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**Safer Recruitment, Selection and Employment
Policy and Procedure
Updated: January 2023**

MONITORING & REVIEW RECORD			
Date for next review	Reviewed	Director signature	Date review completed
31.01.24			

Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is an integral part of the Company'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 for staff members whether full time, part time or freelance contractors (including admin based positions). The exception to this would be applicants to seasonal posts within our activity pack assembly team.

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.

Recruitment and selection procedures

Selection Panel

Stage 1: Job review

The Company Directors 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 directors 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. In addition, the role will be analysed and a decision made whether it is offered as a freelance or PAYE position.

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

Stage 2: Prepare recruitment materials

The selection 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/contract;
- the main duties and responsibilities;
- details of available training;
- details of hours and days of work or a brief of the freelance contract/offers of work;
- details of any travel involved;
- salary details;
- details of line management;
- duty of responsibility for implementing the organisation's policies and procedures.

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 Early Years Foundation Stage 2021 (EYF5) requires employers to determine that an applicant has sufficient understanding/use of English, both verbal and written.

Application/Job Advert Documentation must include:

- Link to application form which contains guidelines for completion. Applicants will be informed that the information containing the applicant's identifying personal information and equalities and diversity monitoring sheet will not be seen by the selection panel until shortlisted for interview;
- Job Description and Person Specification;
- 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 /Child Protection 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: "Unique Voice is committed to promoting equality and diversity," in all job advertisements, both internal and external. Adverts will also state our commitment to safeguarding and declare that the successful applicant will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check at the appropriate level. Unique Voice may from time to time specify applications from certain groups that are lacking amongst our workforce as thought to be essential for our programme participants or to redress a gender/race imbalance within our team.

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, unless applications have been requested from specific sectors. 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 candidates 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. Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet the essential criteria in the Person Specification. If there are too many candidates meeting the essential criteria to interview, we will then use the desirable criteria.

Shortlisted candidates should be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or information 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 allow this to be discussed and considered at interview before the DBS certificate is received.

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 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 candidates name can be checked on the following websites: 'google or another search engine', 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 candidates shortlisting form along with the searches name and date the search was undertaken. Dependent on the seriousness of the 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 criminal conviction on their application form, we will ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything relating to this, prior to their DBS check.

The panel can also ask questions about disability and health, in order to establish whether the organisation would need to make adjustments to the workplace.

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: [Employing workers from outside the UK](#) and <https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work>.

A copy of the interview documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications must be kept for the personnel file.

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 and a successful DBS check;
- tell the applicant when the decision will be made and how s/he 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 six months from the completion of the recruitment process, after which they should be shredded. Documentation for successful candidates must be retained in their personnel file.

Interviewing the Manager of the setting

Ofsted no longer vet and interview the Manager in charge of the day to day running of the childcare provision. Therefore we must incorporate into the interview process a 'suitable person' interview for candidates.

Stage 6: Post Interview

The Chair of the Interview Panel/HR Manager will phone the successful candidate to make a verbal job/contract offer; stating it is subject to the receipt of successful references and satisfactory DBS check.

The successful candidate is then sent a formal letter of the job offer or a copy of the Freelance Contract, which also details anything, agreed in the initial phone conversation and will be asked to respond in writing as soon as possible.

We will then notify unsuccessful candidates.

Stage 7: Employing staff

References

We will apply for at least two references with one being from the most recent employer. Wherever possible, we will do this before interview. Personal references such as friends or relatives are not acceptable. We will send referees the Job Description and Person Specification and ask them to comment on the candidate's ability to carry out the duties listed. References will be scrutinised by the interview panel and any concerns looked into, before the appointment is confirmed, including for any internal candidate. References will also be verified by a phone call.

We will ask referees to respond as soon as possible and follow up any outstanding references

If the applicant has been a foster carer/worked in a children's home etc, a reference will 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 use the information provided in the application form to perform a current status check. If we do not have the information required to check the current status, we will ask the candidate to provide this. If the candidate is not registered with the Update Service we will ask the candidate to complete a DBS application at the appropriate level.

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

We will formally offer the job/contract, in writing, to the successful candidate, subject to satisfactory references and DBS check.

We will ensure the new employee/freelance contractor is aware of any probationary period.

We will prepare an induction programme for new employees and provide training to freelance contractors.

Right to Work in the UK

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 (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](#).

Qualifications awarded outside of the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) 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

Where it is not possible to implement this procedure in full, we will use staff from an organisation that follows a similarly rigorous recruitment and selection procedure (this includes agencies).

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 – 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;
- evidence of qualifications and training;
- details of registration with appropriate professional body;
- confirmation of right to work in the UK and photocopies of relevant documents;
- contract of employment/signed freelance contract;
- support and supervision records;
- disciplinary records;
- emergency contact information;
- health information;
- absence records;
- holiday records
- Copies of offers of work for freelance contractors .

Records should be signed and dated by appointing manager/chair of the interview panel and kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Further Information

ACAS

For guidance, latest employment law, books and booklets. Contact ACAS on www.acas.org.uk

ACAS helpline: 0300 123 1100 - free advice on employment matters.

'Keeping children safe in education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges'
September 2022 - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf

Keeping children safe in out of school settings (2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings>

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213160/working-together-to-safeguard-children>

Reviewing the policy

This policy, and its implementation, will be reviewed annually or earlier if appropriate to ensure that individuals are trained and supported to develop their abilities and meet the requirements of the job.