

# Babysitter Reviews

## Introduction:

The regular review of staff and babysitters is an essential step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. SafeCircle is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its member families and children in connections with the service. As a placement agency, SafeCircle expects all staff and babysitters to share this commitment.

In line with recent legislation including the Children Act 1989/2004, Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance 2010 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, SafeCircle takes very seriously its duty of care for all member family children. In order to help safeguard and promote the welfare of all its members, SafeCircle is committed to a thorough and consistent Babysitter Review Policy.

## Aims and Objectives:

The aims of the Babysitter Review Policy is to help identify and remove people who might abuse or harm children or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for reviewing staff and babysitters.

This is achieved through the following points;

- SafeCircle will complete a comprehensive review of each babysitter on its register on a regular basis. His review will be set against our review criteria as set out below. This is based on the babysitter's abilities, qualifications, experience and merit as measured against the expectations of SafeCircle's Code of Conduct.
- The review of staff and babysitters will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner.
- This policy objectives are to operate this procedure consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about babysitter in respect of their suitability to continue as a SafeCircle Sitter.

## Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the management team to:

- Ensure that SafeCircle has effective policies and procedures in place for reviewing all staff and babysitters in accordance with Ofsted guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor the SafeCircle staff's and babysitters compliance with them.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

## Recruitment Procedure:

*Monitoring and Evaluation:* The staff at head office will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the agency. This will be undertaken through formal reviews of each staff members and babysitter on a 3 yearly pattern as set out below;

*References:* All babysitters will be required to provide contact details for two references; their current employer and a second reference (child care related) for the purpose of the review.

References will be followed up directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support continued registration decisions. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.

SafeCircle does not accept open references, testimonials or references from relatives. Failure to provide details of reference or agreement to these references being contacted will result in their registration with SafeCircle being terminated.

*Paediatric First Aid:* All babysitters will be required to provide evidence of their updated Paediatric First Aid, and any other training courses they have attended within the period for review.

*DBS check:* It is SafeCircle's policy to re-check staff and babysitters DBS Certificates and in addition any staff or babysitters that takes leave for more than three months (ie: maternity leave, career break etc.) must be re-checked before they return back to work. This will be done through the DBS update service and all babysitters will be required to consent to their Enhanced DBS check to be

repeated. Failure to agree to such will result in their registration with SafeCircle being terminated.

Members of staff and babysitters at SafeCircle aware of their obligation to inform head office of any cautions or convictions that arise between these checks taking place.

*Dealing with convictions:* SafeCircle operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- How long ago the offence occurred;
- One-off or history of offences;
- Changes in circumstances,
- Decriminalisation and remorse.

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the directors which includes the lead professional for safeguarding. The reviewer will then consider their suitability to continue as a SafeCircle Sitter.

*Feedback:* Feedback will also be considered as part of the babysitters review. All feedback from parents and staff will be viewed and negative feedback will be discussed with the babysitter to establish the nature of these and will play a factor in their suitability to continue as a SafeCircle Sitter.

*Medical fitness:* All babysitters must possess the appropriate level of physical and mental fitness before continued registration can be confirmed. All babysitter are required to declare any medical history and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required.

*Record retention / Data protection:* SafeCircle will retain all review notes on all babysitters will be held on file by SafeCircle during their registration. If registration does not continue notes will be held for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (ie: shredded). The 6 month retention period is in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will also allow SafeCircle to deal with any data access requests, review complaints or to respond to any complaints made.

All information retained on employees and babysitters are kept centrally in the head office on a secure file system.

### **Leaving registration at SafeCircle Sitters:**

Despite the best efforts to recruit safely there will be occasions when allegations of abuse against children and young people are raised. In cases relating to the behaviour of an employee or babysitter (these behaviours are within the context of four categories of abuse ie: physical, sexual and emotional and neglect) the agency's Allegations Against Professionals policy will apply.

In cases of dismissal (or resignation) due to the above behaviour, SafeCircle will inform the appropriate agencies of the circumstances why the employee or babysitter is leaving SafeCircle's employment/registration.

### **Acknowledgements:**

These procedures have been created with resources and guidance from SafeNetwork.org.uk (an NSPCC organisation).