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To whom it may concern;

As a provider of social, emotional and well-being support for children and young people in Wolverhampton schools, Switch Midlands CIC fulfils its requirements in the safeguarding of children and young people.

As part of these checks, all staff that work directly with children and young people in regulated activity have enhanced DBS checks, are registered with the DBS Update Service, and undergo pre-employment safer recruitment checks. In addition to this, all staff receive regular and up-to-date safeguarding training and supervision. For your reference, our DBS Handling Policy is included with this letter.

A copy of our safeguarding policy can be found online at www.switchmidlands.com, which are annually reviewed and audited as necessary.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact either Tim Wakefield (Safeguarding Lead) or Caroline Erskine-Murphy (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) on either hello@switchmidlands.com or 01902 552288.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Wakefield". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tim Wakefield
Chief Executive Officer

Handling, Use and Safekeeping of DBS information Policy

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on: 25th January 2023

General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Switch Midlands complies fully with The Code of Practice for Disclosure and Barring Service Registered Persons regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

Storage and access

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

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. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (specific ref. in para 166), Schools contracting with Switch Midlands for the delivery of services should ensure that they have received a letter from us confirming that all we have carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates. Provided the school has received this information, there is no requirement for school staff to see DBS certificates and our staff will not routinely carry them.

For staff with direct, unsupervised contact with pupils and those providing regulated activity within a setting i.e. activity and regularity dependant, ID and a can be recorded, allowing schools to confirm that they are the person we have checked. If there are any concerns or further queries then please don't hesitate to contact Switch Midlands.

Any recording of DBS information pertaining to our staff in school will need to be compliant with the Data Protection Act, Human Rights Act, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and incorporated within the individual organisation's policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of DBS certificate information.

Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints, or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Acting as an umbrella body

Before acting as an umbrella body (an umbrella body being a registered body which countersigns applications and receives certificate information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), we will take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of certificate information in full compliance with the code of practice and in full accordance with this policy.

We will also ensure that anybody or individual, at whose request applications for DBS certificates are countersigned, has such a written policy and, if necessary, will provide a model policy for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.