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Document Information
<p>Scope:</p> <p>This procedure applies to all Preston Vocational Centre (PVC) employees and board members with responsibility for or involvement in recruitment and selection</p>
<p>Key Objectives:</p> <p>To ensure that there are robust recruitment and selection procedures that deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying for or securing employment, or volunteering opportunities at PVC</p> <p>To provide a systematic and consistent approach to recruitment and selection and to ensure that consistency and equality of opportunity are applied throughout the whole process.</p> <p>To ensure that we promote inclusivity throughout the recruitment process</p>
<p>Community Gateway Association:</p> <p>Community Gateway Association (CGA) offers support to the services and operations within PVC. The People Services Team supports PVC as a subsidiary operating within a different sector.</p>
<p>Links to Charity Commission’s Statutory Objectives, Ofsted and Ofqual standards:</p> <p>PVC procedures underpin the work of PVC so therefore assist the organisation comply with all regulatory standards.</p>

This procedure sets out PVC's approach to safe recruitment in line with KCSIE guidance to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse or harm children and learners.

Links to Strategic Objective and Vision:

PVC's mission is to deliver the highest quality construction based vocational training and support to enable young people and adults to gain skills, qualifications and confidence to enhance their full potential and build a positive future.

In order to achieve this it is vital to attract, recruit and select job applicants who are appropriately qualified and experienced, and who share our vision and values.

Outcomes for Customers:

N/A

Introduction - Policy Statement

1. PVC are committed to recruiting amazing people to work with our learners. This policy sets out our approach to safer recruitment and selection practices for employees, temporary staff, agency workers, contractors and volunteers. It also reflects our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and ensures that a fair, transparent and open process is undertaken for all recruitment and selection processes.

Procedure - Vacancy Review

2. When a vacancy arises, the manager will review the role to consider:
 - whether it is still needed
 - whether there is a need to fill the vacancy in a like for like capacity
 - opportunities for internal transfer and secondment
 - whether there are any significant changes to the role that need to be taken into consideration
 - opportunities for existing employees to develop
3. It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager to ensure that appropriate funding is available within the budget for the post, and to complete an Authority to Recruit (ATR) request via the online recruitment portal. All ATRs will be reviewed and the salary benchmarked internally and externally.
4. The Centre Manager should review and update the job description and person specification for the role. The person specification will determine the selection criteria for shortlisting.
5. The following information should be considered when defining the role (through the job 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.

Upon receiving the Authority to Recruit request, People Services will meet with the Centre Manager to discuss the recruitment process including the advert, the application process for the role, panel members, selection criteria and timescales. This meeting will ensure a consistent approach is adopted and must be completed prior to any advertisement.

Advertising

6. People Services are responsible for advertising all vacancies, with the support of the CGA communications team, where necessary. All adverts will contain information about:
 - PVC'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 person specification, and
 - whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.
 - that it is an offence to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children

In addition, the recruitment website will include links to PVC's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure and details of PVC's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders.

7. Positions may be advertised internally, externally or ringfenced, dependent on the type and circumstances of the vacancy. If the decision is taken to advertise externally, People Services will work with the Centre Manager to agree on the most effective methods. All adverts will direct candidates to the PVC/CGA website. This page will feed into the online recruitment system which will allow for management of all vacancies.
8. All vacancies, except those that have been ring-fenced will be sent to any employee on maternity or adoption leave by People Services as indicated in their pre-leave communication plan.
9. Whilst managers are responsible for writing advertisements, People Services will provide advice and guidance as to appropriate and effective wording. As well as the information detailed in clause 6, People Services are responsible for ensuring the following for all advertisements:
 - The advertisement does not breach legal requirements and is non-discriminatory.
 - The wording is clear, correct and unambiguous and will attract candidates from all backgrounds.
 - That they contain enough information about the job, its location, and the minimum essential criteria to encourage suitable applicants.
 - The advertisement states what level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required.
10. The closing date will be agreed with the Centre Manager, taking into account the chosen media, the time of year and diary commitments of the Centre Manager and interview panel.

Applications

11. All applicants should apply via the online system by completing an application form. The application form will include:

- 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 and
 - 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.
12. In exceptional cases where candidate attraction is an issue, PVC may choose to accept CVs for an initial 'sift'. In this case all shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a full application form prior to being interviewed, allowing enough time for adequate scrutiny of the form to take place.
13. All applicants will be asked to complete equality and diversity monitoring information. This will be kept by People Services for purposes of monitoring only and will not be disclosed to anyone.

Shortlisting

14. It is the role of the shortlisting panel to review and select the most suitable applicants for interview. The shortlisting panel should consist of at least two people, one of whom should be the recruiting manager. At least one member of the shortlisting panel should have completed safer recruitment training. The shortlisting panel should also carry out the interviews for consistency.
15. The shortlisting / interview panel should:
- Exclude themselves from selection processes that involve partners, close relatives, friends or associates.

- Ensure that they do not give any assistance to partners, close relatives, friends, associates and the like, in relation to their application, interview etc. Where this happens, either at that time, or if PVC becomes aware of the fact at a later date, the situation will be considered and may result in disciplinary action being introduced.
 - Declare any other potential conflict of interest and keep confidential all discussions and decisions during the interview process
16. All applications will be scored against the criteria agreed in the recruitment meeting. The scoring should be done using the information on the application form. The highest scoring applicants should be offered an interview.
 17. The shortlisting panel should consider any inconsistencies in the information provided by the candidate, including looking for gaps in employment and reasons given for them. Notes should be made to reflect these considerations and to enable the panel to follow up any concerns at interview.
 18. 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.
 19. The People Services Team will carry out an online search as part of their due diligence on shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which might want to be explored with the applicant at interview. Any incidents or issues of concern will be shared with the interview panel and discussed with candidates at interview, with notes made. The following online checks using the following terms will be used in an appropriate search engine:
 - Full Name (e.g. Joseph Brown)
 - Full Name "convicted"
 - Full Name "Crown Court"
 - Full Name "Magistrates Court"

- Full Name "Name of country" (if lived and worked outside the UK e.g. Spain). We reserve the right to expand these searches should PVC deem it necessary.

20. References may be sought for shortlisted candidate to allow any concerns to be discussed at interview. In all cases, references will be obtained and scrutinised prior to any firm offer of employment. Any information about past disciplinary action or substantiated allegations will be considered on the circumstances of the individual case. All information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.
21. People Services will contact all external applicants who did not meet the necessary criteria for interview. The recruiting manager may give feedback to any shortlisted candidate who requests it and will always provide feedback to internal candidates who are not selected for interview.

Interviews, Assessments and Selection

22. People Services will contact all candidates with details of the interview date. The Centre Manager is responsible for booking interview rooms and designing the interview/assessment schedule with assistance from People Services where necessary. If candidates cannot attend the scheduled dates, an alternative date may be arranged, but is not guaranteed.
23. A range of selection techniques will be used to identify the most suitable person for the post. Observing short listed candidates and appropriately supervised interaction with learners is recommended as good practice and should be facilitated where possible.
24. Structured interview questions will be agreed by the panel and will always include Warner questions including:
 - 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 of 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.

Advice should be sought from People Services to ensure the questions:

- effectively and fairly test the criteria relevant to the post, be these skills, qualifications or competencies.
- are free from bias in terms of the protected characteristics.
- are not devised or phrased in such a way to unfairly advantage (or disadvantage) internal applicants.

25. If an applicant has disclosed a criminal conviction on their application form, it may be appropriate to ask questions about the conviction. Applicants should be made aware why such questions need to be asked; and this will be handled in a sensitive manner. For more information refer to the group Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Procedure. All information considered in decision making will be clearly recorded along with decisions made.
26. The interview panel will score each candidate against the formal questions and assessments. The panel will agree which candidate will be offered the post based on the highest score obtained overall. If the panel are unable to agree a candidate, for example, where two candidates scored the same, candidates may be brought back for further assessment.
27. All unsuccessful candidates will be contacted within 3 working days of the final interview and informed of the outcome. This will usually be done by the Centre Manager. The Centre Manager is responsible for arranging feedback to any external candidate who requests it. All internal candidates should be given feedback. People Services will offer guidance should this be required.

Offer of Employment and Pre-Employment Checks

28. The successful candidate will be contacted by telephone by the Centre Manager to be verbally offered the position before the unsuccessful candidates are contacted. The verbal offer should be made within the timescales agreed by the panel at interview. If the successful candidate does not accept the offer, there may be a suitable alternative candidate, to whom the role can be offered.
29. The Centre Manager should advise the candidate that the offer of employment is conditional and subject to satisfactory reference checks, medical checks, eligibility to work in the UK and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Additionally, the manager should notify the candidate that their referees will be contacted.
30. All offers of employment are made in writing by the People Services Team and lapse within seven days. All offers are made on a conditional basis subject to relevant checks being carried out.
31. Where the recruitment process fails to lead to a successful appointment, the Centre Manager and People Services will consult and agree a course of action.

Pre-Employment Checks

32. All offers of appointment are conditional until People Services confirm satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks. These will include:
 - Verification of a candidate's identity
 - An enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information, for those who will be engaging in regulated activity with children).
 - Verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
 - Verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK

- Verification of professional qualifications which are essential to the role
- For teaching roles, verification that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State

If the person has lived or worked outside the UK there may be further checks that are considered appropriate

References

33. Offers are subject to two references, which are deemed to be satisfactory by the Centre Manager and People Services and which comply with any relevant legislation or statutory guidance relating to the role – e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education.
34. Referee contact details should be supplied by the applicant on the job application form and should normally be taken from the most recent two employers. References must be from a person in a position of responsibility – e.g. a line manager or People Services team and should come from a company email address. Personal references will not be accepted.
35. When one of the references received is deemed by PVC to be less than satisfactory, further information will be sought from the originating referee. Thereafter if the further information provided still seems unsatisfactory to PVC, through discussion with the Centre Manager and People Services, the matter will be raised with the applicant. It may be necessary to obtain a further reference from an alternative source, perhaps another previous employer, or the decision may be taken to withdraw the offer of employment.

DBS

36. It is PVC's policy to request a new DBS for all prospective employees at the level recommended by current guidance. The applicant must show their original paper DBS certificate before, or as soon as practicable after, the person's appointment, including when using the DBS update service. This will be scrutinised to compare any information disclosed during the recruitment

process. Where a copy of this is taken it will not be retained for more than 6 months.

37. PVC will assess any disclosure information on a DBS certificate and take into consideration the explanation from the applicant, including for example:
- the seriousness of any offence and relevance to the post applied for
 - how long ago the offence occurred
 - whether it was a one-off incident or a history of incidents
 - the circumstances around the incident, and,
 - whether the individual accepted responsibility for their actions.

A risk-based approach will be taken, and a record of any decisions based on the above will be clearly documented.

38. People Services will confirm when the relevant checks have been carried out and agreed as satisfactory and only at this point will a final offer of employment be made. Candidates should not be asked or encouraged to resign from their current employment until the recruitment checks have been completed and a final offer of employment has been made.
39. People Services will hold and maintain a Single Central Record of all pre-employment checks, in compliance with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

Prior to commencement / Induction

40. It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager to raise a new starter form via the IT and Facilities Service Desk. The People Services team are responsible for organising the corporate induction. The Centre Manager is responsible for organising the Centre induction, which must comply with safeguarding requirements and as a minimum include familiarisation with the PVC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure and of 'Keeping Children Safe In Education Statutory Guidance For Schools And Colleges Part One: Information For All School And College Staff'.

Data Protection

41. The organisation processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy. In particular, data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job. Inappropriate access or disclosure of job applicant data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the organisation's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedure.