on the information provided in each candidate's application and references (if available). A candidate's response to a question about an issue will determine whether and how that is followed up. Where possible hypothetical questions will be avoided because they allow theoretical answers. The focus will be on competence based questions that ask a candidate to relate how s/he has responded to, or dealt with, an actual situation, or questions that test a candidate's attitudes and understanding of issues.

During the interview candidates will be asked additional questions designed to explore their motivation for working with children/vulnerable adults, their values and ethics, emotional maturity and resilience and their personal knowledge of safeguarding issues. Any gaps in their employment records should also be queried during this interview.

The interview panel will also explore:

- the candidate's attitude toward children and young people;
- his or her ability to support the centre's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- gaps in the candidate's employment history;
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee.

The panel should also ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS Disclosure.

4.3.3 Selection tasks

As well as interview questions candidates may be required to undertake one or more tasks to assess their suitability for a particular post. The following list indicates some of the processes that may be used:-

- observation of candidates working staff or parents at the centre or at their current place of work
- group discussions
- presentations on a theme relevant to the post
- written exercises
- scrutiny of data
- role play

4.4 Pre-employment checks

For safeguarding posts, a number of additional checks are required over and above those normally carried out at the pre-employment stage.

4.4.1 Identity Checks

Evidence of identity should be requested in 3 different forms, of which at least two must be made available:

- birth certificate issued at time of birth,
- photographic evidence (passport or new-style UK driving licence)
- address-related evidence (e.g. a utility bill).

Where an applicant has changed their name (e.g. through marriage, adoption or by deed poll) they should also provide evidence of this change.

4.4.2 Qualification Checks

Original qualification documents/awards should be requested. Photocopies are not acceptable. If the successful candidate cannot produce original documents or certified copies, written confirmation of his or her relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body.

4.4.3 Reference Checks

We will seek references on short-listed candidates, and may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview;

References should be sought to cover the period of 5 years prior to commencement at Thomas Coram Centre. If this is not possible, the centre should contact as many previous employers as necessary to satisfy themselves of an applicant's suitability for employment in a safeguarding role. General references of the 'to whom it may concern' variety are not acceptable.

One referee should be the applicant's current or most recent employer, and normally two referees should be sufficient. Where an applicant who is not currently working with children has done so in the past it is important that a reference is also obtained from the employer by whom the person was most recently employed in work with children. The form should make it clear that references will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends.

References should not be accepted unless they come directly from the referee to Centre. When we request references, we will address all requests to the previous employers' HR Departments. References should be checked against the application form for unexplained gaps and alert the hiring manager who can then question the applicant about any such gaps.

4.4.4 DBS Checks

The successful applicant will have completed a DBS form and provided the necessary evidence in support of their DBS form at the interview. The conditional offer letter will clearly state that the offer of employment is on condition of receipt of satisfactory references and DBS clearance. Where an applicant has changed their name by deed poll or any other mechanism, (marriage, adoption, statutory declaration), they should provide evidence of such a change.

If either the references or DBS check is unsatisfactory, the applicant will be notified immediately and the offer of employment may subsequently be withdrawn. However, where information has been released by the police to the employer in a separate letter, that information will not under any circumstances be discussed with the applicant.

4.5 Thomas Coram Safer Recruitment

4.5.1 General Principles

Thomas Coram Centre recognises safe recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe environment for children and will ensure that staff working in the school are suitable do to so and do not pose any kind of risk to children.

The school will follow the *Keeping children safe in education* guidance (DfE 2015).
[Keeping children safe in education - Publications - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education)

- Thomas Coram Centre will carry out extensive checks and enquiries on applicants for all positions, including voluntary and support roles and governors, in accordance with statutory requirements. No staff member, volunteer or governor will be allowed to take up posts until all checks and enquiries required for that position have been satisfactorily completed.
- Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service will be carried out at the level appropriate to the candidate's role in the school (see section 6.3).
- All job advertisements and application forms will clearly state that the role is a safeguarding role and that applicants will be expected to agree to undergo DBS and other checks as part of safe recruitment practices.
- Staff and governors who normally sit on interview panels will be trained in safeguarding interviewing techniques and no interview should go ahead unless at least one member of the panel has undertaken safe recruitment training. Thomas Coram Centre will take up the accredited safe recruitment training offered through the Camden Safeguarding Children Board.
- Although the head teacher will have day-to-day responsibility for the recruitment of staff, the board of governors will ensure that they maintain an overview of recruitment systems in order to scrutinise practise and ensure all statutory checks are carried out.
- Thomas Coram Centre and Human Resources staff with responsibility for carrying out recruitment checks should ensure they have a copy of any relevant documents or take relevant issue numbers from documents as proof that the document has been seen.
- Checks will be taken out on existing staff where concerns arise regarding their suitability to work with children or a person moves into a post that is a regulated activity.
- At Thomas Coram Centre the head teacher will be responsible for keeping a single central record of all staff and volunteers who work at the school.
- The single central records should include details of all checks carried out and the outcome of these checks in the format shown at appendix 3.

- Where Thomas Coram Centre has salaried trainee teachers, the school will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out on the trainees, including DBS checks, and that the outcome of these checks is recorded on the single central record.
- For trainee teachers that are fee-funded, the school will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that the necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged to be suitable to work with children.
- Where staff are recruited via third parties such as employment agencies, the head teacher/ deputy headteacher / deputy head of centre and the office manager will:
 - seek written confirmation from the agency that the agency has carried out all necessary checks on the individual
 - request written confirmation of the outcome of all checks
 - request written confirmation that an enhanced DBS certificate has been received by the agency
 - check the identity of agency staff when they first present for work to ensure they are person against whom the checks were taken out.

4.5.2 Checks to be taken out

The school will verify the following information for all new staff:

- The applicant's identity must be verified from their passport or other photographic ID and proof of address but be provided.
- The applicant's right to work in the UK must be evidenced through documentation. Only original documentation should be accepted and its validity checked in the presence of the applicant.
- Where the applicant will be involved in regulated activity, an enhanced DBS check will be taken out, including information from the barred list. If the applicant will begin work before an enhanced DBS check can be completed, a barred list check will be obtained.
- In the case of teaching staff, checks will be made on the applicant's academic and vocational qualifications and to ensure they are not prohibited from teaching.
- Where the applicant has been living abroad, similar enquiries will be made in the country of origin relating to the applicant's qualifications and suitability to teach.
- If a candidate applying for a teaching post is not currently teaching, the school will contact their former school to enquire about their reasons for leaving.
- Enquiries will be made regarding the applicant's state of physical and mental health to the extent that it may affect their capacity to carry out their role.
- Applicants will be asked to provide a full employment history and details of at least 2 referees, including previous and recent employers. All references will be taken up prior to interview and will be requested directly from the referee. Referees will be contacted to resolve any issues that emerge from the references provided.

- The school will keep copies of the following documents on staff personnel files:
 - documents used as proof of identity such as passports or driving licences
 - a summary of the DBS certificate (but all other documents relating to the DBS check must be destroyed)
 - documents that prove the staff member's right to work in the UK (failure to do so can result in a fine for employing illegal workers).

DBS checks

In order to ensure that people who work in the school are suitable to do so and are not barred from working with children, the school will apply to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for police checks and other barred list information as part of the recruitment process.

Full DBS checks which include barred list checks will only be taken out on individuals who are involved in regulated activity. This is defined as close, unsupervised contact on a regular basis involving activities such as:

- teaching
- training
- supervising
- care
- guidance and advice
- driving a vehicle
- personal or intimate care.

The activity must be carried out regularly as part of the staff member's day to day responsibilities and the checks will be reasonable in order to safeguard children.

Full DBS checks with barred list checks will also be carried out on permanent staff members working at the school or unpaid volunteers who regularly work unsupervised at the school and whose work means they have an opportunity for contact with children.

Other staff, contractors and supervised volunteers who have opportunities for regular contact with children but do not carry out a regulated activity will be subject to an enhanced DBS check but **not** barred list checks.

Decisions on whether a person is carrying out a regulated activity or whether their role provides opportunities for regular contact with children requiring a DBS check will be made by whoever is responsible for recruitment in the school, for example the head teacher or governor, and the following will be taken into consideration when deciding on this.

- the age of the children;
- their level of vulnerability;
- the numbers of children in the group;
- the nature of the role;
- Opportunities for contact with the children.

The school has robust procedures for day to day staff management and supervision and clear procedures for reporting and acting on concerns. Staff carrying out roles involving regulated activity will be suitably supervised on a regular basis by senior staff carrying out a similar role.

The school will ensure that all DBS checks carried out on staff are renewed after 3 years of the original DBS disclosure.

5.4.3 Volunteers

The head will ensure that the following are carried out in relation to unpaid volunteers such as parents who accompany pupils on school outings or provide help in the classroom:

- All volunteers will be required to undergo a recruitment process, such as references, DBS and other checks and interviews that is appropriate and proportional to the duties assigned to them.
- Volunteers who are carrying out a regulated activity, for example being left unsupervised with children or providing personal care to children should be subject to an enhanced DBS check, including barred list information.
- New volunteers who are not carrying out regulated activity but who have an opportunity for regular contact with children will be subject to an enhanced DBS check but this may not include a barred list check.
- For other volunteers who are not carrying out regulated activity and do not have regular contact with children, the head teacher will decide whether an enhanced DBS check should be carried out depending on:
 - the nature of the role
 - what information is already known about the volunteer
 - what references from work or volunteering activity the volunteer has provided regarding suitability
 - whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.
- The school will ensure that all volunteers are competent to carry out the duties assigned to them and are only assigned duties that are suitable to their qualification and experience.
- Volunteers carrying out regulated activity but for whom a DBS check has not been carried out will be suitably supervised by teaching staff at all times at a level that ensures the safety of pupils.
- All volunteers will be fully inducted in relation to all school policies and procedures.

This section also applies to school governors who will be treated as volunteers for the purposes of carrying out DBS checks.

4.5.4 Disqualification By Association

This section relates to primary schools with nurseries and/or reception classes and other schools where the school provides after school provision for children under the age of 8.

The school will implement the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 by ensuring that staff who are disqualified by association because they live in the same household as a person disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 are not able to work in an early years setting within the school.

To do this the school will follow the statutory guidance “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006”:

[Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

The school will also implement the “Childcare Disqualification Requirements Management Guidance” provided by Camden available at: [Schools and Nurseries Safeguarding Policies | Camden Safeguarding Children Board](#)

4.6 Other Checks

- Professional Bodies

Although not a standard part of the selection procedure, we reserve the right to approach a relevant professional body to confirm that the (prospective) worker is appropriately qualified and has not been the subject of disciplinary action. This action should be considered in cases where there is either a specific concern, or where we have been unable to gather all the information we need to make a judgement from our standard checking mechanisms.

- Credit Checks

We may also undertake credit checks on staff who will have access to Thomas Coram or client finances. Written permission will be sought from the prospective employee before such a check is undertaken, and they will be given an opportunity to view the final report and to refute any information.

Medical checks

Confirmation of fitness to carry out the role will be required for each successful candidate in line with normal recruitment practice.

Applicants who have worked, trained or lived overseas

Special care needs to be taken when considering making an offer of employment to a candidate who has spent significant periods of time overseas. Please see Appendix 7 ‘Applicants who have worked, trained or lived overseas’.

4.7 Job Offers

Offers of employment are made conditional on the satisfactory receipt of all the checks listed in section 4.4 of this document.

It is not normal practice to send a candidate a ‘first day of service’ letter until all the checks, including the DBS disclosure, have been received and are deemed to be satisfactory.

In exceptional circumstances, and subject to a completed risk assessment, an applicant may be appointed prior to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS check. The process to be followed in this case is the same as for candidates who have a positive trace on their DBS return...

In addition, the senior leadership team should ensure the new employee is supervised at all times while in contact with vulnerable groups until satisfactory DBS clearance is obtained.

4.8 Induction

Each new employee should be given our code of conduct, and other policies including that for disclosing matters in the public interest (whistle-blowing).

As part of the employee's induction, the appointed mentor should emphasise the importance of good personal standards of behaviour, and encourage the employee to report any matters of concern relating to vulnerable groups to the designated person for their service.

The mentor should give the employee any documents that relate to safe working practices, and set a time when these can be discussed and any questions answered.

5. Procedures to be followed when hiring agency & temporary staff

5.1 Agency staff

The agency providing temporary staff should have undertaken a series of minimum generic criteria for vetting temporary workers. The minimum criteria are:

- Face-to-face interview
- Validation of eligibility to work in the UK
- Minimum 2 written and verified work references covering the last 2 years (all gaps explored and verified)
- Verification of identity (preferable photographic ID)
- Qualification checks
- Standard or enhanced DBS checks as required
- Check of the following registers: POVA, POCAL, List 99 and GSCC.

When an agency member of staff arrives at the centre they will be asked for photographic evidence of their identity and their DBS clearance. Details of the identity evidence and DBS reference number will be recorded on our agency staff central record.

New agency staff will be instructed on the centres safeguarding policies before they start work with the children.

6. Procedures to be followed during employment

Vigilance in relation to safeguarding needs to be maintained throughout employment.

6.1 3-year DBS update check

Since a DBS disclosure is a 'snap-shot in time', HR Direct will operate a rolling programme of further checks, to be undertaken at three-year intervals, for any member of staff in a safeguarding post.

This check is in addition to the requirement of every member of staff to make Thomas Coram Centre and the Council aware of any offence they are charged with, or criminal conviction, bind-over or caution they receive during the course of their employment, in line with the Code of Conduct.

6.2 Creating an 'offender-aware' culture

The centre takes every opportunity to create and reinforce an 'offender-aware' culture. This may include activities such as:

- including a safeguarding-related objective in each employee's annual appraisal
- having a regular 'safeguarding' slot at team meetings
- reinforcing the message, e.g. through supervision sessions, team meetings and individual conversations, that inaction in the face of doubt is not a neutral act and may result in harmful behaviours being continued. Employees should be encouraged to change their thinking from *'what if I'm wrong about this?'* to *'what if I'm right and I do nothing?'*

7. Procedures to be followed after employment

If we become aware of any behaviour that we believe provides a strong indication that an individual should not be working with a vulnerable group, we will report the matter to the appropriate authority(ies).

We will comment on any indications that an (ex-)employee' is unsuitable for a safeguarding post in any requests to provide a reference.

8. Procedure for dealing with concerns

8.1 Raised by a member of the public

Where a member of the public has concerns relating to the safety of a member of a vulnerable group, they may raise the matter by contacting the Centre. For the purposes of this document, a 'member of the public' may also be a Camden service user.

Any member of staff receiving such an allegation, either by telephone, in person or in writing, should gather the name and contact details of the person making the allegation, if they are prepared to provide these.

Irrespective of whether the allegation is made anonymously or by an individual who is prepared to give their name and contact details, a written note should be made of the report, including the date and time received, and the nature of the allegation.

The employee should then report the matter to the designated member of staff or any other member of the leadership team if they are not available so that it can be properly investigated. Failure to report an allegation is a disciplinary offence.

8.2 Raised by a Thomas Coram Centre or Camden worker (including volunteers)

If a member of staff has concerns relating to the safety of a member of a vulnerable group, they should raise the matter immediately. The Centre has robust child protection procedures, and all members of staff are encouraged to follow these by raising the matter with the designated manager for their service. The designated manager will then follow the child protection procedures, or similar procedure applied to other vulnerable groups as required.

8.3 Raised against a Thomas Coram Centre or Camden worker, including volunteers

If an allegation is made against a member of staff we will contact the Children Schools & Families Local Authority Designated Officer.

9. Changes to Procedure

This is our Safer Recruitment & Employment Procedure at June 2016. This procedure will be reviewed annually in line with legislative changes and Camden's other employment policies and guidelines.

When the procedure is changed, we will re-issue it, and advise staff of the changes.

Appendix 1 : Dealing With Disclosure Information

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. Camden Council maintains a record of all those to whom disclosures or disclosure information has been revealed.

In the event that an applicant disputes the information provided on the disclosure the dispute must be resolved before a recruitment decision can be made. In the final analysis the applicant can provide finger prints to verify if the disclosure does, in fact, relate to them.

A candidate's suitability should be judged in the light of the results of all the relevant pre-appointment checks carried out on him or her (i.e. including identity, qualification, references, List 99, DBS and overseas police checks where applicable). If no information is disclosed on a DBS check the appointment should go ahead if the results of all other checks are acceptable.

This section also applies to current employees being re-checked or checked for the first time. Failure to notify Thomas Coram Centre of applicable previous convictions/cautions or convictions/cautions which have occurred during employment with Thomas Coram Centre or London Borough of Camden may result in action against the employee under the disciplinary procedure. A change in a role which brings it under the safeguarding umbrella may also have implications for an employee's suitability depending on previous convictions/cautions.

The fact that a person has a criminal record does not automatically make them unsuitable for work with children or vulnerable adults; however if the DBSB check indicates that the candidate appears on a list banning them from working with children or vulnerable adults they will not be appointed irrespective of the outcome of any other checks.

Judging Suitability

For offences which fall within the Tier 2 category an initial judgement on the nature, age, frequency and combination of declared offences and their impact on suitability will be made by an HR adviser/counter signatory, taking into account all relevant pre-employment information. If they decide that the candidate should not be precluded from employment the recruitment will proceed as normal.

| | Recent (< 3 years) | OLDER | VA | CHILDREN |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------|-------------|-------------|
| Sexual Offence | TIER 1 | TIER 1 | TIER 1 | TIER 1 |
| Violent Offence | TIER 1 | TIER 1 | TIER 1 | TIER 1 |
| Drug Offence | TIER 1 | TIER 1 | TIER 1 | TIER 1 |
| Driving | TIER 1 | TIER 2 | Age related | Age related |
| Theft | TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 1 | Age related |
| Petty Theft | TIER 2 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 |
| Fraud | TIER 1 | TIER 2 | Age related | Age related |
| Public Order | TIER 2 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 |
| Multiple | TIER 1 | TIER 2 | Age related | Age related |

For Tier 2 offences that are referred to a higher level, or for offences which are in the Tier 1 category, the judgement about suitability, taking into account only those offences which may be relevant to the particular job or situation in question, must be made by a Head of Service in conjunction with the designated Tier 1 officer.

In deciding the relevance of convictions/cautions or other causes for concern arising from the vetting process, a number of points should be considered:

- **The candidates view and account of events**

The candidate should be approached to discuss the disclosure

- **The nature of the offence**

In general, convictions/cautions for sexual, violent or drug offences will be particularly strong contra-indications for work with children or vulnerable adults. A history of dishonesty should also be regarded as a strong contra-indicator for work with vulnerable adults.

- **The nature of the appointment**

Often the nature of the appointment will help to assess the relevance of the conviction/caution. For example, serious sexual, violent, drug or drink offences would preclude appointment where a position was one of providing care to vulnerable adults or working with children; driving or drink offences would be relevant in situations involving transport of children or Council clients; fraud should be considered in relation to posts in handling Council or service users' money; theft would be of relevance to posts involving unsupervised access to residents' properties and/or service users' personal possessions.

- **The age of the offence**

Offences which took place many years in the past may often have less relevance than recent offences. However, convictions for serious violent or sexual offences or serious offences involving substance abuse are more likely to give cause for continuing concern than, for instance, an isolated case of dishonesty committed when the person was young. The potential for rehabilitation must be weighed against the need to protect children.

- **The frequency of the offence**

A series of offences over a period of time is more likely to give cause for concern than an isolated minor conviction, for instance a series of convictions/cautions for theft or dishonesty over a period would raise concerns around suitability to work in an Adult Social Care setting.

- **Declaration of the offence**

Existing employees are required to declare offences; to do otherwise is to break the Code of Conduct.

For prospective employees, we are likely to take a more positive view of a candidate who declares an offence than of one who chooses to hide such a matter.

Recording of Decisions.

It is advisable for recipients of disclosure information to keep a record of the date of disclosure, name of the candidate/employee, type of disclosure (standard or enhanced), the position in question, the unique number issued by the Bureau and the recruitment decision taken. The Council should store this information on Oracle. The written risk assessment should be held on the candidate's file, and destroyed after 9 months if the offer is withdrawn.

Appendix 2 : Procedure for vetting applicants who have worked, trained or lived overseas

Special care needs to be taken when considering making an offer of employment to a candidate who has spent significant periods of time overseas.

Criminal Record Checks

It may be of limited value to ask for a disclosure in respect of a British national with very substantial gaps in their UK residence. A new central authority for the exchange of criminal records information between EU member states has been established called ACPO Criminal Records Office (ACRO). It contains records relating to offences committed abroad by British nationals and may be of some help.

In respect of nationals from countries other than the UK, the Council will also make every effort to ensure that the selected candidate does not have a criminal record that suggests they are a risk to vulnerable groups. The DBS website details the availability of criminal records from overseas, and the General Social Care Council has a separate registration process for overseas Social Workers.

The Council will take information from the Police National Computer which contains information from some 70,000 offences committed overseas and can advise on overseas vetting services where appropriate. However, there is no guarantee that the disclosure will always pick up information on people convicted abroad.

To minimise any risk, extra care should be taken in the earlier stages of the recruitment process; looking for inconsistencies and gaps in the information applicant's provide, asking the right questions at interview concerning suitability, taking up references and where necessary questioning referees.

When an offer of employment for a safeguarding position is made to an applicant who has spent time outside the UK, a DBS check will not cover that time spent abroad. Therefore police checks with overseas bodies or enquiries to embassies/consulates should be undertaken for the following applicants:

- Foreign nationals who apply from outside the UK
- Foreign nationals who apply from within the UK
- UK nationals who have worked, studied or resided outside the UK

A candidate who has spent time abroad or currently resides abroad will be required to either obtain or assist the Thomas Coram Centre with obtaining a police check from the country or countries they have spent time or are resident in.

Process

1. The successful candidate is sent, and invited to complete, a Disclosure & Barring Service Check.
2. Candidates who have indicated on application form periods of work, study or residence overseas are asked to provide information about their criminal history while abroad.

3. Candidates may already have this information. If so, it attempts should be made to authenticate it and it should be used, in conjunction with other pre-employment information, to make a judgement on suitability.
4. If not already in possession of authentic criminal record documentation, candidates who are from/have spent significant periods in the countries listed on the DBS website as having Criminal Record check arrangements are directed to the following webpage.

<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

5. The candidate will be expected to make efforts to obtain the check from the relevant authorities and make payment for this information. Camden will reimburse them for this expense.
6. For countries not listed on the DBS website the candidate will be expected to contact the representative of the country in the UK. Details are available from the Foreign and Commonwealth office on 0207 0081500, or by visiting the website www.fco.gov.uk (new window)

Timescales and decisions

There are no set timescales for these checks to take place but if a check is not received after a significant time has passed, *or* all channels have been explored to obtain this information without success, then the Council will make a decision about a candidate's suitability using the information available from other pre-employment checks.

Decisions around suitability will be made using the same process and criteria applicable to DBS checks, and will be made in conjunction with pre-employment checks.

Permission to work in the UK

In line with legislation, Camden Council will ensure that an applicant has the necessary permissions to work in the UK. This will involve checking the applicant's passport including the terms of any visa, work permit etc.

References

References provided in a language other than English should be accompanied by a certified translation. The Council reserves the right to have any un-certified references re-translated into English.

Appendix 3

Applicant :

Post :

Thomas Coram Centre Safer Recruitment Checklist

The following checklist provides a convenient way of signing off each stage of the process and is filed as a permanent record at the end of the recruitment process.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHECKLIST

| PRE-INTERVIEW | INITIALS | DATE |
|--|-----------------|-------------|
| Planning Timetable decided; job description and person specification and other documents to be provided to applicants reviewed and updated as necessary. Application form seeks all relevant information and includes relevant statements about references etc | | |
| Vacancy Advertised (where appropriate) Advertisement includes reference to safeguarding policy ie. Statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and need for successful applicant to be CRB checked | | |
| Applications (on receipt) Scrutinised – any discrepancies/anomalies/gaps in employment noted to explore if candidate considered for short listing | | |
| SHORTLIST PREPARED | | |
| References (seeking) Sought directly from referee on shortlisted candidates; ask recommended specific questions; include statement about liability for accuracy | | |
| References (on receipt) Checked against information on application; scrutinised; any discrepancies/issues of concern noted to take up with applicant (at interview if possible) | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| SELECTION PROCESS | | |
| Invitation To Interview Includes all relevant information and instructions | | |
| Interview Arrangements At least two interviewers; panel members have authority to appoint; have met and agreed issues and questions/ assessment criteria/standards | | |
| Interview Explores applicant's suitability to work with children as well as for the post NB : Identity and qualifications of successful applicant verified on day of interview by scrutiny of appropriate original documents; copies of documents taken and placed on file; where appropriate applicant completed application for CRB Disclosure | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| CONDITIONAL OFFER OF APPOINTMENT | | |
| Pre-Appointment Check Offer of appointment is made conditional on satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks and for non-teaching posts a probationary period | | |
| References (if not obtained and scrutinised previously) | | |
| Qualifications (if not verified on the day of interview) | | |
| CRB Disclosure (where appropriate satisfactory CRB Disclosure received) | | |
| List 99 (person is not prohibited from taking up the post) | | |
| Health (candidate is medically fit) | | |
| QTS (for teaching posts in maintained schools the teacher has obtained QTS or is exempt from requirement to hold QTS) | | |
| Statutory Induction (for teachers in first year of teaching who obtained QTS after 7 th May 1999) | | |