



# BERKHAMPSTEAD DAY NURSERY

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

This policy outlines the procedure for safer recruitment at Berkhamstead School.

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### **1. Overview**

Safer environments do not happen by accident. They are purposefully built and carefully maintained. Safer recruitment and selection processes are essential if schools and other educational establishments are to attract the best staff and deter or reject those who may pose a risk to children or who are unsuited to work with them.

The material contained in this pack has been produced to support DfES guidance '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**'. It should be read alongside and in conjunction with that document.

In following DfES guidance and using the information and templates provided in this pack schools and other educational establishment can be confident that they are working towards the standards outlined below.

## 2. Safer Recruitment and Selection Standards

- *The school's management team is vigilant in ensuring that all recruitment and selection systems, processes and procedures are examined from a staff/child protection focus.*
- *The school makes explicit its commitment to the provision and maintenance of a safe and supportive environment for all pupils, staff \* and others within the school community.*
- *All applicants, short-listed candidates, contractors and service providers are advised about, and understand the necessity of, robust recruitment and selection practices that safeguard and support pupils and adults within the school.*
- *The school is clear about personal and professional boundaries, provides clarity about what is proper behaviour, and has managers who are vigilant in pursuing inappropriate, unprofessional or abusive behaviour.*
- *The school's child protection strategies include disciplinary procedures which deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with school policies.*
- *Schools paying for or using services satisfy themselves that those services have in place appropriate and effective arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children.*

*\*The term 'staff' refers to any adult working in or on behalf of the school in either a paid or unpaid capacity.*

## 3. Recruitment and Selection Policy

- a) The school has a Safeguarding Policy which outlines the procedures to be followed when there are concerns about the welfare or safety of children and young people. The policy clearly identifies the child protection designated person (DSL) in school and is made available to all existing and prospective employees and volunteers
- b) The school has a Recruitment and Selection policy document which makes explicit its commitment to building and maintaining a safe environment and which safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and staff. The school has adopted and widely publicises this commitment by use of a general statement similar to the suggestion below.

*'This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'*

This statement should be included in:-

All publicity and information sites  
Advertisements  
Candidate Information Packs  
Person specification and Job description  
Letter of appointment  
Induction Training  
Competency Frameworks

#### **4. Planning and Advertising**

##### **a) Selection Panel**

It is recommended that the selection panel is formed at the start of the recruitment process and that members of this panel are involved at each stage of the recruitment and selection process.

##### **b) Person Specification**

The Person Specification should include the qualifications and experience, and any other requirements needed to do the job especially as it relates to children and young people. It should include the competencies and qualities that the successful candidate will be able to demonstrate and explain how these requirements will be tested and determined during the selection process. It should also make explicit the extent of the relationships and contact with children and the degree of responsibility which accompanies the post to be filled.

The Person Specification should stipulate how the candidate's suitability for the post will be assessed including their motivation for this type of work; their ability to make and sustain professional relationships within clear boundaries and their attitudes to authority, challenge and discipline. Person Specifications should always be reviewed and agreed for each vacancy.

##### **c) Job Descriptions**

All positions, whether paid or voluntary, should have job/position descriptions. A well thought out and comprehensive job description will provide staff and volunteers with a clear list of responsibilities, identify lines of accountability and provide the security for applicants of knowing what is expected.

Careful consideration should be given to the nature of the post and the duties and responsibilities related to it. The Job Description needs to clearly set out the extent and nature of the contact the candidate will have with pupils in school. All work in schools or similar settings involves degrees of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility and the contact involved will vary according to the nature of the post. Job Descriptions should always be reviewed and agreed for each vacancy.

#### **d) Advertising**

The school must openly advertise, either internally or externally, every vacancy in order to comply with equal opportunity legislation.

Employment offers must not be made to individuals unless this process has been followed, regardless of any commendations received or personal knowledge at hand about the individual.

Positions of Headmaster/Headmistress must be advertised throughout England and Wales, in a manner likely to bring it to the attention of candidates who are qualified to fill the post.

Where a Governing Body decide not to advertise via HR providers, they should ensure that the following statement, or one similar, is included in the advert placed:

*“This school’s recruitment and selection procedures reflect our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.”*

All organisations working with or on behalf of children should state clearly and boldly in all their advertising, their commitment to safeguarding children.

#### **e) Application Form**

Schools should ideally use an Application Form. These follow DfES guidelines and are used to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants. Curriculum vitae drawn up by applicants in place of an application form should not be accepted because these will only contain the information the applicant wishes to present and may omit relevant details.

It is harder to ‘fudge’ the truth or avoid details when using a structured application form. Applicants should be asked to detail employment history, relevant experience and be expected to provide information about the *month and year* in which they were employed.

All application forms should include a declaration that all information is true and correct. This documents whether an applicant was honest about their history and can prepare for any issues around deception and honesty should this ever be an issue at a later stage.

Explanatory notes and/or instructions for completing the form should be included in the candidate’s information pack.

#### **f) Candidate Information Pack**

An information pack should be sent to all prospective applicants. This should make reference to the school's child protection and recruitment and selection policies. The pack should include relevant information about the school and its policies and a statement of the terms and conditions of the post. The contents of the pack vary depending upon the vacancy.

The pack should, however, advise that the post is exempt under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and that any offer of employment will be subject to satisfactory checks, including those supplied by the Disclosure and Barring Service. The check will include any cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions.'

### **5. Scrutinising and Short listing**

All application forms should be scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and any gaps in employment are identified.

All candidates should be assessed equally by the members of the interview panel, against the criteria contained in the person specification without exception or variation.

### **6. References**

The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee and are of best value when provided and considered as part of a structured and systematic selection process.

Referees should be sent the job description and person specification and asked to comment upon the applicants' weaknesses and strengths in relation to their suitability to work with children and young people. They should be asked about performance history and disciplinary offences *including those which have expired* where they relate directly to working with children. The request for a reference should also advise referees about their legal liability and that the reference should contain no material mis-statement or omissions. It should also be pointed out that their reference may be discussed with the applicant at interview.

At least two satisfactory references should be received before an appointment is confirmed.

### **7. Invitation to Interview**

In addition to arrangements for interviews – time and place, directions, membership of panel etc, candidates should be advised about how the interview will be conducted and how the person's suitability for this type of work will be explored.

The candidates should also be advised that their identity will need to be verified, a DBS application will need to be completed if the post requires DBS Disclosure and evidence of qualifications will need to be scrutinised.

## **8. Interview Panels**

A panel of at least two people is recommended for all appointments, at least one of whom should have undertaken the CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council) training programme. Each member of the interview panel should have copies of the job description and person specification and broad agreement should be reached prior to the interview as to how answers from the candidate will be assessed.

## **9. Scope of Interviews**

The interview should assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work with children.

The selection process for people who will work with children must always include a face to face interview.

## **10. Recruitment and Vetting Checks**

Recruitment and vetting checks are a key element in ensuring that children are safeguarded and the risk of harm from those who are in contact with them is minimised.

In addition to the various staff records which are kept as part of normal business, schools must have a central record of the following people:

- all staff who are employed to work at school providing education
- all staff who are employed as supply staff, however they are employed
- Other adults who have been chosen by the school to work in regular contact with children. This will cover volunteers, governors who work as volunteers and people brought into school or college to provide additional teaching, tutoring or instruction.

It is essential that those responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff read and understand the guidance contained in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2014@ especially Part 3 which deals with Safer Recruitment.

## **11. Conditional Offers of Appointment**

An offer of appointment can only be confirmed once all references have been received and are acceptable and medical clearance and all police and DBS checks have been obtained through the usual channels.

Ideally, where a DBS disclosure is required, it should be obtained before an individual begins work. It must in any case be obtained as soon as is practicable after the individual's appointment and the request for DBS Disclosure must be submitted in advance of the individual starting work. Headmasters and Chair of Governors have discretion to allow an individual to begin work within their schools pending receipt of the DBS Disclosure but should ensure the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including List 99 have been completed. Information on checking List 99 pending a DBS check is available from [Tsm.Casework@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Tsm.Casework@dfes.gsi.gov.uk). (tel: 01325 392101)

The appointment letter and statement of particulars to the successful candidate will usually be

sent by the office and the candidate must return a signed copy of the statement of particulars to the school.

The school should also provide guidance about expected codes of behaviour for all adults working in, and on behalf of, school. This document should be used to advise prospective, new and existing employees as to what behaviours are expected of them and what will happen if guidance is breached. Successful applicants should be advised they will be expected to work to this code and sign to indicate their agreement and commitment to it.

For applicants who were unsuccessful, it is good practice to offer those who request it, feedback as to why they were unsuccessful. Headmasters/Governors should respond to all requests for feedback and it is strongly advised that an immediate telephone response is not given. A well-considered reply by the chair of the panel, ideally, taking account of each panel members written comments regarding the candidate will be far more constructive and helpful than a response, which relies upon memory alone.

## **12. Post Appointment Induction**

Guidance about safe working practices is given to the successful candidate for discussion and signature. The contents of this guidance should be discussed as part of all induction programmes for all staff and volunteers in school.

## **13. Maintaining a Safer Culture**

All staff should be made aware of, and understand the need for, school's policies which relate to the wellbeing and safety of both pupils and adults in the school community. This will include policies on:

Child Protection, Safer Recruitment and Selection, Handling Allegations against Staff, Physical Contact and Restraint, Safer Working Practice and Whistle blowing.

These policies should be regularly reviewed.

Training should be offered on a regular basis in respect of the contents and implications of these policies. Staff should be expected to attend training events and should be made aware of the support structures available both within the school and the local authority.

The school management team should ensure that all allegations against staff, referrals to social care, disciplinary hearings and their respective outcomes are consistently monitored and recorded.

When staff resign from posts within the school, the management team should ensure that the reasons for leaving are fully explored and exit interviews undertaken. Where appropriate, job descriptions and person specifications should be reviewed at this stage.

Where a serious concern has been justified in relation to a member of staff, local authority procedures must be followed and the DBS informed.

## **14. Safer Contracting**

Establishing contracts with adults other than employees of the school who provide a service in or for schools must be agreed with the Headmaster. These adults would include: student teachers, local authority sports development officers, national governing body sport specific development officers, coaches, instructors, parent helpers, volunteers, professional sports men and women.

The school should ensure that all persons named in a contract understand and accept their responsibility to adopt and implement the measures described in this and other related documents. Schools should, when contracting with these individuals:

- verify that the current national qualification in the activity is held by the adult contracted to deliver
- check that the individual has a current public liability insurance cover (if appropriate)
- undertake appropriate Police and DBS checks
- ensure the individuals have appropriate experience of working with young people
- obtain and confirm two relevant references
- ensure that the all individuals are made aware of, and have access to all policies and procedures adopted by the school
- meet with the adult prior to the delivery of the service and confirm in writing the function, roles and responsibilities of the individual.

## **15. Recruitment and Selection Checklist**

The checklist provided in the DfES guidance is a useful tool to assist those responsible for recruitment and selection of staff.