Dear Head Teacher/Principal,

Re: Local Authority Staff: Confirmation of safe recruitment checks and Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service status for visits to school sites from Local Authority staff.

I am writing to confirm that all Children First Northamptonshire staff who visit schools and who have unsupervised contact with children will have had an appropriate Enhanced DBS check conducted by their employing authority and have been appointed following full Safer Recruitment Processes. If the nature of their work requires it, NCC will also have applied the requirements of the Childcare Disqualification regulations.

All these staff will have received relevant induction and training in safeguarding. All staff receive annual updates on safeguarding and are subject to NCC’s Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy for e safety.

All staff are required to abide by Northamptonshire County Council Safeguarding procedures and the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Partnership safeguarding policies and procedures. All staff working in schools are provided with Part One from “Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019”

Children First Northamptonshire’s recruitment processes include:-

- Fully enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (Enhanced plus Barred List(s)) check in line with Disclosure and Barring Service guidance to employers
- Identity check including proof of address
- Certificate of Good Conduct (if lived or worked outside the UK in the last 5 years) or additional references if an overseas police check cannot be obtained
- Minimum of two satisfactory references including safeguarding questions
- Professional qualifications check for qualifications mandatory for role
- Right to work in the UK check
- Full work history with career gaps explained

The statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2019 states:-

“Schools and colleges must obtain written notification from any agency, or third-party organisation, they use that the organisation has carried out the checks on an individual who will be working at the school or college that the school or college would otherwise perform. This must include, as necessary,
a barred list check, prior to appointing that individual. They must also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made. “

This letter can be regarded as the written notification required by the KCSIE 2019 guidance. In line with KCSIE 2019 NCC’s procedures mean that schools should not need to hold information on NCC staff on their central record of adults working at the school or carry out separate DBS checks themselves on NCC appointed staff who carry Photo ID. Therefore staff carrying an ID badge from Northamptonshire County Council do not need to produce their DBS check at reception nor produce their DBS number. Their ID badge is sufficient proof that checks have already been carried out on your behalf.

The County Council encourages schools to take all appropriate safeguarding measures. These include checking the identity of Local Authority appointed staff on arrival to schools and ensuring they sign-in on each occasion that they visit. All Northamptonshire County Council staff visiting schools will carry photo identification which they must produce to verify their identity and employer.

A role that may have unsupervised contact with children and young people on a regular basis includes (but is not limited to):-

- Social Workers
- Social Work Assistants
- Leaving Care PA’s
- Educational Psychologists
- Education Inclusion Partnership Officers
- Virtual School Officers
- Targeted Early Help Workers
- CFN Family Support Workers
- School Improvement Managers
- Safeguarding in Education Officers
- Online Safety Officer
- Early Years Advisers
- Special Education Need Assessment & Review Service
- Portage
- Team Managers
- Autism and SEND Practitioners

In respect of visitors to the school, KCSIE 2019 Part 3: Safer recruitment, point 138 states: “Schools and colleges do not have the power to request DBS checks and barred list checks, or ask to see DBS certificates, for visitors (for example children’s relatives or other visitors attending a sports day). Head teachers and principals should use their professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise visitors.”

To support schools to make these professional judgements, please note that:

- All staff in paid or unpaid work that involves working with children where the work is classed as a regulated activity must have a DBS enhanced with barred list check. The employing agency such as Northamptonshire County Council is responsible for obtaining and scrutinising DBS checks on their staff.
• The DBS are clear that only employers and licensing bodies can request a DBS check and in accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties.

• Other than on very rare occasions staff from Children’s Social Care should inform the school prior to their visit to see a child or young person.

• Anyone employed by an organisation to work with children and their families will have a photo ID which should be shown prior to any visit to verify the individual. If at any stage the school wish to take further action to confirm the identification of the individual, a discussion should take place with their manager using the main number of the organisation.

Employees of Northamptonshire County Council do not commence employment in posts with regular unsupervised contact with children until all satisfactory clearances have been received.

This letter should be retained with your single central record for Ofsted purposes.

Should you require further information please contact the Safeguarding Lead for Education, Debbie Carrie on dcarrie@childrenfirstnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Can I please reiterate the importance of allowing access as speedily as possible in order that there is no delay in safeguarding investigations for children taking place.

Yours sincerely,
Sharon Muldoon

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