

2.2 Recruitment and Selection

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.

The objective of this policy is to ensure the effective recruitment, selection and retention of the right staff required to meet the needs of Duxford Preschool. We are committed to recruiting a diverse workforce, which reflects the society in which we operate. This will be achieved through fair and systematic recruitment procedures, which ensure that selection decisions are made in accordance with all relevant legal, business and best practice requirements.

In addition, safer recruitment and selection procedures will help to deter, reject or identify people who are not suitable to work with children. A commitment to safeguarding should be the central focus at each stage of the recruitment process.

Recruitment & selection procedure

The following procedures will be following throughout the recruitment and selection process:

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 job description should not include references to the competencies and attributes which the post holder is expected to have to execute the duties of the post, including safeguarding competencies. Such information should be contained in the person specification. It should also not be an exhaustive list of all the individual tasks or duties which the post holder would be expected to carry out. Further to this the following statement should be included at the end of each job description. "This job description is not an exhaustive list of duties and the post holder will be required to undertake any other reasonable duties discussed and directed by the Line Manager".
- The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision at both the short-listing and interviewing stages of the recruitment process. 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. Any existing person specification should be reviewed and rewritten to take into account any changes since the document was produced. If there is no existing person specification, one must be written by the Line Manager. In devising a person specification, the job description should be analysed to identify the key duties and responsibilities of the job. Each group of job duties should then be converted into the appropriate skills, experience, knowledge or abilities needed to carry out the role. A wide range of experiences should be included, and cultural differences allowed for. The emphasis should be on the experience and/or skills required rather than the qualifications required, especially where a formal qualification is not essential for performing the job.

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 General Data Protection Regulations (2018).
- All adverts should be based on the job description and person specification, and should include:
 - job title;
 - rate of pay;
 - hours of work;
 - a brief summary of the main duties and responsibilities;
 - a brief summary of the essential applicant criteria;
 - closing date for applications;
 - contact details for an application pack (which should include a job description, person specification, application form and a privacy notice)

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 applicant 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 Preschool. 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.

Equality and Diversity Monitoring

- The equal opportunities monitoring section, together with the personal details section should be removed from the application forms prior to short-listing and should not be seen by the panel.
- Applicants are not obliged to complete a monitoring form, but short-listed candidates who have not completed the one attached to their application form should be encouraged to complete one on arrival for interview.

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. In addition, the line manager of the vacant post should be included in this process.
- All panel members should declare any personal or social relationships or contacts they may have with any of the candidates.
- 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
- All original material used in creating a shortlist is filed with the recruitment records and stored according to current retention guidelines.

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, at least one of whom is a member of the Senior Management Team. 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 a 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.
- Wherever possible, open questions such as "tell me about...", "give me an example of....", "how do you go about..." should be used that invite a longer response and follow up questions should be asked to check that the candidate has actually done what they say they have. Hypothetical questions should be avoided.
- 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 three-month probationary period, during which the notice period to terminate the contract is one week.

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. Copies of these documents will be retained and stored in the employees personnel file.
- 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 Preschool 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.

Procedures

Vetting and staff selection

- We follow 'safer recruiting' principles, the full details of which can be found in our Safer Recruitment Policy.
- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All staff have job descriptions which set out their staff roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered on the basis of their suitability for the post, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, age, marriage or civil partnership. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.
- We follow the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and Ofsted guidance on checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children. This includes obtaining references and ensuring they have a satisfactory enhanced criminal records check with barred list(s) check through the DBS. This is in accordance with requirements under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) and the Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) for the vetting and barring scheme.
- Where an individual is subscribed to the DBS Update Service, we carry out a status check of their DBS certificate, after checking their identity and viewing their original enhanced DBS certificate to ensure that it does not reveal any information that would affect their suitability for the post.
- We keep all records relating to the employment of our staff and volunteers; in particular those demonstrating that suitability checks have been done, including the date of issue, name, type of DBS check and unique reference number from the DBS certificate, along with details of our suitability decision.
- We require that all our staff and volunteers keep their DBS check up-to-date by subscribing to the DBS Update Service throughout the duration of their employment with us.
- We obtain consent from our staff and volunteers to carry out on-going status checks of the Update Service to establish that their DBS certificate is up-to-date for the duration of their employment with us.
- Where we become aware of any relevant information which may lead to the disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children. In the event of disqualification, that person's employment with us will be terminated.

Version	Changes Made	Author	Date	Review Date
1.0	Baseline version	P Eccleston	26 th April 2018	April 2019
2.0	Reviewed and revised	N Hanlon	17 th April 2019	October 2019
2.0	Reviewed – no changes	N Hanlon	30 th October 2019	October 2020
2.0	Reviewed – no changes	N Hanlon	30 th October 2020	October 2022

2.0	Reviewed – no changes	N Hanlon	21 st October 2022	October 2024
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