SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION - POLICY & PROCEDURE

The recruitment and selection process is important for finding the right people with the right skills and values. Collectively we need a workforce that makes and shapes a positive ethos and ensures the effectiveness of Stramash Social Enterprise. The aim of this policy is to ensure Stramash:

- Recruits staff in line with the Care Inspectorate (2016) *Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment* guidance[1]

- Is compliant with all relevant legislation, and helps lead to positive experiences and outcomes for children in the care of Stramash nurseries and during Stramash experiences for older children and young people.

- Embeds equal opportunity principles, practices and strategies throughout the recruitment process. We want all applicants to be treated fairly and to ensure people's individual needs during recruitment are considered.

- Embeds Protection of Vulnerable principles groups as paramount in all actions taken during the recruitment process.

To ensure that these policy aims are achieved, all appointing managers will receive training in effective recruitment and selection.

The Recruitment Process

The following procedure will be used when a post is to be filled. The CEO in consultation with the relevant team leader will decide which staff will be part of the recruitment panel. The panel will be led by a member of staff or Director from the Stramash Board who has undergone recruitment and selection training. It is this person's remit to:

Define the job (review with each new round of recruitment).

- This is an opportunity to revise the job description and person specification of an existing post if required - *the regular development of job descriptions and person specifications is important to ensure that the right people with the right skills, knowledge and experience apply for the role. It allows Stramash to clearly state what the role entails and allows candidates to assess their own suitability for the role prior to applying.*
- If it is a newly established post, to ensure the requirements are accurate, draw up a job description and consult the CEO and/or Board of Directors in relation to the appropriate grade and/or salary.

NB: No vacancy can be processed without authorisation from Senior Mgt Team.

Liaise with the Senior Management Team and Communications team to confirm:

- details of the post

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[1] Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment (2016) Care Inspectorate

- when the advert will be posted
- where the advert will be posted
- the time frame to be given to the advert

Collate a Recruitment Pack appropriate for the post.
This pack should include:
- An application form for the role
- Job description and person specification
- Information on the site of work (nursery, office, home working)
- Information on Stramash
- Terms and conditions of employment including salary
- Stramash's Protection of Vulnerable Groups statement
- Stramash's Equal Opportunities statement

It is important that this pack is carefully put together in order to present a professional image of Stramash, therefore out-of date or poorly presented information is not suitable.

Advertising
When advertising for a role, the advert should be easily understood and accessible to the wider public. The advert should be posted internally, on Stramash website and on an agreed set of websites (ie Indeed) and social media (ie Facebook). There may be discussion at this point about posting the job in local or wider press, as well as approaching recruitment organisations.

The advert should link back to the Stramash website for the application pack, including the person specification and job description for the role advertised.

The main information should include:
- Post title
- Tasks and responsibilities of role
- Terms and conditions (including salary)
- Location of work
- What type of contract (ie permanent or fixed term)
- That a PVG membership update is required
- SSSC registration will be required (and subsequent qualification requirements)
- Information about Stramash - including a statement on Protecting Vulnerable Groups and a statement on Equal Opportunities
- Recruitment pack related to the post being advertised
- End date of applications

When putting the advert out, there should be a review of the Job Description and Person Specification to ensure these are up-to-date and offer a true representation of the vacant post, and the person being sought to fill this post.

The person specification should include the qualifications, knowledge and experience, registration requirements and any other requirements needed to perform the role as well as the competences and qualities that the successful applicant should be able to demonstrate or show the potential to develop within the role.

There should be opportunity within this stage to support applicants with additional needs, disabilities or language barriers. Considerations should be made as to how we can support these applicants - ie audio files, large font application forms etc

Discuss with the Senior Management Team and Comms Team the most effective means of obtaining suitable permanent candidates. The following options should be explored (in this order):

- Internal advert within Stramash
- Examination of previous applications, or those held on file within the Human Resources Department / Stramash Administration Office
- External advert within the job centre
- External advert in the local press
- External advert in the National press
- External advert in the appropriate technical / professional Journal
- In senior posts the use of a recruitment agency

The advertisement should make specific mention as to how the person specification and job description requirements will be assessed (ie interview or presentation or another method). There should be consideration at this stage as to whether the advertisement is accessible to all - all teams involved should follow the Stramash Equal Opportunities Policy.

External adverts should be submitted to the appropriate senior manager with costings for approval before being placed.

Receiving Applications

Upon receiving an application through email or through Indeed (or other employment sites), all documents submitted by applicants should be stored on Google Drive (Recruitment Drive). This can be done by Communication staff or by Management, but should be clear who is responsible.

When uploading the documents to the Drive, **ALL** applications should be stored in a specifically named file for that round of recruitment
ie Elgin Recruitment Practitioner December 2019

The documents should then be put into individual folders with the applicants name as the title
ie Boris Smith

All documents including application forms, cover letter and CV (and any other documents submitted to Stramash) should be stored here to be reviewed by appropriate members of the Management Team.

The Selection Process - Application stage

Shortlisting applicants should be done by using the person specification as criteria; taking into account length of experience, qualifications, and so on. Criteria for shortlisting applicants must be done equally and without exception - we must not take influence from ages, addresses or other personal qualities of an application.

The shortlisting of applicants process must also adhere to the Equal Opportunities Policy - *"The aim of the policy is to ensure that all job applicants, employees, volunteers and clients receive fair treatment regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic and national origin, disability, age and religious beliefs and working hours. We do this by adhering to all equal opportunities legislation and ensuring that we are fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination in all of our systems, processes, procedures, activities and decisions. Unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated."*

Shortlisting must be undertaken by more than one person - ideally by the members of the interview panel; in this way they can follow the entire process.

To consider when shortlisting:
- Are there any unexplained gaps in employment history?
- Are there any significant changes in career?
- What skills might an applicant hold from their past employment?
- What skills might an applicant hold from their hobbies/past-times?

It is the responsibility of the appointing manager at this stage to record (in writing) the reasons why an applicant is not shortlisted. This should be stored alongside the application.

Invitations to an Interview / Non Successful Applicants

When inviting an applicant for an interview - it is good practise to confirm through email, using the email address that the application was received from or given on the application form. The appointing manager would typically email applicants. The invitation should have the following information:
- time, place and location (directions to the venue are helpful)
- details of the interview panel
- details of how the interview will be conducted
- Statement on the protection of vulnerable groups - clarity that safer recruitment checks will be carried out if the applicant is successful (ie PVG)
- what the applicant will need to bring with them to interview such as identification and evidence of declared qualifications

In the case of certain Stramash sites, it may be beneficial to ask applicants not to wear formal attire, as they may need to walk across site to the office etc.

In the case where an applicant has not been successful in their application and hasn't been selected for an interview, the appointing manager should email the applicant to thank them for their application, but at this point in time we will not be taking their application further.

Unsuccessful application forms will be securely stored online for HOW LONG. After this time, they will be shredded to ensure safety of data.

The Interview Process

The interview should be a structured event which addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and the person specification. As an accessible means of gathering this information, questions should focus on what applicants have achieved, worked on and reflected upon in their past experiences. Although there can be questions that give the applicant a chance to propose what they *may* do in a situation, it is important to keep these to a minimum. For more senior posts psychometric testing, presentations to the interview panel on a chosen topic and/or a series of individual interviews on various topics may be included.

To consider:
- It is essential that interviews are done by a team of at least two staff members, of which one should be a Manager.
- Managers should ensure additional needs are met when inviting applicants to an interview.
- The location of the interview should be accessible to all attending - in a quiet, comfortable location such as an office.
- Questions are pre-set (see blank templates) for each role, however these can be added to or amended in discussions with the Senior Management Team. Everyone must be given the same questions for the same role.
- There should be an opportunity for applicants to ask questions to the interview team.

The panel members should:
- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointment
- be appropriately trained including for example, interviewing skills, relevant legislation including the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Equalities Act.

At least one week prior to the interview, each panellist will receive an interview pack containing:
- copies of application forms;
- blank interview question forms;
- a copy of the job advertisement;
- a copy of the job description;
- a copy of the person specification

In advance of the interviews panel members should:
- reach a consensus about the required standard for the post
- consider the issues to be explored with each applicants and who will ask about these
- agree the assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification and agree how a record of the assessment will be taken.

At the interview, the appointing manager will ensure that the Interview Question sheet is completed as fully as possible. When interviewing, they will ensure that Stramash's Equal Opportunities Policy is strictly adhered to, with no discrimination shown on any grounds.

The atmosphere of the interview should be friendly and professional. There should be opportunities to explore questions and answers, ideally with a good amount of back and forth conversation.

Opportunities to tour the site (including buildings), observe the group at play and interact with staff are recommended.

If an applicant discloses that they are subject to SSSC investigation or employer disciplinary enquiries or investigation, the appointing Manager should be prepared to explore the issues. This should be evaluated by the Senior Mgt Team.

The Selection Process - Interview Stage

When reviewing an interview, a complete sense of non-bias judgement will be used. The process must adhere to Stramash's Equal Opportunities Policy -

"*The aim of the policy is to ensure that all job applicants, employees, volunteers and clients receive fair treatment regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic and national origin, disability, age and religious beliefs and working hours. We do this by adhering to all equal opportunities legislation and ensuring that we are fair, objective, transparent and free from discrimination in all of our systems, processes, procedures, activities and decisions. Unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated.*" - **Apply scoring criteria to all applicants equally and without exception.**

Scoring of applicants will be recorded and shared by interview panel members and considered alongside all available candidate information. When scoring the applicant, it is a numerical score based on how well the applicant answered the question in relation to the job description and person specification - as these are the tools to see who is suitable for the role and who is not.

If the panel cannot agree on the most suitable applicant for the post, or want to explore further with the applicant their suitability for the post - the appointing manager will liaise with the Snr Mgt Team about conducting a second interview with one or more of the applicants. It is essential that at least one interview panel member from the original interview should be on the second interview panel to allow for consistency.

Upon united decision of the Interview Panel, the appointing Manager will:
● email all unsuccessful candidates with outcome of interview within one working day
● Telephone the successful candidate, with a follow up email with written evidence of the offer the post provisionally, **making it clear that only when satisfactory references and pre-employment checks have been received will the offer be confirmed**

The offer of employment shall contain:
● confirmation of the key terms and conditions of employment (including salary, work location, contract type, hours to be worked per week)
● any requirement for the applicant to declare any new charges / convictions
● any requirement relating to gaining and maintaining registration with any regulatory body

The appointing Manager should notify the Snr Management Team if the appointee refuses the offer, or if there are any other details to be cleared.

Unsuccessful candidates application forms and interview question forms will be stored for <mark>HOW LONG</mark>. After this time, they will be shredded to ensure safety of data.

The Hiring Process

Essential checks MUST be completed BEFORE start date

Right to work in UK

It is essential that the appointing Manager fully checks **ALL** successful applicants Right to Work in the UK documentation prior to employing them. If these checks are not made, and the individual is not able to work in the UK, Stramash could face fines of £20,000 per individual. **Stramash will not offer employment to those unable to provide evidence of the Right to Work in the UK**.

The guidance from HMRC can be found in the Employer's Guide to Right to Work Checks guidance here.

In order to check if an individual has the right to work in the UK, they must provide **original copies** of 3 of the following:

- A passport showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
- A passport or national identity card showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
- A Registration Certificate or Document Certifying Permanent Residence issued by the Home Office to a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
- A Permanent Residence Card issued by the Home Office to the family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
- A current Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder indicating that the person named is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
- A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
- A current Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the named person is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
- A birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
- A birth (short or long) or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
- A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

There is also provision for these to be provided instead/also:
- Group 1 – Documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts until the expiry date of leave

- A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is currently allowed to do the type of work in question.
- A current Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder which indicates that the named person can currently stay in the UK and is allowed to do the work in question.
- A current Residence Card (including an Accession Residence Card or a Derivative Residence Card) issued by the Home Office to a non-European Economic Area national who is a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland or who has a derivative right of residence.
- A current Immigration Status Document containing a photograph issued by the Home Office to the holder with a valid endorsement indicating that the named person may stay in the UK, and is allowed to do the type of work in question, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

- Group 2 – Documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts for 6 months
  - A Certificate of Application issued by the Home Office under regulation 18(3) or 20(2) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006, to a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland stating that the holder is permitted to take employment which is less than 6 months old together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
  - An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office stating that the holder is permitted to take the employment in question, together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
  - A Positive Verification Notice issued by the Home Office Employer Checking Service to the employer or prospective employer, which indicates that the named person may stay in the UK and is permitted to do the work in question.

If in doubt, appointing Managers can obtain the documents and then check if they are relevant forms of Right to Work ID here.

The appointing manager must check:
- **photographs and dates of birth are consistent** across documents and with the person's appearance in order to detect impersonation;
- **expiry dates** for permission to be in the UK **have not passed**;
- any work restrictions to determine if they are allowed to do the type of work on offer (for students who have limited permission to work during term-times, you must also obtain, copy and retain details of their academic term and vacation times covering the duration of their period of study in the UK for which they will be employed);
- the **documents are genuine**, have not been tampered with and belong to the holder;
- the reasons for any **difference in names** across documents can be explained by providing evidence (e.g. original marriage certificate, divorce decree absolute, deed poll). These supporting documents must also be photocopied and a copy retained.

Please note in some cases where evidence is based on a time period with an expiry date there may be need for to do an **updated check.** This date should be recorded and followed up on. At that point, the Manager will need to complete the entire Right to Work check again.

The appointing Manager must **make a clear copy** of each document in a format which cannot manually be altered and retain the copy securely:
- electronically (jpeg or pdf) or;
- in hardcopy in their staff files.

The appointing Manager must also retain a secure record of the date on which they made the Right to Work check via the Safer Recruitment Checklist. After 2 years of storage, these documents should be shredded in line with Data Protection.

If at any stage there is a reason why a candidate is unable to work in the UK, then the employment offer cannot be given. If there is a suspected case of fraud, then contact should be made with local police or fraud teams.

PVG / Disclosure Scotland Checks

Prior to confirming a start date, individuals must fill in the relevant PVG form, which will be countersigned by an authorised member of the staff (typically Kate Hunter, Oban TL). Kate will then send the form into Disclosure Scotland to be checked. A start date will only be generated **after** receiving the PVG form back and confirmed as safe to work on site.

If the application to join the PVG scheme is denied, the candidate will be unable to work with Stramash as per Stramash's stance on Protecting Vulnerable Groups and the Child Protection Policy.

Stramash will, under <u>no</u> circumstances, accept a volunteer or staff member to work on site with the children if they have not got a valid PVG for their Stramash role - This is in accordance with current legislation (Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 & Part V of the Police Act 19).

Volunteers working with Stramash are treated in the same way as paid staff and any volunteers without a PVG scheme record or a relevant Disclosure Scotland certificate **will not** be able to carry out their volunteer work with Stramash until their PVG scheme record has been updated.

Stramash volunteers and employees must **update their PVG every 3 years** to ensure an up-to-date record is kept concerning any convictions or otherwise. As Disclosure Scotland will continually check individual's suitability to continue working with children or protected adults, if it is found that new information means someone might have become unsuitable to work with children or protected adults, Disclosure Scotland will make a report to Stramash (through Kate Hunter).

PVG Records returned to Stramash for all sites shall be kept in a secure storage at Oban. Individuals should keep their own records. There should be no PVG records kept on individual sites due to the personal information kept on PVG records.

For more information about PVG Scheme, see here.

References

Prior to a confirmed start date, at least **TWO** appropriate references must be sought. **Stramash will not offer employment if both references cannot be sought.**

The appointing Manager will write to the referees given during the application process where the opinion of competence in the role will be asked with reference to the person specification and job description, which should be provided to be referred to (see reference request forms & Reference request procedure).

When seeking references, there must be a reference from the **most recent employer**. References are to come from an **appropriately senior manager** and **not** from a former peer operating at the same grade. However in any circumstance where this is not possible, a valid reason must be accepted and the reason recorded on the safer recruitment checklist. Where there is not an opportunity to get a reference from a senior manager (ie school leavers, individuals who have been long term unemployed or self employed) alternative references will be requested from a suitable professional that is able to accurately state the suitability of the individual for the role (ie a lecturer, social worker, partnership workers) - however, these are special circumstances and should not be considered the norm.

As per the SSSC code of practice - in particular code **1.3: seeking and providing accurate and appropriate references to share information relevant to a person's suitability to work in social service posts** - information in references may come back highlighting concern or unsuitability for the post. These should be thoroughly explored through communication with the referee.

References will be evaluated and reviewed by the appointing Manager before offering a start date. If there is considerable evidence towards the unsuitability of the applicant, the case will be given to the Snr Mgt Team for a decision.

References should be stored within the applicant's file for future reference.

The Induction Process

The induction process is important for equipping practitioners with the right skills and values to provide a high quality experience for the children in our care at Stramash.

Team Leaders, who will mentor and support staff as they go through their induction process, are to ensure staff are properly inducted in line with the Scottish Government's *Early Learning and Childcare National Induction Resource* (2019) guidance[2] and the Scottish Government's *Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" In Scotland* (2012) guidance[3].

The purpose of induction is to build on what an individual already knows, integrate them as a valuable member of the team and to ensure their understanding of the following:
- **Basic on the job skills, responsibilities and tasks** (protocols, safe systems of working and routines)
- The importance of **developing trusting relationships** with children and their families;
- The individual's role as **part of a team** and how to **develop good communication** with children, their families and colleagues;
- Responsibilities in **keeping children safe**: particularly protocols around raising concerns about a child's wellbeing or child protection matters;
- The individual's responsibility in respect of **professional registration** with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and the associated requirements around continuous professional learning and qualifications and subsequently, the **codes of practice** for social service workers;
- The **Stramash ethos and values,** and how to implement these throughout their practice.

New Starter Form / Health Information Form
All new staff must complete a New Starter Form with details of their employment status, student loans or postgraduate loans. This will be uploaded to the Leadership Drive for use by Payroll.

Secondly, all new staff must complete a Health Information Form which details any underlying health conditions that they have that may need to be considered by their employer. Any information declared within the form is kept confidential between the Team Leaders and the individual. There may be a need to put in support within the individual's role as a result of the declaration. This document will be kept in the individual's staff file.

Induction Checklist
Stramash uses an induction checklist to ensure that all areas are covered during the induction process. These are split into four categories: General, Task/Site Skills, Care and Training Courses. As these areas are worked through, there should be a record of this by dating the document. All areas covered in the induction will be reviewed during the probationary meeting.

Team Leaders will work with the individual to cover all points within the induction checklist at a good pace, taking time to understand and reflect upon each item on the agenda. There will be opportunities to ask questions and to try out skills learned during the induction process.

Registering with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

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[2] Early Learning and Childcare - National Induction Resource (2019) Scottish Government
[3] Common Core of Skills, Knowledge & Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland (2012) Scottish Government

Stramash employees **must** register with the [Scottish Social Services Council](#) (SSSC) **within 6 months** of the start of their employment. The SSSC is the regulatory body for social service workers, including those who work in the early learning and childcare profession (with the exception of those working in childminding services, who are regulated by the Care Inspectorate, and teachers, who are regulated by the General Teaching Council for Scotland).

Staff will register in one of the following SSSC categories:
- Typically apprentices will register as Support worker in a day care of children service;
- Typically Practitioners will register as Practitioner in a day care of children service;
- Typically Team Leaders and Snr Team Leaders will register as Lead Practitioner/manager in a day care of children service.

Although the registration must take place within six months of starting their role at Stramash, staff should be aware it can take up to 60 days for an application to be processed. As such, staff should not leave their registration too late.

There is typically a charge for registration for the SSSC, and this is to be renewed annually by staff.

It is the responsibility of the individual who registers with the SSSC, not of Stramash, to meet the conditions of their registration within the given time limit, and to update their training log through the mysssc portal.

The SSSC have developed the '[Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers](#)' (the Codes of Practice) which set out clear standards for professional conduct and practice that social service workers, including early year workers, must meet in their everyday work. When staff register with the SSSC they should understand that in doing so, they are agreeing to follow the SSSC Codes of Practice for Workers.

If an individual cannot, for any reason, register with the SSSC, then employment with Stramash cannot be maintained.

Catch Ups / Supervision / Induction Resource
Throughout the induction process, the individual and their mentor will reflect upon the practises and approaches within the nursery, and the impacts that these have on the overall experience for the children by use of the Scottish Government's National Induction Resource.

Team Leaders and staff will work through a series of thought provoking questions to explore and reflect upon these observed practises, routines and approaches in generic circumstances or with specific examples. The questions are written in such a way as to promote discussion about the individual's role in providing quality care and learning.

The questions are laid out in a month by month time scale. Although always available for conversations, questions and coaching - Team Leaders should arrange for a specific "catch up" time during the month to run through any questions, scenarios and supporting opportunities.

It is important for Team Leaders to note that it may take some time to build up a trusting relationship where the new recruit is able to freely share thoughts, feelings and progression in an honest manner. Team Leaders should consider how this induction process will work for different individuals and remember that each will progress at different rates, particularly part time workers, or for those with limited previous experience.

It is important for Team Leaders to note that the Induction Resource is a fantastic resource that offers opportunities to discuss and also links to relevant guidance and best practise - and will be used **in conjunction** with the Stramash Induction Checklist.