



2.2 Safer Recruitment

Policy statement

We meet the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensuring that our staff are appropriately qualified, and we carry out checks for criminal and other records through the Disclosure and Barring Service in accordance with statutory requirements.

Recruitment & selection procedure

Advertising

- To ensure equality of opportunity, we will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.
- We ensure that our advertising materials, leaflets and policies carry a commitment to Safeguarding children.
- All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Application forms

- We use own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete an application form containing questions about their academic and full employment history and their suitability for the role (in addition all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history). CVs will not be accepted, and the applying will be invited to re-submit their application using our standard form.
- We will only ask about health or disability if:
 - There are necessary requirements of the job that cannot be met with reasonable adjustments.
 - To find out if someone needs help to take part in a selection test or interview.
- The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- It is unlawful for us to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the Pre-School. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or the DBS.

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

- A job description is a key document in the recruitment process and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the recruitment process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role.
- The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities, and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children.

Scrutinising and shortlisting applications

- At least two people will be involved in the process of scrutinising applications and short-listing candidates, with at least one member having undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.
- All applications will be checked to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent, does not contain any discrepancies and to ensure that any gaps in employment are identified. Incomplete application forms will not be considered.
- Any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified will be noted so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant. As well as obtaining reasons for gaps in employment, the reasons for any repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression, or a mid-career move from a permanent post to supply teaching or temporary work should also be explored and verified.
- All candidates will be assessed equally against the personal qualities and behavioural criteria as detailed within the job description and person specification, without exception or variation, using a shortlisting record sheet.

References

- References for shortlisted applicants will be sent for immediately after shortlisting. The only exception is where an applicant has indicated on their application form that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted at that stage. In such cases, this reference will be taken up immediately after interview.
- Any offer of employment will always be conditional on the receipt of two satisfactory references.
- We will always obtain a reference from the person's current employer and in most circumstances, this will be a role in which the applicant has worked with children. Where an applicant does not have current experience of working with children but has done so in the past, we will also seek a reference from the relevant previous organisation. Where possible, reference should cover at least 5 years employment history.
- We will not accept open references, testimonials, or references from relatives.
- We will always request a reference in writing and telephone contact must be made with at least one referee (the most recent or relevant) to verify the reference. If an employer says it is not their policy to provide references, the applicant must be asked to nominate another referee. All reference requests should contain a copy of the job description and person specification
- All referees will be asked the following:

- the referee's relationship to the applicant;
 - the applicant's dates of employment, job title, reason for leaving, performance, sickness, and disciplinary records;
 - whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied;
 - whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.
- We will thoroughly screen references to ensure the referee has answered all the questions, and any discrepancies to the application form, or anomalies will be followed up, both with the referee and the applicant. Any vague or ambiguous statements will be noted and explored at interview.

The interview & assessment process

- We will hold a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and a minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position, one of whom is a member of the committee and the other being the Pre-School manager. Wherever possible, there will be a third interviewer, who may either be a member of staff (who will be in a superior position to the applicant's post), or another member of the committee.
- At least one member of any interviewing panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training or refresher training as applicable.
- The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any gaps in employment, concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or referee.
- At least one safeguarding question is asked at interview for junior positions, and at least two for more senior roles.
- Any information regarding past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process, if it has not been disclosed on the application form.
- We ask the candidate whether they wish to declare anything considering the need for enhanced criminal records and barred list checks to be undertaken.
- We ask all applicants to bring evidence of their identity, address, and qualifications. Original documents only will be accepted, and copies will be taken. If the candidate is appointed, these copies will be held in their personnel file. If the candidate is unsuccessful, all documentation relating to the application will be confidentially destroyed.
- We use an agreed interview rating system to identify the best candidate, and to keep decision making as objective and transparent as possible. However, when reaching a decision, they should give sufficient weight to the views of those who will work with the successful candidate most closely (e.g., the Manager).
- We may, as part of the interview process, ask the candidate(s) to interact with children during a normal session. Observations of any such interaction will inform our decision-making process.

- In the absence of a clear frontrunner, we may choose to invite any or all shortlisted candidates for further interviews, or more extensive observation – whatever we deem likely to give us an objective basis on which to reach a decision.

Conditional offer of appointment

Any offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be conditional upon the following:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if not obtained prior to interview);
- proof of the candidate's identity (where this has not been verified at interview);
- proof of the candidate's right to work in the UK;
- a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Disclosure where they are working in "regulated activity";
- verification of qualifications where they are a requirement of the post (if not verified at the interview);
- all appointments will be subject to a six-month probationary period, during which the notice period to terminate the contract is four weeks.

Employment checks

We will ensure that we carry out the following checks for all prospective employees:

- We must ensure that enhanced criminal record checks and children's barred list check is undertaken for each person we appoint. This includes administration assistants and committee members even if they do not have direct access to children.
- We will also undertake additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- We will send the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application form to the applicant, and this must be completed and sent prior to the applicant taking up employment. If we receive no response to the DBS application, we will follow this up straight away
- **No employee will work unsupervised with children until we have obtained a valid DBS check for them.**
- Will must view original documentation from the candidate which proves their identification. Ideally these documents should be a form of photographic personal identification, confirmation of the applicants address and personal signature. For example, passport, UK full or provisional driving licence, utility bill, local authority tax bill, most recent HMRC tax notification.
- We must also view original documentation from the candidate which proves their right to work in the UK. For asylum seekers and immigrants, we must check whether they have legal work permits for working in the UK.
- We must view original documentation proving professional qualifications, recording that these have been checked and retain copies of these.

Post appointment & induction

- All members of staff and volunteers are given an induction on starting their employment with us, which will cover all aspects of the workings of the pre-school including:

- information about emergency evacuation procedures, safeguarding, child protection, the reading and understanding of our policies and procedures, codes of conduct and how to identify and raise concerns about the welfare of children. and health and safety issues.
- We put in place appropriate supervision arrangements for staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for practitioners. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which encourages confidential discussions of sensitive issues, setting time aside to discuss safeguarding and child protection, answering any questions or addressing any concerns.
- We ensure that staff members know that they can expect complete support from their line manager if they raise a concern about a colleague's conduct, especially in relation to children. We point out that if concerns are not reported then children may continue to be harmed while an adult is unwittingly being protected.
- During the probationary period, the employee will regularly work under the supervision of a more experienced member of staff.

Version	Changes Made	Author	Date	Review Date
1.0	Baseline version	N Hanlon	16 th April 2018	September 2019