



©"Happy Talk" Speech and Language Therapy Ltd

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### **Happy Talk Ltd -Safer Recruitment Policy**

**To be read in conjunction with the Happy Talk Safeguarding Policy Statement and Policy**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- Happy Talk Ltd are committed to safeguarding children and young adults and in promoting the welfare of all vulnerable individuals.
- Our overall aim is to '*deter unsuitable applicants from applying for roles with vulnerable groups*. Happy Talk Ltd will ensure all candidates are treated fairly, consistently and in compliance with all relevant legislation.

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As an employer, Happy Talk Ltd expects all staff, students and volunteers to share this commitment.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The aims of the Safer Recruitment policy are to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

The aims of Happy Talk's recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance.
- to ensure that Happy Talk Ltd meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

Happy Talk Ltd has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit as measured against the job description and person specification.

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation and guidance.

If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare it as soon as they are aware of the individual's application and avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**It is the responsibility of the Happy Talk Director to:**

- Ensure Happy Talk Ltd has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers.
- Ensure all appropriate checks are carried out relating to staff and volunteers who are employed by Happy Talk Ltd.

- Promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

**It is the responsibility of all Happy Talk employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff to:**

- Familiarise themselves with and comply with the provisions of this policy. Share Happy Talk's commitment to safeguarding children and young adults.

**It is the responsibility of all Happy Talk Ltd employees to:**

- Be aware of and familiarise themselves with this policy and share Happy Talk's commitment to safeguarding children and young adults.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURE**

### ***Advertising***

- To ensure equality of opportunity, Happy Talk will advertise all vacant posts through their website and external advertising.
- Any advertisement will make clear Happy Talk's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the GDPR.

### ***Application Forms***

- Applications are accepted on receipt of a Happy Talk application form and preferably a current CV plus informal discussion with the HT Director.
- Happy Talk Ltd will accept CV's as long as all applicants include their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role. **All applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in their employment history.** A CV with incomplete information will not be shortlisted.
- All employees including interviewee's for vacant posts will be required to **sign a declaration regarding convictions and working with children.** All Happy Talk Ltd posts are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Happy Talk Ltd will not employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position with Happy Talk Ltd. **All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or the DBS.**

### ***Job Descriptions and Person Specifications***

Happy Talk job descriptions will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

- The person specification informs the selection decision. It will detail the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.
- JDs refer to Happy Talk's clinical governance requirements including the requirement for an enhanced DBS clearance, the requirement to comply with the GDPR, equal opportunities, dignity and respect at work and health and safety at work.

### ***References***

- References for shortlisted applicants will be sent immediately after shortlisting unless an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. If timescales do not allow for receipt of references prior to the interview the successful applicant's job offer will be made **subject to two satisfactory references and an enhanced DBS.**

- **One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer/ University tutor. If the current / most recent employment does / did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer/ University tutor with whom the applicant most recently worked with children.** The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.
- All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.
- Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.
- Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. **Direct contact by phone will be undertaken with each referee to verify the reference.**
- Happy Talk Ltd does not accept open references; testimonials or references from relatives.

### **Interviews**

- Face to face interviews are conducted by the HT Director or the Clinical Coordinator and at least one other member of the HT Team.
- The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps that have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.
- **Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview** process, if it has not been disclosed on the application form.
- At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken **Safer Recruitment Study / Training as applicable.**
- All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Only original documents will be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed six months after the recruitment programme.
- All offers of employment are subject to the candidate providing proof of their qualifications.
- All offers of employment for qualified Speech and Language Therapists are subject to the candidate being registered with the HCPC and the RCSLT. Annual compliance with this requirement is audited by the HT Director / PA to the HT Director.
- An enhanced DBS is an essential requirement of all clinical posts prior to starting work with HT. Team members are required to show the Director their **paper copy and register with the update service when it is time for their renewal.** The Director is registered to access the update service to check certificate numbers and dates of birth against valid DBS clearance.

### **On-going Clinical Governance Procedure**

1. All staff must sign an annual declaration confirming their:

- **Knowledge of and compliance with their settings safeguarding procedures.**
- Understanding of all aspects of their child protection / safeguarding training.
- Understanding of the Happy Talk Safeguarding policy statement and commitment to safeguarding children.
- Understanding of the requirement to notify the Happy Talk Director of any changes to their circumstances in respect of their DBS certificate.

2. All staff must participate in annual appraisals (Personal Development Reviews) conducted by the team member nominated by the HT Director or the HT Director themselves.

3. All staff are required to participate in clinical audits which are designed to review and maintain standards of clinical practice including compliance with the GDPR, RCSLT and HCPC.
4. In line with the HCPC, all staff must access regular clinical supervision. The latter will be monitored by the HT Director PA to the HT Director.
5. All staff will work as part of a Team involving joint practice, second opinions, shadowing and mentoring colleagues.
6. All staff will have ready access to management support as required/ requested by the staff member.
7. Newly Qualified Practitioners will be supported in line with the recommendations of the RCSLT, to complete the RCSLT's NQP competency framework.
8. **All staff will access annual mandatory online child protection and safeguarding training.** Certificates of completion are sent to and stored by the HT Director / PA to the HT Director.
9. **All staff in schools are required to familiarise themselves with their settings safeguarding procedures / paperwork and the safeguarding lead.**
10. All new staff will be inducted during their first weeks of employment, ensuring employees are aware of and have read all HT policies and have been trained in the safe and secure use of the HT website.
11. All HT policies are reviewed on an annual basis or before should the need arise.

Signed:  Director of Happy Talk Ltd 09.2019

Reviews:  
10.2020.  
10.2021  
07.2022