Safer Recruitment of Staff Policy

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| EYFS: 3.9 -3.20, 3.23, 3.26, 3.27, 3.28 |

At Ashridge day nursery we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures aiming to ensure that all people working and looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role. We have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with children are suitable.

We follow this procedure each and every time we recruit a new member of staff to join our team.

Legal requirements

* We abide by all legal requirements relating to safer recruitment set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and accompanying regulations, including our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
* We also follow any requirements or guidance given by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in relation to carrying out checks. We abide by the employer’s responsibilities by informing the DBS of any changes to the suitability of our staff, whether this member of staff has left the nursery or is still under investigation. Please refer to the Safeguarding children and child protection policy for further information.

Advertising

* We use reputable websites and the local authority job search pages to share our vacancies, along with specialist early years recruitment agencies.
* We ensure that all recruitment literature includes details of the need for an enhanced DBS check and at least two independent references for every new employee.

Interview stage

* We shortlist all suitable candidates against a pre-set specification and ensure all applicants receive correspondence regardless of whether they are successful in reaching the interview stage or not
* All shortlisted candidates receive a job description and a request for identification prior to the interview
* The manager decides the most appropriate people for the interview panel. There will be at least two people involved in the overall decision making
* At the start of each interview all candidates’ identities are checked using, for example, their passport and/or photo card driving licence. All candidates are required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK. The interview will also cover any gaps in the candidate’s employment history
* All candidates reaching the interview stage are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. These cover specific areas of childcare, including safeguarding the children in their care, planning suitable activities to enhance the child’s development and their understanding of the legal frameworks applied to childcare and used in the nursery. The questions are value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as the nursery with regards to the safety and welfare of the children in their care
* Candidates will be given a score for their answers including a score for their individual experience and qualifications
* Every candidate will be asked to take part in a supervised practical exercise which will involve spending time in a particular age group in the nursery interacting with the children and staff
* The manager and deputy will then select the most suitable person for this position based on these scores and their knowledge and understanding of the early years framework as well as the needs of the nursery
* The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked and copies taken for their personnel files where applicable
* Every candidate will receive communication from the nursery stating whether they have been successful or not. Unsuccessful candidates can request feedback

Starting work

* The successful candidate will be offered the position subject to at least two references from previous employment or, in the case of a newly qualified student, their tutor and a personal or professional reference. At least one reference will be taken up BEFORE employment commences. This may be verbal initially and then followed up with a written reference which will form part of their personnel file
* Any concerns that are written in the reference or any questions given a score of poor are followed up with a phone call or email to gain more information
* Prior to employment but after the job has been offered, a medical form will be given to the employee and its results will be taken into account in making an overall decision about suitability. The nursery reserves the right to take any further advice necessary in relation to a person’s physical and mental fitness to carry out their role. Please see the absence management policy for more details about how the nursery manages health problems including access to medical records
* All new starters, other than those who have registered for the DBS update service (see below), will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will be initiated before the member of staff commences work in the nursery and they will not have unsupervised access to any child or their records before this check comes back clear. Further to this, the new starter will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, look at their learning and development log or change the nappy of any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check (whether supervised or not)
* An additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) should also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad
* The nursery will record and retain details about the individual including staff qualifications, identity checks carried out and the vetting process completed. This will include the disclosure and barring service reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it. The nursery will not retain copies of the disclosure itself once the employment decision is taken
* There may be occasions when a DBS check is not clear, but the individual is still suitable to work with children. This will be treated on an individual case basis, a risk assessment completed if it is felt necessary and at the manager’s/owner’s discretion taking into account the following:
  + seriousness of the offence or other information
  + accuracy of the person’s self-disclosure on the application form
  + nature of the appointment including levels of supervision
  + age of the individual at the time of the offence or other information
  + the length of time that has elapsed since the offence or other information
  + relevance of the offence or information to working or being in regular contact with children.
  + advice from LADO
* If the individual has registered on the DBS system since 17 July 2013, managers may use the update service with the candidate’s permission instead of carrying out an enhanced DBS check
* New starters are required to sign a suitability declaration to state that they have no criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or unsuitable to do so
* All new members of staff will undergo an intensive induction period during which time they will read and discuss the nursery policies and procedures and be assigned a ‘mentor’ who will introduce them to the way in which the nursery operates
* During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedure, emergency evacuation procedures, inclusion & equality policy and health and safety issues
* The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager and their ‘mentor’ during their induction period to discuss their progress, support required and/or further training and professional development opportunities.

Ongoing support and checks

* All staff are responsible for notifying the manager in person if there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children (staff suitability status will also be checked through an annual staff suitability declaration. This includes any incidents occurring outside the nursery. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the manager **immediately**
* DBS checks will be repeated every 3 years
* All members of staff will update a staff medical form on an annual basis to ensure management have a good knowledge of any changes that may require support or additional resources to aid them to carry out their day-to-day duties. This will also be discussed at staff supervisions/review meetings. Management may require this more regularly where health circumstances change. There are more details about how the nursery deals with any health problems in the absence management policy
* The nursery manager will review any significant changes to an individual’s circumstances that may suggest they are no longer suitable to work with children and take appropriate action to ensure any unsuitable or potentially unsuitable employee does not have unsupervised contact with children until the matter is resolved. Please see the Disciplinary Policy for further details
* Every member of staff will have a formal appraisal. This will provide an opportunity for the manager and member of staff to discuss training needs for the following twelve months as well as evaluate and discuss their performance in the previous twelve months
* The manager, deputy and room leaders will be responsible for any support the staff team may have between these reviews. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, ongoing supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback
* The nursery will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.

**Supervisions:**

We implement a system of supervision for all of our staff following their induction and probation period. Supervision is part of the nursery’s overall performance management system and promotes a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement. It encourages the confidential discussion of sensitive issues including the opportunity for staff and their managers to:

* Discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well-being, including child protection concerns
* Identify solutions to address issues as they arise
* Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness
* Develop their own skills/training needs in order to progress in their role
* Discuss any concerns relating to changes in personal circumstances that might affect an individual’s ability/suitability to work with children.

The frequency of supervision meetings is every 4 months according to individual needs. A template agenda is used in all meetings to ensure consistency across the nursery. This clearly sets out who does what and the timeframe. Supervisions are booked in advance, and new dates set after each supervision.

There may be times when supervision may be increased for members of the team as and when needed, i.e. if they have particular concerns about a child or if they are going through personal circumstances at home, following any disciplinary procedure, for new starters, staff returning after long-term illness, on request from staff.

It is the responsibility of the manager to plan time to ensure that all staff have supervisions.

If for any reason a supervision is cancelled a new date will be rearranged within 14 days.

Information shared in supervision sessions is confidential, unless a staff member has given written permission for it to be shared. The supervision process will be evaluated once a year through staff feedback and is used as part of the overall performance monitoring system at the nursery.

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| **This policy was adopted on** | **Signed on behalf of the nursery** |
| *March 2024* | *Lisa Hubbard* |