



AGENCY STAFF POLICY

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AGENCY STAFF POLICY

Contents

1. Introduction to the Policy
2. How this Policy Benefits the Home
3. Definitions & Legislation
 - 3.1 Definitions
 - 3.2 Key Legislation and Statutory Guidance (table)
4. The Policy
 - 4.1 Policy Statement – Avoiding Agency Staff
 - 4.2 Approval for Use of Agency Staff
 - 4.3 Approved Agencies and Pre-Placement Checks
 - 4.4 Induction and Ongoing Support
 - 4.5 Limits on Agency Staff Numbers
 - 4.6 Agency Worker Checklist (Appendix 1)
 - 4.7 End of Placement Assessment (Appendix 2)
 - 4.8 Recording and Retention of Records
5. How the Home Trains its Staff About this Policy
6. Related Policies and Guidance
7. Appendices
 - Appendix 1 – Agency Worker Checklist
 - Appendix 2 – Residential End of Placement Assessment for Agency Workers
8. Policy Approval and Review Details

1. Introduction to the Policy

This policy sets out the framework, principles, and procedures that **Byram House** follows when the use of agency staff is unavoidable. The policy applies to all staff involved in the recruitment, management, or supervision of agency workers, and to the Registered Manager, Responsible Individual, and Directors.

The Home is Byram House, which comprises the two residences at 62 Deighton Road and 66 Deighton Road. This policy applies equally across both residences.

Byram House is committed to providing continuity of care and stable relationships for children. Therefore, the use of agency staff is **avoided wherever possible**. Agency staff will only be used after all other avenues have been exhausted (overtime, sessional staff, staff from other homes) and with prior approval from the Responsible Individual or Director.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Comply with the **Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 (Regulation 33 – Staff records)** and **Schedule 2** (information to be obtained for each person working at the home).
- Ensure that agency workers are subject to the same safer recruitment standards as directly employed staff.
- Maintain an audit trail of pre-placement checks (Agency Worker Checklist) and post-placement assessments.
- Ensure that agency workers receive a suitable induction and, where used for extended periods, regular supervision.
- Limit the proportion of agency staff on any shift to no more than half.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the **Safer Recruitment Policy**, the **Schedule 2 Staff File Audit Policy**, and the **Staff Induction and Training Policy**.

2. How this Policy Benefits the Home

This Use of Agency Staff Policy benefits Byram House in the following ways:

- **Legal Compliance** – It meets duties under the **Children’s Homes Regulations 2015** (Regulation 33, Schedule 2) and the **Employment Agencies Act 1973** (duty to obtain specified information from agencies).
- **Child Protection** – It ensures that agency workers are vetted to the same standard as permanent staff, including enhanced DBS with children’s barred list checks, references, right to work, and health declarations.
- **Continuity of Care** – It limits the number of agency staff on shift (no more than half) and requires approval from the RI/Director before any agency worker is used.
- **Audit Trail** – It requires a completed Agency Worker Checklist for each agency worker, stored for the current Ofsted inspection cycle, and an End of Placement Assessment for longer assignments.
- **Inspection Readiness** – The **Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) 2026** expects the home to demonstrate robust arrangements for agency staff. This policy provides clear evidence.
- **Training Framework** – It sets out induction and ongoing support requirements for agency workers, including familiarisation with key policies and children’s care plans.

3. Definitions & Legislation

3.1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Home	Byram House, comprising 62 Deighton Road and 66 Deighton Road.

Company	IMS Care LTD.
Byram House	The name used throughout this policy to refer to the home and its staff.
Agency Worker	An individual supplied by an employment agency or employment business to work at the home on a temporary basis.
Approved Agency	An agency that has been vetted by IMS Care LTD and is on the company's list of approved suppliers.
Schedule 2	The schedule to the Children's Homes Regulations 2015, which lists the information that must be obtained for each person working at the home (including agency workers).
Agency Worker Checklist	A document (Appendix 1) used to record that all Schedule 2 checks have been completed before an agency worker starts.
End of Placement Assessment	A document (Appendix 2) used to evaluate an agency worker's performance after an assignment.
Responsible Individual (RI)	The person appointed under Regulation 5 with oversight of the home's management and quality.

3.2 Key Legislation and Statutory Guidance (presented in a table)

Legislation / Guidance	Key Provisions	Relevance to this Policy
Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 – Regulation 33	Requires records of all staff and agency workers; Schedule 2 information must be obtained.	The home must hold a completed Agency Worker Checklist for every agency worker.

Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 – Schedule 2	Mandatory information: identity, DBS, references, employment history, right to work, qualifications, etc.	This policy incorporates Schedule 2 requirements for agency workers.
Employment Agencies Act 1973	Regulates employment agencies and requires them to provide certain information to hirers.	The home must obtain written confirmation of checks from the agency.
Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003 (as amended)	Requires agencies to take reasonable steps to ensure workers are suitable and to provide information to hirers.	The home relies on these regulations to hold agencies accountable.
Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974	Duty to ensure safety of all workers, including agency staff.	The home must provide a safe working environment and adequate training.
Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) 2026	Inspects how the home manages temporary staff and continuity of care.	Inspectors will review agency worker records and the proportion of agency staff on shift.

4. The Policy

4.1 Policy Statement – Avoiding Agency Staff

Byram House will **avoid the use of agency staff wherever possible**. Before requesting agency staff, the Registered Manager must:

- Offer overtime to existing permanent staff (where not in breach of working time regulations).
- Check availability of sessional or bank staff already employed by IMS Care LTD.
- Check availability of staff from other homes within the company (where cross-covering does not compromise safety).

Only if all these avenues have been exhausted may the Registered Manager request approval for agency staff.

4.2 Approval for Use of Agency Staff

Any use of agency staff requires prior approval from the Responsible Individual (RI) or Director. Approval may be given for:

- **A single shift or short-term cover** (e.g., sickness absence) – verbal approval recorded in an email.
- **Planned longer-term cover** (e.g., to cover a vacancy) – written approval with a specified end date.

The Registered Manager must justify the request, including evidence that internal options were exhausted.

4.3 Approved Agencies and Pre-Placement Checks

Approved agencies: Byram House will only use agencies that have been pre-approved by IMS Care LTD (list held by HR). New agencies must undergo a vetting process before being added to the approved list.

Pre-placement checks (before any agency worker starts work):

The Registered Manager (or delegate) must complete the **Agency Worker Checklist (Appendix 1)** before the agency worker's first shift. This checklist records that the following information has been obtained from the agency (and, where necessary, verified by the home):

Check	Method
Identity (including photo)	Copy of passport or photo driving licence; document checked online or in person.
Enhanced DBS with children's barred list	Check certificate copy and, where possible, DBS Update Service status.
Right to work in the UK	Home Office online share code check.
Two written references	Copies obtained; content reviewed.
Employment history (including gap explanations)	Agency confirmation, with written explanation for any gaps >28 days.
Relevant qualifications	Copies of certificates.
Health declaration / fitness to work	Agency confirmation of health screening (or copy of declaration).
Training records (safeguarding, first aid, etc.)	Agency confirmation; copies requested where possible.

For **emergency cover** (e.g., a shift that needs to be filled within hours), the home may accept written confirmation from the agency that all Schedule 2 checks have been completed, **provided that**:

- The agency is on the approved list.
- The home follows up to obtain copies of the documents within **5 working days**.
- The agency worker is **supervised** at all times until the documents are received and verified.

If the documents are not received or are unsatisfactory, the agency worker will be removed from the rota.

4.4 Induction and Ongoing Support

All agency workers must complete a **site-specific induction** before working unsupervised. The induction (which may be brief for single shifts) must cover:

- Fire evacuation procedures and assembly points (including for both 62 and 66 Deighton Road).
- Key policies (Safeguarding, Behaviour Support, Confidentiality, Code of Conduct).
- The child's care plan and ISP (key information only, on a need-to-know basis).
- Daily routines and shift patterns.
- Who to report to and emergency contact numbers.

For agency workers used for **prolonged periods** (more than 2 weeks), the Registered Manager must:

- Arrange a full induction (as per the Staff Induction and Training Policy).
- Provide regular supervision (at least monthly) from a member of the home's leadership team.
- Complete an **End of Placement Assessment (Appendix 2)** at the end of the assignment.

4.5 Limits on Agency Staff Numbers

To ensure continuity of care and safety:

- **No more than half of the staff on duty at any one time (by day or night) shall be agency workers.** For example, if the shift requires 4 staff, no more than 2 may be agency.
- The Registered Manager will monitor compliance with this limit and report any breach to the RI.

4.6 Agency Worker Checklist (Appendix 1)

The Agency Worker Checklist (Appendix 1) is a mandatory document that must be:

- Completed for **every agency worker** before their first shift.
- Stored in the home's **Agency Worker Folder** (electronic or physical) and retained for the **current Ofsted inspection cycle** (plus any additional time required for historical records if the agency worker has been involved in a serious incident).
- Reviewed by the Registered Manager and countersigned.

The checklist includes personal details, identity checks, DBS, right to work, references, employment history, qualifications, health, and training.

4.7 End of Placement Assessment (Appendix 2)

For agency workers who have worked in the home for more than 2 weeks (or at the end of any significant assignment), the Registered Manager must complete an **End of Placement Assessment (Appendix 2)** . This assessment records:

- Whether all safeguarding requirements were met.
- Any areas of concern.

- Whether the agency worker displayed the home's values.
- Whether the home would welcome an application from the agency worker for a permanent role.

The assessment is retained in the Agency Worker Folder and may be used to inform future decisions about using the same agency worker.

4.8 Recording and Retention of Records

- **Agency Worker Checklist (Appendix 1)** – retained for the current Ofsted inspection cycle (typically 3 years) or longer if the agency worker was involved in a serious incident (retain for 10 years).
- **End of Placement Assessment (Appendix 2)** – retained for at least 3 years.
- **Agency Worker Folder** – kept in Bright HR or a secure physical cabinet.

The Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring that records are complete and accessible for inspection.

5. How the Home Trains its Staff About this Policy

Byram House provides structured training to ensure all staff understand and can implement this Use of Agency Staff Policy effectively.

Training Element	Frequency	Method / Content
Induction (for managers)	Upon appointment	Face-to-face training covering: approval process (RI/Director), approved agencies, Agency Worker Checklist (Appendix 1), limits on agency numbers, induction requirements, End of Placement Assessment (Appendix 2), record retention, and the dual-site operation (62 & 66 Deighton Road).
Annual refresher	Every 12 months	Classroom or virtual session covering updates to legislation (SCCIF 2026, Employment Agencies Act), case studies, and refresher on pre-placement checks.

Staff are required to:

- Read and sign this policy annually.
- Complete all mandatory training.
- Never allow an agency worker to start a shift without a completed Agency Worker Checklist (except for emergency cover with documented supervision and 5-day follow-up).

6. Related Policies and Guidance

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Schedule 2 Staff File Audit Policy
- Staff Induction and Training Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 (Regulation 33, Schedule 2)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF) for Children's Homes 2026
- Employment Agencies Act 1973 and associated regulations

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Agency Worker Checklist

(This checklist must be completed and stored in the Agency Worker Folder before the agency worker starts.)

Section	Information	Details / Notes
Personal Details		
Photo	(attached or seen)	

Name		
Date of Birth		
Home Address		
Agency Name and Address		
Role (e.g., Support Worker)		
Identity Checks		
Documents checked (e.g., passport, driving licence, birth certificate, proof of address)		
Employment Checks		
Right to work (share code or document)		
Work permit expiry date (if applicable)		
Pre-employment health declaration (copy obtained)		
Medical disclosures reviewed		
Confirmation of fitness for role		
Occupational health clearance (if required)		
DBS		
DBS number		
Issue date		
Enhanced? Children's barred list?		
Processed by (umbrella body)		
Original certificate seen and by whom		
DBS Update Service registration number (if applicable)		
Update Service checked on (date)		

Barred list check confirmed		
Overseas police check (if applicable)		
Qualifications and Training		
Relevant qualifications (list)		
Safeguarding children training (date)		
First aid certificate (valid)		
Other relevant training		
Employment History		
Relevant childcare experience		
Gap explanations (any gaps >28 days)		
References		
Reference 1 (name, organisation, date)		
Reference 2 (name, organisation, date)		
Copies obtained? Satisfactory?		

Agency Worker Name: _____

Registered Manager signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Agency confirmation (signature or email attached): _____

Appendix 2 – Residential End of Placement Assessment for Agency Workers

(To be completed for agency workers who have worked in the home for more than 2 weeks, or at the end of any significant assignment.)

Field

Details

Agency Worker Name

Location (62 or 66 Deighton Road)

Duration of placement (start – end)

Agency name

Summary of the agency worker's time with the home (please provide a brief summary):

Questions:

Question	Yes / No	Comments (if No)
Were all safeguarding requirements met by the agency worker?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Did you have any areas of concern about the agency worker?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Did the agency worker display Byram House values (respect, empathy, professionalism, teamwork)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Would you welcome an application in the future from this agency worker if there were a vacancy?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

Additional comments / recommendations for future use of this agency worker:

Assessed by (Registered Manager or delegate): _____ **Date:** _____

8. Policy Approval and Review Details



Home	Byram House	
Reviewed by	Danyaal Iqbal / Mustafa Amin	Deputy Manager / Registered Manager
Approved by	Stacey Wagstaffe	Responsible Individual
Date	May 2026	