Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is an integral part of the setting's recruitment process and plays an essential part in creating a safe environment for children. This policy applies to the recruitment of both paid and unpaid staff.

We commit:

- To recruit and employ people on the basis of their skills, experience, knowledge and ability to safeguard children.
- To 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 Equalities Act 2010.
- To advertise for staff and management using a mix of methods, using a mixture of minority and mainstream press.
- To follow the procedures outlined in our recruitment and selection procedure below.

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

Aim

To set out a recruitment 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;
- Treat all applicants fairly.

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Stage 1: Job Review

We will consider whether each job is necessary. For a post to be advertised it must meet both our needs and our legal responsibilities. We will review each job and create (or amend) recruitment materials accordingly to make sure that they are in line with School's Out Henleaze's policy on

Equalities, do not contain discriminatory criteria and accurately reflect the requirements of the post.

Stage 2: Prepare Recruitment Materials

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

- The objective of the job.
- State the main duties and responsibilities.
- Details of available training.
- Details of hours.
- Details of any travel involved.
- Salary details.
- Name of the supervisor (or make it clear if this is to be the management committee).
- Responsibility for staff and volunteers (if any).
- Duty of responsibility for implementing the organisation's Policies and procedures
- Age limits will only be retained if they are necessary to the job
- Do not include any criteria which are not necessary for the role and might discriminate

Person Specification

Details of the attributes that the successful candidate MUST have to be shortlisted (Essential) and SHOULD have to be the ideal candidate (Desirable)) should highlight the essential and desirable skills and qualities required for a job. It will vary according to the Job Description. If Ofsted Registered under the EYFS , 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: front sheet containing personal information will not be seen by the shortlisting panel.
- Job description and person specification.
- Set of application guidelines.
- Additional information stating the closing time / date for applications, anticipated date/s of interviews and whether unsuccessful applicants will be informed. - Safeguarding or Child Protection Policy / statement.

Stage 3: Advertising

In the interests of Equality and diversity the organisation will ensure that all job vacancies are advertised in a wide variety of places to attract applicants from all of the community. 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: "School's Out Henleaze is committed to promoting Equality and Diversity," in all job advertisements, both internal and external.

Adverts will also state the organisations 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. Information on regulated activity is in Further Information

Stage 4: Shortlisting

We will consider all candidates against the job specification, using the information contained in the applicant's application form, to select a short-list of candidates to be invited to attend for an interview. We will not accept CVs. In doing so we will take all possible steps to avoid making biased judgements and select the best candidate for the job. We will ensure that shortlisting and interviewing is carried out by more than one person and is done solely according to person specifications. Interview panels will be representative in terms of Equalities issues.

Candidates will be shortlisted for interview only if they meet the essential criteria in the Person Specification. Desirable criteria will only be used if there are too many candidates meeting the essential criteria to interview.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a Criminal Record Self-Disclosure form, detailing relevant criminal history or any information which may affect their suitability to work with children. This includes, but not limited to, arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders. 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. 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 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.

Dependant 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

All interviewers will be offered training in Equalities and interviewing techniques, wherever possible. At least one person on the panel will have attended safer recruitment training.

Questions will be prepared in advance by the interview panel and will address/include:

- questions 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: Employing workers from outside the UK 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 interview panel members.
- Tell the person more about the job and ensure they are present for the job as advertised.
- Ask questions relating to the person specification and job description.
- 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 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 three months from the completion of the interview process, after which they should be shredded. Documentation for successful candidates will be retained in their personnel file.

Interviewing the Manager of the Setting

Ofsted will no longer vet and interview the Leader 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

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 is then sent a formal letter of the job offer, 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 and References

References

We will apply for at least two written 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 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 and phone numbers for organisations will be obtained by looking online.

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 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 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. Staff will not be left unsupervised with children pending their DBS check results.

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

We will ensure the new employee is aware of their probationary period.

We will prepare an induction programme for the new employee.

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

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 (e.g., emergency cover), staff should be sought from an organisation that follows a similarly rigorous recruitment and selection procedure (this includes agencies).

Retention of Records/General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

If an applicant is successful in their application, School's Out Henleaze will retain on their personnel file any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This will include copies of documents used to verify identity, right to work in the UK, and qualifications. All information retained on employees is kept centrally in a locked and secure cabinet, School's Out Henleaze will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of 3 months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (i.e. shredded). This retention period is in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

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 (this will have been provided for the DBS check);
- 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;
- support and supervision records;
- disciplinary records;
- emergency contact information;
- health information;
- absence records;
- holiday records.

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).

This policy will be reviewed annually.

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 2026
Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026)

Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2026
Working together to safeguard children 2026

2010 Equalities Act

For further information: www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance

NACRO

Criminal Record Support Service | Nacro

Criminal records that don't show (stay) on standard and enhanced DBS checks (filtering and protected cautions and convictions)
Criminal records that don't show (stay) on standard and enhanced DBS checks (filtering and protected cautions and convictions) - Unlock

Definition of Regulated Activity

Change to the definition of regulated activity with children from 1 September 2026 - GOV.UK
Before 1 September 2026, people who teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children often enough are not in regulated activity with children if someone else who is in regulated activity supervises them sufficiently. This means an organisation can ask for an Enhanced DBS check in the child workforce, but there is no access to a Children's Barred List check for that supervised role.
From 1 September 2026, this supervision rule will no longer apply. If a person teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children often enough, or overnight, they will be in regulated activity with children even if someone else supervises them. This means an organisation will be able to ask for an Enhanced DBS check in the child workforce with a Children's Barred List check.
The work is done often enough, or overnight, if it occurs:

- on more than 3 days in any 30-day period

- once overnight, between 2am and 6am