

# CODE OF CONDUCT - Supervisors

## **Those supervising work with children and young people will:**

- Hold regular meetings with workers to review and plan work.
- Support those working with children and young people.
- Enquire as to their working and personal relationship with the children or young people.
- Take or create opportunities for observing those working with children and young people.
- Watch for any child or young person receiving exceptional treatment. For example being highly favoured, excluded, or treated unduly harshly.
- Hold regular meetings with the Advocate(s) and Church Leaders to review the work.
- Provide, under direction of the Church Leadership, appropriate training opportunities for those working with children and young people.
- Keep written records meetings, training and observation sessions.

If the Supervisor has concerns relating to good practice between an adult leader/helper and a child or young person, they should explore further by talking:confidentially with the leader/helper concerned.

The issue should not be abandoned until the Supervisor/ leader is sure there is no possibility of abuse.

# IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAINING

## Implementation

- All those working with children and young people will require references and a Criminal Records Bureau check.
- Advocates and all who have a supervisory role will be given a complete copy of the Policy Statement and Procedures Manual.
- Those working with children and young people, on completing a probationary period and 'Safe to Grow' training, will receive a document containing a copy of:
  - The Policy Statement
  - The Policy and Implementation Guide, section on The Whole Church, including
    - Appendix 1 sections A-D
  - Good Practice for those Working Children's and Youth Workers, including
    - Code of Conduct
    - Transport
    - Residential or Excursion Activities
    - E-Safeguards
    - Procedures If Abuse is Disclosed or Discovered
    - Allegations Against Workers
  - A copy of their signed Volunteer Contract (Appendix 3 C)

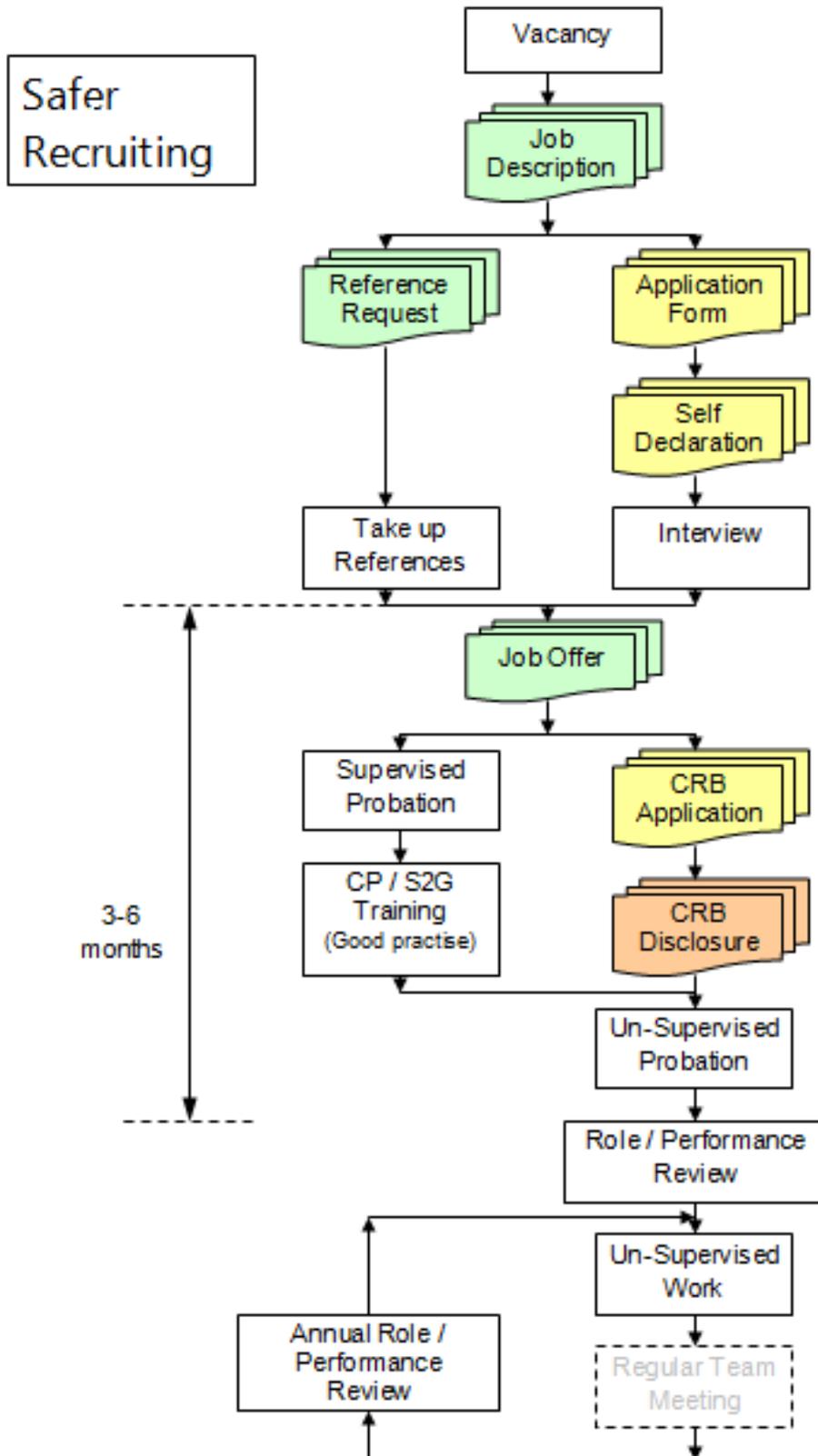
## Initial Training Programme

- All who wish to work with children or young people, in whatever capacity, are required to attend an initial 'Safe to Grow' training programme. This initial training programme will be provided during a six-month probationary period, or equivalent time period.
- Ideally this initial training programme will be conducted by Social Services and/or qualified children / youth worker and/or a Child Protection Officer from a Parent denomination and/or a representative sent by the Parent denomination.
- This initial training programme will allow for discussion and feedback on the policy and how it is working, with suggestions for improvement and alterations.

## Continuing Training

- All who wish to work with children and young people, in whatever capacity, are required to attend a Refresher 'Safe to Grow' training programme every three years. The training programme is open to any who wish to attend (for example those working with children but not as part of the church)

# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES



# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

It is helpful to have a clear process in mind when embarking upon a recruitment process and for the recruiting person to have a good idea about the position and what sort of people may be appropriate to fill the position. The following is a brief checklist:

- There is a written job description/role profile and person specification for the position
- The position is advertised
- Those applying have completed a standard application form and a self declaration form
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up
- Short-listed (if required) candidates have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Qualifications have been verified
- A criminal records application form has been completed
- A suitable induction training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.
- The applicant has completed a probationary period

Candidates should not commence work until the recruitment process has been fully completed (including the receipt of all checks and references). This will reduce the risk of exposing children and vulnerable adults to potential harm as well as the embarrassment of having to remove someone from a position of work if they prove unsuitable. It also reduces the risk of committing an offence by 'knowingly' employing someone whose name is on either of the barred lists.

## **Job Description**

A clear and up to date job description or role profile should be given to every applicant. This will contain duties, roles and responsibilities for work with vulnerable people and a person specification detailing experience, knowledge and /or qualifications required, as well as details of the support and training that will be provided. Alongside these details, each job description or role profile should make absolutely clear what duties will be expected of the

# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

post-holder regarding contact with and responsibility for vulnerable people and what level of supervision will be provided for these duties.  
should be given to every applicant

## **Advertisement**

As a matter of good practice, all positions with vulnerable people should be advertised. Whether this is in the local church newsletter, on the church notice board or in the local paper, advertising assists you to gain the greatest number of possible applicants. As well as a brief description of the role, the advertisement must also state the church's commitment to safeguarding and the need to complete criminal records checks. It is also helpful to state the closing date for applications and the dates agreed for shortlisting and/or interview where this is appropriate.

## **Candidate Information Packs**

The Candidate Information Pack is one of your first opportunities to present a good, professional impression to potential applicants. It is also the primary chance to provide your applicants with all of the information they may require to submit an application that may result in the person being shortlisted for interview. At the very least, the pack should include:

- Covering letter to the candidate
- Information about the Church/Organisation
- Safeguarding Policy Statement
- Job Description/Role Profile and Person Specification
- Application Form (Appendix 3 A Application Form)
- Recruitment timetable, including closing date for applications and interview date(s).

## **Application Forms**

A standard application form (Appendix 3 A Application Form) should always be used because it ensures everybody provides the same information and it is more difficult to hide relevant information. It also assists with the shortlisting (if undertaken) and the recruitment decision. Using CVs should be avoided as these cannot always be guaranteed to be accurate or provide the information you require. Two copies shall be signed. One shall be held on file the other held by the applicant.

## **Self-declaration Form**

A self declaration form (Appendix 3 D Declaration Form) that includes agreement to a criminal records check should also be completed and signed by the applicant for all positions working with vulnerable people.

# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

In order to maintain confidentiality and to ensure a fair and transparent process, the form should be able to be separated from the application form and returned in a separate envelope to the person making the recruitment decision and not opened before the decision to interview has taken place.

## **Rejecting Applications**

Any applications that are significantly incomplete should not be accepted or short-listed. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment identified by the scrutiny should be taken into account in considering 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 agency, freelance or temporary work, also need to be explored and verified.

## **Assessing Candidate Information**

Following the above checks, each application that is received should then be assessed in relation to whether the required criteria have been demonstrably met by the applicant in his/her application form.

## **Invitations to Interview**

This is an important part of the process that should be used to inform the candidate about the interview process, including what additional forms of assessment might be used, whether children and young people or adults who may be vulnerable will be a part of the process and where the interview is to take place.

## **References**

This is a crucial part of a safer recruitment process and is an important part of gathering information about the applicant, which can provide useful insights into their experience, attitudes, motivation and character. It is best practice to take up references for all your shortlisted candidates before interview so that the information supplied can be addressed in interview if necessary and form part of the recruitment decision.

Two references should be requested and ideally one should be from their current employer (or previous employer if they are not currently working). The reference should be requested using a standard template (Appendix 3 B Form Letter – Reference Request)

# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

## **The Interview**

The interview should generally be conducted by at least two people with leadership or supervisory responsibilities within the church/organisation, one of whom will directly supervise the person who is appointed.

## **Making Confident Recruitment Decisions**

A decision as to whether or not to appoint should be based on ALL of the information gathered (i.e. their experiences, ability, suitability and their motives for wanting to work with children and young people). Decisions should not be based on external factors such as the urgency of need or the immediate availability of the applicant.

If there are legitimate concerns about a candidate that you have not been able to resolve at interview, it is best not to appoint. This minimises the risk of placing children, young people or adults who are vulnerable at risk of harm.

## **Conditional Offers**

When you have made your decision about who you would like to offer the position to, any offer made should be conditional upon receipt of satisfactory criminal record checks, references (if not already obtained) and any other outstanding checks, such as health. You may also wish to add a requirement for the candidate to have satisfactorily completed a specified probationary period before confirmation of a permanent job offer

## **Criminal Records Checks**

Once a decision has been made and a conditional offer of employment has been given, a criminal records check must be carried out for the successful applicant. You are not entitled to require any other candidate to apply for a criminal records check. The check will reveal any information held on central police databases such as cautions, convictions, reprimands, warnings, bind-overs and where the applicant is applying to work in 'Regulated Activity' their inclusion on government lists that bar an individual from working with children, young people or vulnerable adults (the ISA Barred Lists for Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults).

Although criminal records checks can be applied for in respect of anyone aged 16 and above careful consideration should be given before applying for a check in respect of anyone below 18 years old. This is because they should never be expected to be responsible for leading activities with children and/or adults who may be vulnerable and are unlikely to be able to meet requirements for the supervision of either vulnerable people or other workers.

# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

**An Enhanced CRB check (with a check of the barred lists) is required for anyone undertaking Regulated Activity. It is illegal to request a check of the barred lists for anyone who is not undertaking Regulated Activity (Sept 2012)**

The new definition of Regulated Activity is -

*'any unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice / guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children.*

*Regular is defined as carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period (or in some cases, overnight).'*

**It is our opinion that most Sunday School or Sunday Club activities are NOT "Regulated Activities" so we intend in most cases to apply for an enhanced CRB check and NOT a check of the ISA Barred Lists for Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults. There will be exceptions.**

## **Blemished Disclosures**

It is important the church is clear about the procedure for dealing with concerns resulting from information revealed by the check (a blemished disclosure). All blemished disclosures are currently returned to the Churches Advisory Service who refer them to Church House, who in turn contact the denomination Safeguarding Officer. An assessment of risk is undertaken as to whether it is considered safe to appoint the person and what further information, if any, might be necessary to assist in that risk assessment. In certain cases it may be necessary to commission a formal risk assessment. Old, minor and unrelated or irrelevant offences will not prohibit people who are otherwise suitable to work with children from doing so.

An employer who 'knowingly' seeks to appoint an individual who is barred from working in regulated activity for which they have been barred is also committing a criminal offence. Both offences are punishable by a £5000 fine and/or 5 years imprisonment.

Because of the addictive nature of sexual offending it is our policy that all those with convictions of a sexual nature against children (relevant offences) will not be placed in any position of responsibility that puts them in contact with children. The same applies to those having committed relevant offences against adults.

## **Probationary / Induction Period**

When a worker is appointed it is beneficial for both worker and the church to have a probationary period (usually 3-6 months). During this time the church will provide relevant training and policies (e.g. safeguarding, code of conduct, disciplinary and grievances) and arrange support for the worker, including regular meetings with a supervisor to discuss how

# SELECTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS AND ADVOCATES

the job/role is going and to make any adjustments. The probationary period also allows the church to assess the worker's performance.

At the end of this period the recruiter should confirm the worker's position in writing unless, of course, they have proved unsuitable, in which case this must also be stated in writing. The recruiter will recommend to the church committee whether the person is suitable for the post. If the committee so decides they will confirm the appointment and minute their decision.

(Appendix 3 C – Volunteer Contract)

Notification of the appointment will be sent to the Partnership Safe to Grow co-ordinator who will keep a record of all trained 'Safe to Grow' applicants within the Partnership.

## **Additional Information**

- All new applicants will follow the procedure set out above.
- The names of newly appointed workers will be notified to Partnership's Council and Child Protection Coordinator as soon as possible
- Current workers will also be asked to complete any forms currently not on file.
- Advocates will be appointed annually at the church AGM, on the recommendation of the Church Committee or Leadership team.
- The names of local church Safe to Grow Coordinators, and Advocates will be notified to the Partnership Council as soon a possible.