

Children's Secretary Ed Balls has accepted all of Sir Roger Singleton's recommendations to make sure that the Government's Vetting and Barring scheme draws the line in the right place and protects children without getting involved in private arrangements between parents and friends.

And he pledged to make the necessary adjustments to the rules of the scheme to ensure it strikes the right balance between protecting children and vulnerable adults without being unnecessarily burdensome. It is estimated that once these adjustments have been put in place, the number of people who will be required to register will fall from 11 million to nine million.

In his report, *Drawing the Line*, he recommends that private arrangements between parents and friends should continue to remain outside the scheme. But where an organisation makes the decisions on which adults should work with their children then the requirement to register will apply.

Sir Roger's recommendations include:

- Where organisations such as schools, clubs or groups make the decisions as to which adults should work with their children then the requirement to register with the VBS should apply, subject to the frequent and intensive contact provisions
- The frequent contact test should be met if the work with children takes place once a week or more (at present the test is if activity happens as often as once a month). The intensive contact test should be met if the work takes place on 4 days in one month or more or overnight (this change is designed to make the scheme easier to understand and put into practice, since at present the test is 3 times in every 30 days or overnight)
- Individuals who go into different schools or similar settings to work with different groups of children should not be required to register unless their contact with the same children is frequent or intensive
- The minimum age of registration for young people who engage in regulated activity as part of their continuing education should be reviewed. The Government will make immediate changes to the rules so that 16, 17 and 18-year-olds in education will not be required to register

- Overseas visitors bringing their own groups of children to the UK e.g. to international camps or the Olympics, should have a three months exemption from the requirement to register for the work they do with children they have brought to the UK
- Exchange visits lasting less than 28 days, where overseas parents accept the responsibility for the selection of the host family, should be regarded as private arrangements and will not require registration

Further recommendations made by Sir Roger Singleton mean that the Government will also take action to:

- Consider whether private health practitioners, such as chiropractors and homoeopaths should be required to register. Current legislation allows them to register but does not require them to
- Review the continuing need for 'controlled activity'. 'Controlled activity' is defined as a small number of activities where there might be opportunity for contact with children or vulnerable adults, such as working as a hospital or school receptionist, but falls short of the opportunities open to other roles such as nurses or teachers. This review will be launched in the New Year;
- Review the law and the Government's advice on when, in the future, workers who have already secured ISA registration, will have to get CRB checks.

The Government will also be renewing its work on communicating the details of the scheme.

The Scheme does not replace the need for Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosures. In fact, the Scheme will run alongside CRB disclosures. Eventually, anyone working in a Regulated Activity will have to apply for both an enhanced CRB disclosure and be registered with the ISA, but the Scheme is being implemented in phases to ensure smooth implementation. These phases are as follows:

*From 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009*, if an organisation removes from a Regulated Activity someone who they are responsible for - volunteer or paid member of staff - because they have caused harm or pose a risk of causing harm to a child or vulnerable adult then they are legally obliged to refer this organisation to the ISA

*From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010* anyone moving into a Regulated Activity will have to apply for an enhanced CRB disclosure with a barred list check

*From 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010 anyone moving into a Regulated Activity will have to apply for an enhanced CRB disclosure and apply for ISA registration before starting that activity. It will be a criminal offence to start a Regulated Activity without being ISA registered.*

*Anyone already working in a Regulated Activity and subject to a 'current' enhanced CRB disclosure will be able to continue that activity without being ISA registered.*

However, if someone moves from one Regulated Activity to another, or takes on an additional Regulated Activity, then they will have to apply for ISA registration before starting the new activity.

*From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 anyone already working in a Regulated Activity will be able to apply for ISA registration, if they are not already registered.*

*From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 anyone already working in a Regulated Activity will be strongly encouraged to apply for ISA registration, if they are not already registered.*

*From 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 everyone working in a Regulated Activity must be ISA registered.*

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For more information go to the Independent Safeguarding Authority website [www.isa.gov.org.uk/](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/)

To download 'Drawing the Line' in pdf format go to the Every Child Matters website <http://tinyurl.com/ybhqv2q>