

Recruitment Policy

Recruitment and selection process

This section focuses on ensuring potential applicants are given the right messages about the company and commitment to recruiting suitable people.

It is vital that Help 4 Kidz's approach to safeguarding creates a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children. As part of this culture, it is important that we adopt robust recruitment procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities.

Management and staff will ensure that those involved with the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training, the substance of which will at a minimum cover the content of this guidance.

Management will ensure that at least one of the persons who conduct an interview has completed safer recruitment training.

Advert

Help 4 Kidz Ltd will include the following information when defining the role (through the job or role description and person specification):

- the skills, abilities, experience, attitude, and behaviours required for the post, and
- the safeguarding requirements, i.e. to what extent will the role involve contact with children and will they be engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

The advert will include:

- Help 4 Kidz's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and make clear that safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- the safeguarding responsibilities of the post as per the job description and personal specification, and all applicants will undergo an enhanced DBS check
- whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.

Application forms

Where a role involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children, Help 4 Kidz will include a statement in the application form or elsewhere in the information provided to applicants that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

Help 4 Kidz will also provide a copy of the child protection policy and practices or refer to a link on its website.

Help 4 Kidz will require applicants to provide:

- personal details, current and former names, current address, and national insurance number
- details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
- full employment history, (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment
- qualifications, the awarding body and date of award
- details of referees/references
- a statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification.

Help 4 Kidz will only accept copies of a curriculum vitae alongside an application form. A curriculum vitae on its own will not provide adequate information.

Shortlisting

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Self-declaration is subject to Ministry of Justice guidance on the disclosure of criminal records, further information can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) For example:

- if they have a criminal history
- if they are included on the children's barred list
- if they are prohibited from working with children or teaching
- if they are prohibited from taking part in the management of a youth organisation
- information about any criminal offences committed in any country in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales, not the law in their country of origin or where they were convicted
- if they are known to the police and children's local authority social care
- if they have been disqualified from providing childcare
- any relevant overseas information.

This information will only be requested from applicants who have been shortlisted. The information will not be requested in the application form to decide who will be shortlisted.

Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration confirming the information they have provided is true. Where there is an electronic signature, the shortlisted candidate will physically sign a hard copy of the application at the point of the interview.

The purpose of a self-declaration is so that candidates will have the opportunity to share relevant information and allow this to be discussed and considered at the interview before the DBS certificate is received.

Help 4 Kidz will:

- ensure that at least two people carry out the shortlisting exercise

- consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and reasons given for them
- explore all potential concerns.

In addition, as part of the shortlisting process Help 4 Kidz will consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, which Help 4 Kidz might want to explore with the applicant at the interview.

Employment history and references

The purpose of seeking references is to allow Help 4 Kidz to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. Help 4 Kidz will obtain references before the interview, where possible, this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at the interview.

Help 4 Kidz will:

- not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern
- not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with the appropriate authority
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer
- always verify any information with the person who provided the reference
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before the appointment is confirmed.

When asked to provide references, Help 4 Kidz will ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicant's suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold. They will not include information about concerns/allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious.

Selection

Help 4 Kidz will use a range of selection techniques to identify the most suitable person for the post. Those interviewing will agree on structured questions. These will include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience working with children which are relevant to the role
- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

The interviews will be used to explore potential areas of concern and to determine the applicant's suitability to work with children. Areas that may be concerning and lead to further probing include:

- implication that adults and children are equal
- lack of recognition and/or understanding of the vulnerability of children
- inappropriate idealisation of children
- inadequate understanding of appropriate boundaries between adults and children,
- indicators of negative safeguarding behaviours.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case.

Young People will be involved in the recruitment process in a meaningful way. Observing shortlisted candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with young people is common and recognised as good practice.

All information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.

Pre-appointment vetting checks, regulated activity and recording information

All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre employment checks. Help 4 Kidz will:

- verify a candidate's identity, it is important to be sure that the person is whom they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name.
- obtain an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children).
- obtain a separate children's barred list check if an individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available
- verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities. A job applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role

- verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then Help 4 Kidz will follow advice on the GOV.UK website
- Have lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the school or college consider appropriate
- verify professional qualifications.

Recording information Single central record

Help 4 Kidz will maintain a single central record of pre-appointment checks

The single central record will cover all staff, including volunteers, agency and third-party staff, even if they work for one day,

The single central record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed or certificate obtained:

- an identity check
- an enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided
- further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
- a check of professional qualifications, where required
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom. In addition:

The details of an individual will be removed from the single central record once they no longer work at Help 4 Kidz.

Volunteers

Under no circumstances will a volunteer on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Whilst volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults, the nature of voluntary roles varies, so Help 4 Kidz will undertake a written risk assessment and use our professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required.

The risk assessment should consider:

- the nature of the work with children, especially if it will constitute regulated activity, including the level of supervision
- what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on their suitability.
- whether the role is eligible for a DBS check, and if it is, the level of the check, for volunteer roles that are not in regulated activity.

Details of the risk assessment should be recorded.

Fair and Non-Discriminatory Assessment

Help 4 Kidz will not discriminate against applicants with convictions or concerns unless the nature of the offence directly relates to the role and poses a potential risk to children. Each case will be assessed individually, taking into account the nature, severity, and relevance of the offence, as well as the time elapsed since the conviction or concern.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment will be conducted for applicants who disclose convictions or concerns. This assessment will consider factors such as the applicant's honesty, remorse, rehabilitation efforts, references, and any supporting evidence provided. The assessment will be conducted by designated personnel trained in safeguarding and relevant legislation.

Consultation and Informed Decision-Making

The decision regarding the suitability of an applicant with convictions or concerns will be made by a panel comprising key personnel involved in safeguarding and recruitment. The panel will consider the risk assessment report, consult with relevant stakeholders, and make an informed decision based on the best interests of the children.

Support

Help 4 Kidz is committed to supporting staff members with previous convictions or concerns in their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. Support mechanisms, such as mentoring, supervision, and access to relevant resources, will be provided to help the staff member maintain professional boundaries and ensure the ongoing safety of children.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All information provided by applicants regarding convictions or concerns will be handled in strict confidence, following applicable GDPR regulations. Access to this information will be limited to personnel directly involved in the recruitment process, and it will be securely stored.

Continuous Monitoring

Staff members will be subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic reviews to ensure their suitability for continued employment. Regular communication and reporting mechanisms will be established to address any emerging concerns and take appropriate action, including termination if necessary.

Training and Awareness

All staff involved in the recruitment process will receive regular training on safer recruitment practices, including the assessment of applicants with convictions or concerns. Help 4 Kidz will also provide training to raise awareness among all staff members about the importance of safeguarding children and the procedures in place to protect their welfare.

Single Central Record

The companies single central record of all staff and volunteer will outline the following:

- Identity check
- Standalone children's barred list check
- Enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided
- Prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
- A check of professional qualifications, where required
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom

The single central record will include dates of which all these were obtained, and renewal where necessary.