

Staff Recruitment Guidance in respect of roles working with vulnerable groups

This Guidance should be applied when recruiting people to work in an employed / official capacity with children or vulnerable adults within the Catholic Church and is in line with Cumberlege Commission Report 2007. This guidance is for Dioceses; Religious Orders and Catholic organisations and is based on recognised Safe Recruitment practice¹. This guidance should be applied in all cases where a recruitment or selection process is required to appoint to an employed² post working with children or vulnerable adults, thus ensuring a consistent and robust process of staff recruitment.

Safe Recruitment Process:

1. **Identify who will be involved at each stage of the recruitment:** planning; advertising; short listing; interviewing; vetting.
2. **Safeguarding Statement: highlighting the organisation's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable groups** to be included in job advert; application packs; job descriptions/person specifications; induction training and probation arrangements. Sample statement "*Our organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and post holders to share this commitment.*"
3. **A clear job description/role outline:** setting out the extent of the contact with children/young people/vulnerable adults and the degree of responsibility assumed within the role.
4. **Standard Application Form completed by all applicants:** Sample available from CSAS
5. **Organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure:** to be included in within the job application pack
6. **References:** wherever possible to be taken up **before** interviewing. Sample available from CSAS
7. **Interview Questions:** designed to ascertain the applicant's attitude to children/vulnerable adults and their motivation to work with vulnerable groups; over and above required skills for the post.
8. **Identity Verification:** for each shortlisted applicant including checking qualifications if appropriate.
9. **Job Offer:** clear indication to the applicant that any offer of employment is subject to the satisfactory completion of pre-employment vetting checks i.e. Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure and/or registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (with effect July 2010)³

Application Pack to include statements to explain that:

- The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This requires all convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings, bind-overs (including those regarded as "spent") to be voluntarily declared (if shortlisted) via the Confidential or Self Declaration Form (part of the CRB/pre-employment vetting process).
- References will be sought on shortlisted candidates, where possible prior to interview.
- Information from current or prior employers will be sought about disciplinary offences relating to work with vulnerable groups and if the applicant has been the subject of any child/vulnerable adult protection concerns.
- Providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected. This could result in possible referral to the Police and the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

References:

A minimum of two referees must be obtained, one of which should be the applicant's current or most recent employer and both should be able to testify to the candidate's suitability for the role and whether there is any known reason why the applicant should not work with vulnerable groups. Where a person has worked with vulnerable groups in the past but not currently, it is important to seek a reference from the employer who most recently employed the person to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

CRB Disclosure: (applicable to new appointments prior to July 2010)³:

The CRB Disclosure process must be initiated **before** the successful applicant commences in post. Please liaise with your Diocesan Safeguarding team; Conference of Religious Counter-Signatories OR CSAS if you need clarity about the CRB/ISA registration process.

For further detailed assistance and support regarding Safe Recruitment practices for roles working with vulnerable groups, please refer to your Diocesan / Religious Safeguarding team or CSAS

¹ Safe From Harm (Home Office); Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education (2006); CWDC Safer Recruitment Guidance (2009)

² A salaried or official post on behalf of the Diocese, Order or Organisation as opposed to a voluntary post through parishes etc

³ With effect from July 2010, the new Independent Safeguarding Authority Scheme becomes effective. This will require that anyone new to post MUST be registered with the Scheme BEFORE they undertake work with vulnerable groups.