

Policy and Procedure on Reference Requests

Purbeck View School

Policy Author	Shilleen Freeth
Approval Date	May 2021
Next Review Date	May 2023
Version No	3
Policy Level	Group
Staff Groups Affected	All Staff

Contents

1. Monitoring and Review	1
2. Terminology	2
3. Introduction	2
4. Purpose	3
5. Policy	3
6. Procedure	3
7. Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.


1. Monitoring and Review

- 1.1. The Proprietor will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than three years from the date of approval

shown above, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

- 1.2. The local content of this document will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of Service.

Signed:



John Ivers
Proprietor, Cambian Group



Paul Kniveton
Head of School
May 2021

2. Terminology

- 2.1. Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

'Establishment' or 'Location'	This is a generic term which means the Children's Home/school/college. Purbeck View School is a school and home.
Individual	Means any child or young person under the age of 18 or young adult between the ages of 18 and 25. At Purbeck View School we have children and young people attending and/or residing between the ages of 7 – 19.
Service Head	This is the senior person with overall responsibility for the [school/college/home]. At Purbeck View School this is the Head of School and the Registered Manager who are Paul Kniveton and Mel Micklewright.
Key Worker	Members of staff that have special responsibility for Individuals residing at or attending the Establishment.
Parent, Carer, Guardian	means parent or person with Parental Responsibility
Regulatory Authority	Regulatory Authority is the generic term used in this policy to describe the independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services. At Purbeck View School this is Ofsted.
Social Worker	This means the worker allocated to the child/family. If there is no allocated worker, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	Placing Authority means the local authority/agency responsible for placing the child or commissioning the service
Staff	Means full or part-time employees of Cambian, agency workers, bank workers, contract workers and volunteers.

3. Introduction

Version: 1
Next Review Date: May 2023

Policy Name: Reference Requests

Approved by: Shilleen Freeth
Date: May 2021

Print Date: 11-May-21

Page 2 of 5

- 3.1. This policy explains the process of what happens when Cambian receive a reference request for a current or former employee.
- 3.2. It affects all employees.
- 3.3. Make sure you are familiar with the detail of what is expected of you under this policy

4. Purpose

- 4.1. To ensure that Cambian complies with all the relevant current legislation and other National Standards which govern this area of our work.
- 4.2. To provide clear guidelines and information for Managers and the HR team when a request for a reference is received.

5. Policy

- 5.1. When a reference is provided for a current or former employee, the reference should be true, accurate and not be misleading but based on fact.
- 5.2. Failure to provide fair or accurate information may lead to legal action being taken by the employee or prospective employer.
- 5.3. This may also lead to individuals providing references being subject to possible disciplinary action for the provision of false or malicious allegations being made.

6. Procedure

The process for providing a reference

Standard reference request

- 6.1. All reference requests must be sent to the referencing team at References@cambiangroup.com. Under no circumstances should any other employee issue a reference on behalf of the Company.
- 6.2. Current or ex-employees seeking a reference, must consider that it can take up to four weeks to comply with this request. The Company receive a large volume of such requests, and the details must be carefully checked. You should ensure that any prospective new employer is aware of this timescale. Repeated and duplicate request's will not be responded to any quicker, and in fact may delay the process.
- 6.3. The HR team must always provide advice on references that involve disciplinary sanctions against the subject of the reference or if his/her performance is under formal review. This will include reference to current live sanctions in relation to Safeguarding.
- 6.4. The Company operates a policy of not providing personal written or oral references for current or former employees. All reference requests received must be sent to References@cambiangroup.com. Any deviation from this guidance will render the author of a personally provided reference, personally responsible for any issue arising from the provision of such a reference
- 6.5. The process is the same for both former and current employees.
- 6.6. If there is an agreed reference on file then the reference team will contact HR to use the pre-agreed reference.
- 6.7. If the reference request is for an ex-employee who worked within one of our legacy or acquired businesses (i.e. ACL, Continuum) and HR are unable to locate any information within their current folders, the referencing team should

approach the appropriate Regional Manager and cc in the relevant Director to confirm any safeguarding concerns during their period of employment.

Writing the Reference

- 6.8. References must be written on Company headed paper and marked "confidential" to the addressee only and a copy must be placed on the employees file. There is a template that must be used when providing a reference.

Content of Standard references:

- Generally, references will include minimal or factual information only.
 - Details of the period for which the person has worked for the Company, including start and end date of employment.
 - Job title.
 - Reason for leaving. This could include for example resigned/dismissed/failed probation/retired.
 - Details of any safeguarding issues. This will include reference to current live sanctions in relation to Safeguarding.
- 6.9. The Company will refrain from providing subjective opinion about an individual's performance, conduct or suitability, which cannot be supported by evidence that has been raised with the employee.
- 6.10. Many organisations will provide their own pro forma, or ask for details about an employee's skills and experience against a person specification. In general, it is the Company's practice to respond to requests for factual information only as listed.

Non-standard reference requests

- 6.11. If an individual is applying for a registered position with another company (e.g. a Registered Manager), or a Teaching post, as the previous employer, we are obligated to respond in full to reference requests from regulatory bodies.
- 6.12. Once these reference requests are received, the Referencing Team will forward them onto the relevant Director who will provide the full and detailed reference. They will then send this back to References@cambiangroup.com where the Referencing Team will send to the regulatory body with their standard reference attached.
- 6.13. These references are more detailed in terms of information requested, and to comply with the statutory guidance 'working together to safeguard children 2018' ('Working together'), the Company will respond fully and honestly.

Providing references for when there are safeguarding issues.

- 6.14. If we are asked to provide a reference for an employee where we have undertaken a referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service, then we are required to state the facts of the reason for them leaving the Company.
- 6.15. Where the Company make a referral to DBS, a record of this is kept with the Referencing team. Managers completing a DBS referral must notify the reference team of the referral made by emailing References@cambiangroup.com.
- 6.16. Referrals are made to the DBS by the Company in the following circumstances:
- Where an employee is dismissed from their position because they harmed, or poses future risk of harm to vulnerable groups including children.
 - Where an employee was dismissed or removed from their position because they might have caused harm to a vulnerable person including children.

- Where an employee resigns, retires or their job becomes redundant during an investigation and it is likely they would have been dismissed from their position in relation to a safeguarding incident if their employment had not ended by other means.

6.17. An employer is breaking the law if they do not refer someone to the DBS for any of these reasons.

6.18. Where the DBS decide, as a result of the referral, to include the individual in one of their lists, they will be barred from working with vulnerable adults/children. It is a criminal offence for barred individuals to seek work with vulnerable groups and for an employer to knowingly take them on.

Dismissal

6.19. Any reference must be in line with the facts of the dismissal.

7. Standard Forms, Letters and relevant documents

7.1. GHR 03 Recruitment, Selection and appointment of staff

7.2. DBS barring referral guidance – Disclosure and Barring service:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638129/DBS_referral_guidance_completing_the_form_v1_2_August_2017.pdf

7.3. GHR 41.1 - DBS Referral log