



## Safeguarding Children

Providers must take all necessary steps to keep children safe. They must safeguard children, and this means they must ensure staff working or having contact with children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles.

Ensure you refer to the requirements set out within the [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#)

## Checking Identity

Providers must verify a candidate's identity; it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Best practice is to check the name on their birth certificate and any other certificates which state a name change such as a marriage certificate.

## Checking right to work in UK

Providers must verify the person's right to work in the UK, including EU nationals. If there is uncertainty about whether an individual needs permission to work in the UK, then providers should follow advice on the [GOV.UK website](#);

- if the person has lived or worked outside the UK, make any further checks the providers consider appropriate.
- verify professional qualifications, as appropriate. (See section on how to check early years and childcare qualifications).



## References

[The Statutory Framework for the EYFS](#) requires early years providers to implement effective systems to check the suitability of practitioners and obtaining references is just one step providers should use.

The purpose of seeking references is to allow employers to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions.

In line with the guidance set out in [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) you should consider the statements below when seeking references:

- You must always ask candidates' permission prior to requesting a reference.
- Ideally, references should be requested from current and/or most recent employers. Also make the candidates aware you may contact referees with any follow up questions about the references you have received.
- Open references addressed 'to whom it may concern' are not acceptable, neither are testimonials brought by the candidate on the day of the interview.
- Always follow up at least two referees and, where possible, references should cover the last five years work history, especially that of the current/last employer.
- References need to include information which is based on fact. Referees who hold supervision and performance management records should be asked to refer to these to ensure any disciplinary issues are included.
- The reference should be relevant to employment working with children or if the applicant has come directly from studying, a reference should be requested from the place of study. A second character reference can then be obtained from another source for example, voluntary/community work.

For further information about seeking references, refer to section 7 in [Safer recruitment best practice guidance](#)

## Health

- **Verification** - Providers should verify the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities as set out in the [Education \(Health Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#). An applicant can be asked relevant questions about disability and health in order to establish whether they have the physical and mental capacity for the specific role; [See legislation.gov.uk Section 60 of the Equality Act 2010](#)
- **Medication** - Providers must ensure that staff members only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair the staff member's ability to look after children properly.



## How to check early years and childcare qualifications

All early years providers must follow the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) regulations on staff:child ratios. This is the number of qualified staff, at different qualification levels, an early years setting needs to have in order to meet the needs of all children and ensure their safety.

The Department for Education (DfE) defines the qualifications that staff must hold to count in EYFS staff:child ratios. Providers can use the DfE early years qualifications lists to:

- check if a person's qualification meets the approved 'full and relevant' criteria for early years qualifications
- confirm if a person counts in the EYFS staff:child ratios

The guidance on early years qualifications and ratios covers:

- which qualifications are acceptable to work in early years
- paediatric first aid (PFA)

Further information regarding how to check the qualifications of applicants can be found within the [Check early years qualifications guidance](#)

## DBS Checks

An enhanced criminal records disclosure (DBS check) with children's barred list check must be obtained for all adults who undertake 'regulated activity' with children, which includes most individuals in childcare roles.

The DBS provide a [searchable list](#) of the umbrella bodies who process DBS checks for childcare workers. You can search by sector (childcare), by location (Suffolk) and by specialist services (e.g. online support/tracking). Voluntary workers checks are free but there is a handling fee.

Owners, directors, committee members or childminders who constitute the 'registered person' [Daycare roles that must register with Ofsted - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) must apply for DBS checks via the [Ofsted application portal](#).

See Section 8 in [Safer recruitment best practice guidance](#)

## Keeping records

Providers must maintain staff files that contain information about their qualifications and the identify checks and vetting processes that have been completed.

This includes the information about their DBS such as criminal reference check number, the date a check was obtained and details of who obtained it.

