



Safer Recruitment Policy

Safer recruitment is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education. Happy Bunnies Preschool is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

It is vital that a culture of vigilance is promoted across the setting, and as such, the setting has adopted recruitment procedures that seek to deter, reject and identify people who may be unsuitable to work with children and young people.

All elements of the Safer Recruitment Policy ensure that the recruitment and selection processes outlined:

- meet the requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework
- meet the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education
- meet the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children-2023
- set out prescribed vetting and checking procedures
- include a robust induction
- provide for ongoing training, supervision and monitoring of staff and volunteers

This policy outlines the steps we will take to ensure those employed are suitable to work with children and young people. Its main purpose is:

- to deter unsuitable individuals from applying to work with us
- to attract and engage suitable candidates
- to promote and maintain a culture of vigilance

The recruitment and selection process aims to support the selection of the most suitable applicant for a post based on the appropriate combination of ability, qualifications, experience and attitude, as measured against the job description and person specification.

All those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff must ensure that policy, processes and procedures are compliant with current employment legislation.

This policy applies to the recruitment of all staff, students and volunteers.

Roles and Responsibilities

We will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy in line with 'The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage' and its specific requirements relating to Safer Recruitment.

We will ensure that processes and procedures are in place to support the effective implementation of this policy and that all appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out on all staff who work at the setting.

We must ensure, before convening any interview panel, that at least one member of the interview panel has completed training in 'Safer Recruitment'.

The Interview Panel must ensure that child protection and safeguarding matters are central to the interview process.

Any member of staff involved in the recruitment and selection process must ensure they refer to and comply with all elements of this policy.

Preparing to Recruit

Identifying the Vacancy

When a vacancy arises, the Manager/Lead will review the needs of the setting and ensure the post to be advertised effectively meets those needs.

In line with the settings current and future budget and staffing structure the Manager/Lead will review the Job Description and Person Specification relating to the vacant post.

The Selection Panel

At least one of the persons who conducts an interview should have completed safer recruitment training.

Interviews should be conducted by a panel of at least two people.

Declaration of Interest

Any person on the interviewing panel who has any interest in, or is related to, any of the applicants, must declare that interest or relationship. This is to ensure fairness, objectivity and awareness across the selection

panel.

If appropriate, an individual member may be removed or replaced on the selection panel.

Job Descriptions

The job description will summarise the duties and responsibilities of the post. It will provide a clear, concise and fair representation of the requirements of the post.

To be shortlisted, candidates must demonstrate, on the application form, how they meet the criteria listed on the person specification.

The person specification provides a profile of the ideal person for the post. It sets out the qualifications, experience, skills, personal attributes, attitudes and behaviours needed to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the role, as detailed in the job description. Person specifications are divided into education, skills and experience that are either the 'essential' or 'desirable' attributes required of the ideal candidate.

The Application Form

We use a standard application form for all vacancies

Applicants should be advised that where they have submitted an electronic application, they will be asked to physically sign a hard copy of the application form, should they be invited to attend for interview.

Only fully completed application forms will be considered for shortlisting.

Advertising

The purpose of an advertisement is to attract the best candidate for the job role and to deter unsuitable applicants from applying.

We may decide that a post can be filled from within our setting's current workforce. Such an appointment will be made on the basis of an internal advertisement and open internal competition.

Shortlisting

Shortlisting will be undertaken with reference to the criteria set out in the job description and person specification. The panel will consider any inconsistencies in the information provided, look for any gaps in employment and the reasons given for them. This will enable the panel to identify any potential concerns that may be appropriate to discuss with the applicant during the interview.

Shortlisting will be undertaken by the Manager/Lead.

Receipt of Application Forms

An application form will be used for all our vacancies. CVs are not acceptable and information provided on a CV will not be considered as part of the shortlisting process.

Each application form will be carefully considered and applicants will be assessed against the criteria listed in the person specification and job description. Those undertaking the shortlisting process will apply the criteria from the job description and person specification objectively, based on the information provided by the applicant on the application form.

The selection criteria will be applied consistently to all applicants, whether internal or external and each applicant will be considered in the same way. Candidates who are shortlisted must always meet the essential requirements of the post - the desirable criteria may be used as an additional filter to reach a final shortlist.

Where a qualification is not a legal requirement of the postholder, applicants who do not have the formal qualifications specified, but can demonstrate skills of an equivalent standard, may still be considered for the shortlist.

Online Search

We will conduct an online search of shortlisted candidates to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that no online information exists which would potentially make the applicant unsuitable to work with children.

The setting will inform the candidates that an online search will take place and will ensure that any information found does not introduce any bias into the recruitment process and result in candidates being inadvertently discriminated against.

Any information found will be discussed with the applicant during the interview/selection process. This may be within or outside the main interview, dependent on the sensitivity of any information found. The setting

will follow a similar process as occurs for discussions about potential criminal convictions disclosed during the recruitment process.

We will ensure that it does not inadvertently discriminate against applicants who may be covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and related legislation (i.e. certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', and not subject to disclosure to employers, therefore they cannot be taken into account.)

Inviting Shortlisted Candidates to Interview

Candidates will be sent written confirmation of their invitation to interview.

On the day of the interview, the setting must verify the identity of all candidates and ensure that they have signed their completed application form.

References

Where a candidate clearly requests on their application form that no contact should be made with their referee(s) until they have been formally offered a position, it should clearly communicate in a conditional offer of employment, that an appointment will not be confirmed until all relevant references have been received and deemed to be satisfactory.

We will ensure that any references provided by the candidate's current employer have been provided by a senior person with appropriate authority.

Upon receipt of references, the Manager/Lead must contact the referee directly to confirm the authenticity and origin of the information provided and/or to clarify any aspect of the detail given. Clear notes of any telephone discussion with a referee must be recorded along with the date and time the contact was made.

Information for Referees

Requests for references must be made on the setting's standard reference request form. Reference requests should be accompanied by the job description and person specification.

Requesting References

At least two references are required as part of the appointment process, one from the candidate's current or most recent employer plus one other. A reference will also be requested from a previous setting / education employer. Should the current or most recent not be an educational or childcare setting, additionally, a reference may be requested from a previous employer where a candidate has worked with children.

References will be sought directly from the referee named on the application form.

Unsolicited references, sometimes called 'open references', addressed '*to whom it may concern*' and provided directly by the candidate along with the application form, must not be accepted at any stage in the recruitment process.

The Interview and Selection Process

The main objectives of the interview / selection process will be to:

- determine each candidate's suitability for appointment, as measured against the person specification and job description
- provide candidates with further information about the job
- select the most suitable person for the job

The Interview

All vacancies will require a face-to-face interview designed to explore an applicant's ability to do the job, as set out in the job description and person specification.

The interview is a key element of the safer recruitment process and is a formal opportunity to identify and reject unsuitable applicants and prevent them from being appointed.

During the interview, previously agreed, core questions are used, devised to provide each candidate with an equal chance to demonstrate their suitability for the job. Supplementary questions may be asked of candidates based on responses to the core questions.

Additional, pre-prepared questions may be asked of individual applicants based on the information provided on their application form and/or in relation to self-disclosure documentation, references etc.

All members of the interview panel must remain objective and ensure they give each candidate equal opportunity to respond to questions asked during the interview.

At the end of the interview, candidates will have the opportunity to ask their own questions about the job or the setting.

Feeding back to Candidates

Once a decision has been made in relation to an appointment (even where it is decided that no appointment can be made), The Manager/Lead will contact all shortlisted candidates who have attended for interview, appointed or not) to offer constructive feedback about the application and interview.

Making an Appointment and Pre-employment Checks

All offers of appointment should be conditional until satisfactory completion of the mandatory pre-employment checks has been undertaken. The offer of employment will be made in writing, by the Manager, to the successful candidate as soon as possible after the interview. This will be in the form of a conditional offer of employment which is subject to satisfactory receipt and verification of all outstanding pre-employment checks.

Pre-employment Checks

Appointments are subject to satisfactory receipt and/or confirmation of the employment checks detailed below, and any offer of employment will be conditional, until such time as all checks have been completed and accepted by the setting as satisfactory.

- **Proof of Essential Qualifications** - all shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring to the interview, documentary proof of the qualifications stated on the person specification as an essential requirement of the role. If these documents were not made available at the interview stage, the Manager/Lead will inform the candidate that, if successful, they will be required to present the original certificates prior to the offer of employment being confirmed.
- **Criminal Records Checks (DBS) - Disclosure and Barring Service.** All posts within this setting require an enhanced DBS check to be checked and approved by the Manager/Lead. The appointed candidate is required to present an original DBS certificate for the Manager/Lead to view and record the necessary details from it on the settings central record.
Where a DBS check reveals information not previously disclosed by the individual and/or discussed at interview stage, a further meeting will be convened with the Manager/Lead who will make a final decision as to whether or not employment will be confirmed.
- Settings are entitled to ask if a shortlisted candidate has any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and if they have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020.
- Shortlisted candidates for posts are obliged to declare any pending court actions, all previous criminal convictions, bind-over orders or cautions, which for other posts would be considered spent. Failure to disclose this information could lead to an offer of employment being withdrawn.
All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and access to such information will be restricted to those with a legitimate need to see it.

Equality and Access Considerations - if a candidate requires any adjustments to be made to enable them to do the job, these will be discussed with the individual prior to the start of their employment.

Right to Work in the UK

There are two types of right to work checks: a manual document-based check and an online check. To ensure that a preferred candidate is legally allowed to do the work in question, a 'right to work' check must be made by the Manager/Lead.

Induction and Training

All new employees will be subject to the setting's consistent induction process during the first term of their employment.

As part of the induction process all staff should be made aware of the systems within the setting and should

- Know how to spot signs that a child may be experiencing abuse.
- Know how to respond appropriately if a child makes a disclosure about abuse.

- Know who are the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officers

The following elements of staff induction will be administered within the first week of employment

- safeguarding and child protection policy.
- settings behaviour policy
- staff behaviour policy (code of conduct/handbook)
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).
- emergency evacuation procedures
- Copy of Part One of KCSIE should be provided to staff at induction.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take a key role in ensuring all staff have access to, and opportunity for, continued training and development in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The setting will ensure all employees receive appropriate training in accordance with statutory and setting requirements and priorities as well as to ensure its ongoing commitment to developing its workforce.

Probationary Periods

All new employees will be subject to a 6 months probationary period which will be set out in the conditional offer letter.

Single Central Record

The Setting must maintain a record of all the pre-employment checks of employees (including volunteers) who work in the setting.

The setting's record must cover all staff, including students and volunteers.

The record must indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed, or certificate obtained:

- an identity check
- a barred list check
- an enhanced DBS check requested/certificate provided
- a check of professional qualifications, where required; and
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.

Committee Members

All members of the committee should complete safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to equip them with the knowledge to challenge and assure themselves that appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are in place within the setting.

Volunteers

Under no circumstances should a volunteer, on whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in a regulated activity. Whilst volunteers play an important role and are often seen by children as being safe and trustworthy adults, the nature of voluntary roles varies. The setting will apply professional judgement and experience when deciding what checks, if any, are required.

The setting will seek an enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list information) for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity with children, i.e, where they are unsupervised or look after children regularly.