



Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is an integral part of the setting's recruitment and employment process and plays an essential part in creating a safe environment for children.

We commit to:

- recruit and employ people on the basis of their skills, experience, knowledge and ability to safeguard children;
- ensure that no applicant or employee is subject to discrimination of any kind on the grounds of having, or being perceived as having, or being associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic, as defined by the Equality Act 2010;
- advertise for staff and management widely, using a mixture of minority and mainstream press and social media;
- follow the procedures outlined in our recruitment and selection procedure below.

Training, supervision, development and progression opportunities will be available to all staff.

Aims

We aim to set out a recruitment and employment process that will:

- attract and select the best possible applicants to vacancies;
- deter, identify and reject prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people;
- meet the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010;
- meet the requirements of employment law.

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Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Interview Panel

We will strive to ensure that at least 1 person on the interview panel has up-to-date safer recruitment training.

Stage 1: Job Review

The panel will consider whether the job being advertised is necessary. For a post to be advertised it must meet both our needs and our legal responsibilities. The panel will review each job and prepare or amend recruitment materials to make sure that they are in line with our policy on equalities, do not contain discriminatory criteria and accurately reflect the requirements of the post.

The panel will decide whether the post will be advertised internally in the first instance.

Stage 2: Prepare Recruitment Materials

The interview panel will prepare a Job Description, Person Specification and Application Pack.

Job Description (details of the duties and responsibilities) should include:

- the objective of the job;
- the main duties and responsibilities;
- details of available training;
- details of hours and days of work;
- details of any travel involved;
- salary details;
- details of line management;
- duty of responsibility for implementing the organisation's policies and procedures, including safeguarding.

Person Specification

This will give details of the attributes that the successful candidate **MUST** have (Essential) and **SHOULD** have (Desirable) to be shortlisted for interview. The Person Specification will vary according to the Job Description. The Person Specification will include the requirement of The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) that an applicant must have sufficient understanding and use of English to ensure the wellbeing of children in their care.

Application Packs: must include:

- application form together with guidelines for completion. The front sheet containing the applicant's personal information will not be seen by the interview panel;
- Job Description and Person Specification;



- Equalities and Diversity Monitoring Form on a separate sheet;
- a letter outlining additional information e.g. the closing date/time deadline for applications, anticipated dates of interviews, whether unsuccessful applications will be informed, a brief summary of the setting;
- our Safeguarding or Child Protection Policy/statement.

Stage 3: Advertising

In the interests of equality and diversity, the panel will ensure that all job vacancies are advertised in a wide variety of places to attract a diverse range of applicants. Wording of the advert will communicate clearly our specific requirements and not use discriminatory language, unnecessary jargon or superfluous details. We will include the statement: "Horfield Welly Pre-school is committed to promoting equality and diversity," in all job advertisements, both internal and external. Adverts will also state our commitment to safeguarding and state whether the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974 and that successful candidates will be required to obtain an enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check and (if regulated activity) a barred list check.

NB: If the post is not 'regulated activity' then we cannot check the barred list but will request an enhanced DBS check.

Stage 4: Shortlisting

Before shortlisting, front sheets will be removed from application forms and the forms will be given a reference number, so that they can be shortlisted anonymously. The panel will consider and score all candidates against the Person Specification, using the information contained in the applicant's application form, to select a shortlist of candidates to be invited to attend an interview. Only applicants who have the right to work in the UK will be shortlisted. The panel will not accept C.V.'s. The panel will ensure that shortlisting is carried out by more than one person and is based solely on the Person Specification. Applicants will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet the essential criteria in the Person Specification. If there are too many applicants meeting the essential criteria to interview, we will then use the desirable criteria.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record that would make them unsuitable to work with children. The purpose of a self-declaration is so that candidates will have the opportunity to share relevant information and enable this to be discussed and considered at interview before the DBS certificate is received. As a result of amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions order 1975) in 2013 and 2020, some minor offences are now protected (filtered) and should not be disclosed on the form. We will signpost shortlisted candidates to information about this. If the role is for early years or later years (wrap around) childcare, candidates will also be asked if they have any reason to believe they are disqualified from working in childcare and we will provide more information on this if required. Forms should be returned to the setting, for the attention of the Interview Panel, by a specified date.



An online search of the shortlisted candidates will be undertaken to ascertain if there is information to help identify concerns that are publicly available online. The online search will not include any irrelevant personal information and social media searches will not be carried out to prevent biases. Where possible, the person carrying out the online search will be trained in safer recruitment and will not be a member of the recruitment panel. To have a clear understanding of what the searcher is looking for, the following terms will be used when carrying out an online search; 'candidate name', 'candidate name + current employment', 'candidate name + previous employment', 'candidate's name + job title', 'candidate's name + city', 'candidate's name + country', 'candidate's name + crown court', 'candidate's name + magistrate's court'. The candidate's name can be checked on the following websites: 'Google' or another search engine and LinkedIn'. An online search will be carried out when recruiting new trustees and directors. Any relevant information that could suggest the candidate poses a potential safeguarding risk will be recorded on the candidate's shortlisting form, along with the searcher's name and date the search was undertaken.

Dependant on the seriousness of any content found, we may either decide to end the recruitment process, or explore the findings with the candidate during the interview stage to discuss any issues or concerns that could call into question the candidate's suitability to work with children and/or could cause harm to the reputation of the setting. We may consider further action such as a risk assessment once the candidate is in post to mitigate risks.

Stage 5: Interviewing

Preparing to Interview

Questions will be prepared in advance by the panel and will ensure that:

- the questions asked should be designed to establish whether or not the applicant can meet the requirements of the Person Specification;
- some of the interview questions should include a value based element in order to explore a candidate's ethos and attitudes;
- questions should explore understanding of safeguarding;
- the same questions will be asked of all candidates.

In addition to establishing the candidate's suitability for the post, the panel can ask additional questions to further probe where the application form and the interview has identified gaps and/or discrepancies.

If a candidate has declared any relevant criminal history on their Criminal Record Self-Disclosure Form, we will discuss this with them at the interview to gain more information. We will do this in line with our Recruitment of ex-Offenders Policy.

The panel will not ask questions about disability and health, unless it relates to an intrinsic part of the job. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010.



Some job roles may also require the candidates to be observed working with children and/or to complete a task, previously chosen by the interview panel.

All candidates should bring with them documentary evidence of their identity and right to work in the UK. This must comply with latest Government requirements. Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work> and <https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work>.

Evidence of proof of identity will be kept in personnel files.

Interviewing

The format for interviews will be:

- introduce panel members;
- confirm the job role being offered and clarify this is the role the applicant has applied for;
- ask questions relating to the Person Specification;
- ask questions that address the suitability and values of the candidate;
- provide an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions;
- ask if anything is unclear;
- stress that offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references, a successful DBS check and any other checks as required;
- tell the applicant when the decision will be made and how they will be notified.

Interview panel members will keep notes on each candidate and their responses and score them. Candidates' scores will be totalled, ranked and compared and used as part of the decision-making process. Score sheets and ranking charts for all unsuccessful candidates will be kept for a period of three months from the completion of the interview process, after which they will be shredded. Documentation for successful candidates will be retained in their personnel file.

Stage 6: Post Interview

A member of the interview panel will phone the successful candidate to make a verbal conditional job offer; stating it is subject to the receipt of successful references, satisfactory DBS check and any other checks as required.

The successful candidate will then be sent a formal letter of the conditional job offer and will be asked to respond in writing as soon as possible.

We will then notify unsuccessful candidates.

Stage 7: Employing staff

References

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We will follow the EYFS requirements for obtaining references

We will apply for at least two references and they must be obtained before employment commences. We will send referees the Job Description, Person Specification and a Reference Request Form to fill out, which will ask them to comment on the candidate's ability to carry out the duties listed.

We will:

- not accept open references;
- not rely on applicants to obtain their reference;
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority;
- not accept references from a family member;
- obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment where they are currently not employed;
- secure a reference form from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children (if not currently working with children but have done in the past);
- ensure all references originate from a legitimate source and will verify references by a phone call. Phone numbers for organisations will be obtained by looking online.
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided;
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate;
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed.

If the candidate has been a foster carer/worked in a children's home etc, a reference should also be obtained from the local council/agency they were employed by.

DBS Checks

If the candidate is registered with the DBS Update Service, we will ask for the authorisation code to access information held on the candidate. If the candidate is not registered with the Update Service, we will ask them to complete a DBS application at the appropriate level. If the role is in regulated activity, the children's barred list will also be checked.

Any information that comes back from the DBS will be checked against the Criminal Record Self-Disclosure Form and disqualification regulations and a risk assessment will be completed to determine whether we think someone is suitable or not. This will be recorded in writing. We have the right to withdraw any offer of employment if something wasn't disclosed and/or if we think somebody isn't suitable.



We will allow the candidate to start employment with us pending the receipt of a successful DBS check. Staff will not be left unsupervised with children pending their DBS check results.

Right to Work in the UK/Checking Identity

We will check an applicant's identity, address and right to work in the UK in accordance with latest Government advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work>. We will do this at shortlisting/interviewing stage.

Overseas Checks (for staff who have lived or worked abroad)

Candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK need to undergo further checks, such as getting a criminal record check for time spent abroad so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This will be in accordance with the Government guidance: [Criminal record checks for overseas applicants](#).

Candidates who have qualifications awarded outside of the United Kingdom will need to apply for an Early Years statement from Ecctis to count within the staff:child ratios. The Early Years Statement service will map the details of the qualification against the criteria set by the Department for Education. Details on how to make an application for recognition of overseas qualifications can be found within the [How you make an application for recognition of overseas qualifications](#) guidance.

Emergency Cover

When using agency staff, we will ensure the agency follows a similarly rigorous recruitment and selection procedure.

Staff records

Each staff member will have a personnel file containing:

- Job Description and Person Specification for the job;
- record of interview questions and answers and score sheets;
- Job Application Form with gaps in employment history checked;
- written references obtained and confirmed by telephone;
- evidence of a satisfactory DBS check and (where applicable) children's barred list check – this will be recorded on our Single Central Record and the original returned to the staff member (copies of the certificate will not be kept by us);
- written evidence of our decision to appoint a staff member despite criminal convictions (i.e. a Risk Assessment);
- evidence of proof of identity (this will have been provided for the DBS check);
- evidence of qualifications and training;
- confirmation of right to work in the UK and photocopies of relevant documents;
- Contract of Employment;
- support and supervision records;
- disciplinary records;



- emergency contact information;
- health information;
- absence records;
- holiday records.

Information and records will be kept in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR).

Probationary Period

Probationary periods are 3 months for all permanent roles, in some circumstances this may be extended. Employees will be informed in writing with a clear explanation for the extension, specific performance goals to be met, and a defined new end date for the extended period. Reasons for extending probation may include poor performance, excessive sickness absence, or failure to meet targets. Horfield Welly Pre-school will offer continued support and a formal process for review.

Induction

We will prepare an induction programme for new employees.

Further Information

ACAS

For free advice and guidance on employment - www.acas.org.uk

Keeping children safe in education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Equality Act 2010

www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance