

NEWS RELEASE

Powerchex warn that temps require the same level of pre-employment screening as permanent employees

Nursery hired sex offender in temporary role after failing to carry out the required pre-employment screening

London, October 6th, 2009. A convicted child sex offender was able to obtain employment in a nursery after staff failed to carry out the required pre-employment screening checks.

Andrew Smith was employed in the kitchen of Norwood Manor Day Nursery through employment agency Reed despite his name appearing on the sex offender's register after he was caught sending a string of perverted internet messages and webcam footage of him performing a solo sex act to someone he thought was a 13-year-old girl, but was in fact an undercover police officer.

Smith subsequently served 6 months of a 12 month jail sentence and was placed on the sex offenders register for 10 years. The Criminal Records check that is required for those working in nurseries would have revealed this but staff failed to comply.

Alexandra Kelly, a Director at Powerchex, one of the leading pre-employment screening providers, believes that Smith being a temporary employee is no excuse for a low level of vetting, "We advise our clients to determine the level of vetting required using a risk based approach. Temporary workers pose the same, if not a bigger risk to the company than permanent employees. With temps there is an emphasis on the speed of vetting but companies should work closely with their provider of pre-employment screening to ensure that this need does not prevent proper due diligence taking place."

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Powerchex

Powerchex is the UK's premier pre-employment screening firm for financial institutions. Based in the City of London, Powerchex checks the background, employment history, criminal records and professional qualifications of applicants on behalf of financial institutions. It sets the industry benchmark of 5 days for a background check.

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