



# CocoRio Safer Recruitment Policy

## Policy brief & purpose

Our Employee and Agency Staff recruitment and selection policy describes our process for attracting and selecting external job candidates including our creative sitters, who hold freelancers' contracts with CocoRio. We are committed to our equal opportunity policy at every selection stage. Hiring staff should aim for a well-planned and discrimination-free hiring process. This is why CocoRio has introduced a standardised Application form instead of encouraging CVs and covering letters.

## Scope

This recruitment and selection policy applies to all staff members who are involved in hiring for our company. It refers to all potential job candidates.

## Policy elements

### **General recruitment**

The Recruitment Manager holds the following qualifications: Safer Recruitment for Those is Non-Education Settings from the NSPCC and Safeguarding and Child Protection for Early Years (Level 2), to ensure that children's safety is always at the forefront while recruiting.

### **What is the recruitment and selection process?**

1. Identify the need for a job opening.
2. Review the need and recruitment timeframe, compose a job description and create a new job application pack.
3. Select appropriate sources for posting the opening: Arts Council England, university careers sites, Indeed and LinkedIn and other appropriate platforms.
4. Post the Job Ad on the appropriate platform(s), and add the Job Application Pack on the website <https://careers.cocorio.co.uk/> . Reshare on social media if appropriate.
5. Review job Application Forms received and answer any queries via email/phone call or through ATS platform Teamtailor. Point any candidates sending a CV/covering letter to fill in the Application Form for CocoRio's consideration.
6. Shortlist applications who fit the Job Description - they need to meet all Essential Person Specifications.

7. Invite successful candidates to a one-to-one interview and subsequently to a group interview.
8. Review candidates: they need an average of 4 (out of 5) points per criteria.
9. Check the candidate's ID in person. For ad hoc recruitment outside of the London area, the family that has requested the sitter will meet the sitter in person and we will be checking their ID online if it is not possible for the sitter to travel to London.
10. Contact 2 referees per candidate. If references aren't exhaustive, ask the referee to provide more details. If the Reference flags a worrying aspect, contact the candidate and discuss that in a meeting.
10. Make an official offer to candidates. Send them training materials, ask them to inform us on any existing certificates and qualifications they may have, and start background checks when appropriate.
11. Start onboarding the candidate. Training includes a Safeguarding Course (<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/introduction-safeguarding-child-protection> or equivalent) and a First Aid Training (<https://www.firstaidforfree.com/> or equivalent) as well as CocoRio's training including elements of Health and Safety, Children's Development and Age-Appropriate Creative Activities. Once all training has been completed, the candidate is ready to start working with CocoRio.

### **Creating job descriptions**

Hiring staff can create job ads based on full job descriptions of each role. Job ads should be clear and accurately represent the open position. They should include:

- A brief description of our company and values
- A short summary of the role's purpose
- A list of responsibilities
- A list of requirements - essential and desirable
- How to apply and Recruitment Process
- CocoRio's Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity Statement

The Application Form should include:

- Full name, previous names, contact details, address, employment history, education history, 2 referees
- Candidate's Supporting Statement
- A space for the applicant to outline any Pre-Existing Connections to CocoRio staff and directors
- Question about the right to work in the UK
- Self Disclosure Form and Policy on Recruiting Ex-Offenders - Information about Criminal Records, The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 & Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Consent Form linking to Data Protection Policy - how we are keeping applicant's data safe
- Signed declaration confirming that all information provided is true and nothing relevant has been omitted

Furthermore, the job ad's style should be consistent with our company's unique voice. It should be addressed to 'you' in a polite and engaging tone. Jargon, complicated phrases and gender-specific language should be avoided.

## Current Guidelines for CocoRio Sitters Recruitment

The following outlines our current guidelines for recruiting sitters, including our criteria

### **Application Form Criteria Prospective Creative Sitters (Freelance Independent Contractors) - must meet all Essential Criteria**

#### **Essential**

1. Creative professional with experience working with children
2. Committing to children's safety at all times
3. Knowledge of children's development
4. Knowledge of health and safety and safeguarding
5. Proactive in session planning of age-appropriate activities
6. Reliable and responsible
7. Responsive on the phone and on emails
8. A belief and understanding of CocoRio's values (Trustworthiness, Approachability, Friendliness, Sustainability, Diversity)

#### **Desirable**

- Holding child care degrees/qualifications
- Speaking additional languages
- Holding a First Aid training, Enhanced DBS check, Safeguarding Certificates
- Previous work in nurseries/teaching roles or in children's entertainment roles

Applications will be reviewed and discrepancies, incomplete sections or non-relevant references will have an impact on the selection process.

### **Interview Selection Criteria Prospective Sitters (Freelance Independent Contractors) - must score 4 out of 5 on average on all individual aspects.**

1. Experience working with children
2. Experience working with children using creative activities
3. Children's development knowledge
4. Trustworthy, reliable and responsible character
5. Proactive attitude
6. Safeguarding and Health and Safety knowledge

#### **Interview feedback**

Hiring staff should always inform candidates they interviewed that they decided to reject them. Leaving candidates in the dark can be damaging to our employer brand. Hiring staff send interview feedback to candidates. Being brief, respectful and keeping feedback job-related are the general rules for writing feedback emails to candidates.

#### **Requesting References**

CocoRio uses standardised Reference Requests forms, to ensure that we receive the most accurate information as possible. When asking for a Reference, we send both the Reference Request form and the Job Description, in order for the referee to give us as specific a reference as possible.

Candidates need to provide two references meeting the following criteria:

1. One reference should be the candidate's current/last employer
2. One reference should refer to previous activity working/volunteering with children
3. If the candidate has never been employed they should provide someone who can give a character reference
4. Candidates should not include a family member/partner as a referee
5. For students, one reference should be from a senior member of staff at their educational institution

Reference Request Forms must include:

1. The Candidate's performance history in the role
2. Whether the Candidate has been the subject of any child protection concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure
3. Any specific concerns that the Referee may have regarding the Candidate's suitability to working with children and young people
4. The Candidate's skills and attributes in relation to the post for which they have applied
5. Referees have a legal liability for references and the reference should contain no material misstatement or omission.
6. In case of a telephone conversation with a Referee, any detail will be kept on file and more information may be sought in writing
7. The Referee may be contacted later - even by phone - to clarify any inconsistencies or doubts about the Candidate's suitability in the reference

### **Self Disclosure**

Once a candidate has passed the interview stage, their Self Disclosure declaration will be considered. If that is not blank, CocoRio recruitment staff will need to consider if the offence(s) is relevant to the role. If it is, CocoRio will need to work on a risk assessment and decide what further information is needed from the candidate, or other bodies including previous employers or the police. CocoRio can then contact the candidate to discuss the concerning matters in a meeting.

CocoRio may pass on its concerns regarding the candidate's suitability to work with children in the following situations:

1. If the candidate has been barred and disqualified from working with children, applying to a job requiring work with children is a criminal offence and it should be reported to the police
2. The candidate has passed the Harm Test, harmed or poses a risk to harm children or vulnerable adults, receives a caution conviction for a relevant offence
3. If the candidate has provided false information in support of their application, CocoRio will investigate this further and it may have to pass on its concerns to other institutions
4. If the candidate belongs to a professional organisation and CocoRio believes that they are in breach of the standards/behaviours of this organisation, CocoRio will report the individual to the criminal record agency

### **Revoked offers**

In case when a formal has to be revoked, the hiring staff should draft and sign an official document. This document should include a legitimate reason for revoking the offer.

Legitimate reasons include:

- Candidate is proved to not be legally allowed to work for our company at a specific location
- Candidate has falsified references or otherwise lied about a serious issue
- Candidate doesn't accept the offer within the specified deadline (deadline must have been included in the offer letter)

Hiring managers and HR must notify the candidate formally as soon as possible.

### **Personal Files**

CocoRio will hold the following in their employee/agency staff files:

1. Copy of ID and evidence of right to work in the UK
2. Application forms
3. Completed references
4. DBS number and issue date
5. Evidence of original qualifications and related checks

CocoRio will not hold any DBS check copies, but only view them as part of its recruitment process.

### **Induction**

As part of the Induction and Training process, all staff will be required to view all CocoRio Policies and Procedures including CocoRio's Code of Conduct, as well as completing training which includes Safeguarding and Health and Safety.

