

## Statement on the dismissal of Events & Activities Officer, 16/02/2020

As many of you will be aware, we went through two thorough recruitment processes and waited over three months to find a person with exceptional qualifications, experience, and references; which were accompanied by a strong interview performance. The recruitment panel felt this individual matched the high standards which we expect for you and our young people.

I want to make it clear, that from the first week in post, extenuating personal circumstances have been listed as mitigation. I'm sure that we can all relate to challenges in our own life; and to me, family, friends, pets, and wellbeing, should be prioritised. Nevertheless, especially when utilising public funds, if you agree to perform a paid role, you should make reasonable effort to perform it to the best of your abilities.

After expressing serious concern a month into post, and following four subsequent one to one meetings, where the first questions were always...

- How are you?
- Would you like or do you need any additional support?

...it became increasingly evident that a thorough investigation was required. This investigation and subsequent disciplinary process have established the following facts:

- Limited progress against agreed targets
- Multiple occurrences of deception
- Over 150 hours (>1/3) of time unaccounted for

Dismissal was confirmed on 14/02/2020 due to:

Gross misconduct:

- Giving false and misleading information to the organisation (and schools)
- Persistent and repeated failure to follow reasonable instructions
- Unauthorised absence

The situation became untenable due to a lack of acknowledgment of the seriousness of these issues.

We operate in an environment of complete and total trust, with staff members supported in setting their own work programme and schedule. We want everyone involved with our organisation to have fun; life is short. My opening welcome, and further staff training, can be best summarised with a line from a team training document which simply reads "Just don't take the mick". We have an exceptionally positive and dedicated team, who deserve the respect and support of all colleagues.

The person in question came to us with good references, appears to have had an extremely unfortunate run of personal events, and we genuinely wish them the best in the search for a rewarding and enjoyable life.

I'm off for a relaxing\* half-term break in Ireland, with limited checking of electronic devices; I hope that you prioritise yourself too, and come back refreshed to continue making a difference in the lives of young people; which is exactly what Jess, Amy, Subhaan, and myself, will continue working hard to do.

Thank you as ever for your continued support.

Warm regards

Steve

\*bunkered down in a storm shelter

