

News story: Partnership working to tackle fraud

DBS has been made aware that a number of people have been targeted by fraudsters asking them to pay upfront for DBS certificates that never materialised.

Dr Sue Smith, Director of Safeguarding, Strategy and Quality at the DBS said:

This sort of scam can be really distressing to those involved and we are keen to do all we can to prevent it. We will be working closely with colleagues in SAFER Jobs to raise awareness of the issue and advising people where to go for more support.

SAFER Jobs is a not-for-profit organisation set up by the Metropolitan Police to raise awareness and combat criminal activities that may be attempted on those seeking a job.

Keith Rosser, Chair of SAFER Jobs, said:

Recruitment fraud takes many guises including paying for background checks, identity theft, premium rate phone interview scams, and even human trafficking and modern slavery. The public can fall for fake jobs advertised online or they can even be 'head-hunted' by criminals finding their profiles or CVs online. We are proud of the impact we have had so far but there is still so much more to do to prevent job seekers from falling victim to fraudsters. It is great to be working with the DBS to help raise awareness of the issue and help reduce the number of people falling victim to this crime.

The DBS issue around 4 million certificates every year. The type of role you apply for will determine the level of DBS check you are eligible to have carried out. The following are the three types of checks available:

- Basic Check: This is suitable for any role. The certificate will show any unspent cautions and convictions under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Standard Check: This is suitable for certain trusted roles such as security guards. The certificate shows both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings that are held on the Police National Computer
- Enhanced Check: This is suitable for people working with children and vulnerable adults. These certificates show the same information as the Standard but with the addition of further relevant information from the Police. They can in some cases also show if a person is on one of the DBS Barred lists

Applicants can only request a Basic Check to be carried out on themselves. For a Standard or Enhanced criminal records check they need to get an application form from the employer who asked them for a DBS check. This would then be submitted to the DBS by an organisation registered to do so. The certificate would then be issued to the individual and it would be up to them to share the information with their potential employer. They can however, request a Basic check.

Dr Smith added:

If anyone is concerned that they are being asked unnecessarily for a DBS check or that the person requesting a check may not be a legitimate organisation, especially if they are asking for money, then they should get in touch with us or SAFER Jobs to discuss their concerns. It is also worth remembering that if you are applying for a volunteer position we process your application for free.

For more information or to raise a concern visit www.safer-jobs.com or contact DBS Customer Services via email customerservices@db.s.gsi.gov.uk or call the DBS helpline on 03000 200 190 or for Welsh speakers 03000 200 191.

[News story: Government responds to consultation on disadvantage support](#)

The government will support even more disadvantaged children to receive free school meals and free early education for two-year-olds, Education Minister Nadhim Zahawi has announced today (Wednesday 7 February).

This announcement follows two public consultations – which sought the view of parents, schools, local authorities, early years providers and charities – on eligibility for free school meals, the early years pupil premium and the free early years entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds, in light of the national rollout of Universal Credit.

These plans follow the introduction of a similar threshold under Universal Credit for free school meals in Scotland.

The government proposals will now become law, meaning all children currently receiving this additional support will be protected, and these entitlements will be more targeted in future, to ensure they reach those most in need.

This is all part of the drive to ensure every child has the opportunity to make the most of their lives, no matter where they live or their background.

Last year, around 1.1 million of the most disadvantaged children were eligible for and claiming a free meal. Overall, it is estimated that by 2022 around 50,000 more children will benefit from a free school meal compared to the previous benefits system. In addition, it is estimated that by 2023 around 7,000 more children will benefit from the two-year-old entitlement.

Education Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

Academic standards are rising, with 1.9 million more children now in good or outstanding schools than in 2010 and nine out of ten schools given this rating at their latest inspection.

It is right that we must continue to offer the most disadvantaged young people additional help and I am pleased that, following public consultations, we can extend free school meals and the free early education entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.

Tens of thousands more children will be entitled to free school meals by 2022 compared to the previous benefits system.

I'd like to thank everyone who responded to these consultations; their views will help to ensure every child can access a world-class education and the support reaches those that need it most.

The proposals that will be taken forward include:

- introducing a net earnings threshold of £7,400 per annum for free school meals eligibility under Universal Credit, to take effect from 1 April 2018. A typical family earning around £7,400 per annum would, depending on their exact circumstances, have a total household income of between £18,000 and £24,000 once benefits are taken into account;
- mirroring this eligibility criteria for the early years pupil premium, which gives additional funding to early years settings to boost the attainment of pupils from low income families; and
- introducing a net earnings threshold of £15,400 per annum under Universal Credit for eligibility for the 15-hour free early education entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds, to take effect from 1 April 2018.

Any household earning below these thresholds and claiming Universal Credit will be eligible to claim these benefits for their children.

The policy will protect every child in receipt of free school meals at the point at which the threshold is introduced, and every child who gains eligibility before the end of the rollout of Universal Credit, until Universal Credit is fully rolled out. Following this, protected children still in school will continue to receive free school meals until the end of their phase of education (e.g. primary or secondary school). No child who has started their two-year-old early education place will lose it as a result of this new proposal.

The government will work with schools and local authorities to help ensure families who are entitled to these benefits feel confident in how to claim them.

[Press release: Government's response to the Taylor review of modern working practices](#)

The Low Pay Commission (LPC) welcomes the Government's response to the Taylor review of modern working practices

Bryan Sanderson, Chair of the Low Pay Commission said:

The LPC's view has always been that 'good work' is relevant to all workplaces, irrespective of earnings or hours worked, and we were pleased to see this set out in the Taylor review. In particular we supported the review's highlighting of practices for some low-paid workers, which in some cases result in one-way flexibility benefiting only the employer.

As such, we welcome the Government's response to the review and look forward to considering the potential of a premium rate of the National Minimum Wage, as well as other possible solutions to the issue of one-sided flexibility. We will use our experience, knowledge, and analysis and work with our stakeholders to provide evidence-based advice to the Government.

We are particularly pleased that the Government has committed to implementing the recommendation on payslips that we made in our Spring 2016 Report. This required employers to provide hourly-paid staff with a payslip that clearly states the number of hours they are being paid for. Government has gone further than this, extending the right to payslip to all workers, not just employees. This will make these rights easier to both communicate and understand and therefore aid compliance

Notes: 1. The Low Pay Commission is an independent body made up of employers, trade unions and experts whose role is to advise the Government on the minimum wage. The National Living Wage is the legally binding pay floor for workers aged 25 and over. The other minimum wage rates comprise: the 21-24 Year Old Rate, the 18-20 Year Old Rate, the 16-17 Year Old Rate and the Apprentice Rate. 2. The LPC's remit prescribes different requirements in relation to the NLW than for the four other bands of the minimum wage. For the NLW we are asked to make recommendations on the pace of increase towards a target: an 'ambition...that it should continue to increase to reach 60 per cent of median earnings by 2020, subject to sustained economic growth'. For the other rates we are asked to 'help as many low-paid workers as possible without damaging their employment prospects'. 3. Our full recommendations for

April 2018 and underpinning analysis were published in our 19th report. The rationale for our recommendations is also included in a letter from the LPC Chair to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

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[News story: UK Chief of Defence Staff reaffirms commitment to Australia](#)



Chief of Defence Staff Sir Stuart Peach and Australian Minister for Defence Marise Payne. Copyright @MarisePayne.

During a visit to the country, Sir Stuart Peach met his Australian counterpart, Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC, to discuss how both countries' Armed Forces can work together on a number of fronts.

Sir Stuart also met with the Australian Minister of Defence, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, to discuss an aligned approach to both global and regional issues, such as North Korea, Iraq, Syria and countering terrorism.

Both nations are already part of the Five Eyes defence relationship and work together on tackling shared threats, but are seeking to build upon this further.

Whilst in Canberra, Sir Stuart laid a wreath at the tomb of the unknown Australian soldier in the Australian War Memorial and met the Director, Dr

Brendan Nelson.

The Chief of Defence Staff Sir Stuart Peach said:

From the First World War right up to the fight against Daesh, the UK and Australia have stood shoulder to shoulder as the strongest of allies. We work together on a range of regional and global challenges, advocating and defending the rules-based international system and promoting rule of law as the basis of peace and security.

Our strong defence and security relationship reflects a modern and dynamic partnership. We learn from each other as our soldiers train together, we collaborate in defence science and technology and I have no doubt our partnership will continue to go from strength to strength as we face upcoming global challenges together.

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1. 7 February 2018 Amend to copyright.
2. 7 February 2018 First published.

News story: Update: Brighton office

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1. 12 February 2018
Updated following resolution of maintenance issue and reopening of the office.
2. 7 February 2018
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