

**Safeguarding Children**  
**Safer Recruitment and Retention Policy and Procedure**  
**Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery**

### **Statement of intent**

This school recognises that recruiting and retaining the right staff is at the heart of providing a quality learning experience for children. We use robust safer recruitment practices to ensure we promote the safeguarding and welfare of children. We aim to create and maintain a skilled, balanced, conscientious and committed team that reflects the diversity of the people we serve.

We recognise the value of, and seek to achieve, a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the school is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity. Our school upholds its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of Protective Characteristics as defined in the Single Equality Act 2010.

### **Responsibilities of the Employer**

It is an offence under Section 76 of the Childcare Act 2006 to employ someone who is disqualified from working with children.

Section 39 of the Childcare Act 2006 places a legal duty to ensure that adults looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so and have appropriate qualifications, training, skills and knowledge.

We endeavour to meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

We follow the Code of Practice and the guidelines on the appointment of staff supplied by the local authority.

### **Procedures**

#### **Recruitment – preparation**

- We use an application form which states that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and that the successful candidate must apply to have an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. The application form will request full and complete information about employment history.
- All applicants are required to disclose whether they have any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children.
- We prepare a recruitment pack including a statement of our commitment to safeguarding children and equality of opportunities.
- The pack includes a job description, person specification and application form.

### **It is the responsibility of the governing body to:**

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with DFE guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them

### **It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and other managers involved in recruitment to:**

- Ensure that the school operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the school
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document
- Promote the welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure

### **It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to:**

- comply with this document.

### **It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to:**

- comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.

## **Recruitment advertising**

- Our job advertisements always include a statement that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and that a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced disclosure will be required for the successful candidate. The advertisements state that our setting has a commitment to a culture of safeguarding children and to promoting equality of opportunity for all. We encourage applications from under-represented groups in the community.
- We believe that it is important to use deterrents during the advertising process; therefore we include a safeguarding statement in our advertisement and a copy of our Safeguarding Children policy in the recruitment pack.
- If we consider there are candidates within the setting with the appropriate skills for the post, we may initially advertise the position internally.

## **Dealing with applications**

- Incomplete application forms will be rejected.
- We assess applicants against job criteria i.e. the job description and the person specification, and we use a short-listing grid for each applicant, which we keep for at least a year, to decide which applicants will be interviewed.
- Any relevant qualifications will be checked on the Department for Education qualification database to determine if the applicant meets the requirements of the post.
- Applicants are judged entirely on their suitability for the post rather than any Protective Characteristic .
- Gaps in employment history will be highlighted and explored at interview.
- We inform short listed applicants of the interview process and the date, time and venue.
- Applications will be checked for information about previous convictions which may prevent the employment of individual candidates.

## Identity checks and references

- We ask all short-listed candidates to bring appropriate original identity documents such as passport, driving licence, national insurance number, and proof of address which is not less than 3 months old, to their interview.
- We ask all candidates to bring their original qualification certificates with them as well.
- We are legally required to ensure that the successful candidate is eligible to work in the UK. Foreign nationals must have appropriate asylum and immigration checks before being offered employment.
- At least two written references will be sought, one of which must be from the most recent employer. Open or agreed references (which may be part of a compromise agreement) will not be accepted.
- We will request the references directly from the referees in writing. The job description and person specification will be sent to the referees, requesting confirmation that the candidate is suitable for the post.
- Email references will be accepted as long as these are from a recognised email e.g. a pre-school or school.
- If references have not been received after two weeks another request will be made to the referee.
- All references will be scrutinised before an appointment is confirmed and before the candidate begins their employment ; not to do so potentially puts children at risk (*refer to Safeguarding children policy*)

## Interview process

- Interview team will be aware of their roles and of their legal obligations with reference to relevant legislation e.g. Single Equality Act. Interviewers will be made aware that notes made during interviews must be objective as candidates may ask for copies through a request under the Freedom of Information Act.
- They will be well acquainted with the applications, and the roles and responsibilities of the job on offer. Ideally at least one member of the interview panel will have attended 'Safer Recruitment' training.
- The task and/or questions will be designed to reveal candidates' attitude towards children & young people and their ability to support the setting's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Hypothetical questions will be avoided and there will always be a question to test the candidates' knowledge of child protection.
- Probing interview questions will be used to assess skills and knowledge, but also to explore attitudes and motives for working with children.
- We will use an assessment grid for the task-based part of the interview and a question grid for the formal interview to ensure that all candidates are asked the same questions.
- Incomplete answers will prompt further questioning. However, any gaps in employment or other areas of concerns on the application will be explored at interview.

## DBS and other checks

- It is an offence under Section 76 of the Childcare act 2006 to employ someone for childcare provision who is disqualified from working with vulnerable groups of people, including children and young people. This refers to staff, students, committee members and other volunteers in the provision.

- Existing staff and volunteers must disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).
- Adults will not have unsupervised access to children unless an Enhanced Disclosure has been returned and is clear of any convictions.
- The DBS Disclosure request will include a Barred List check (as of 2014) and the following information: reference number, date of issue and the name of the counter-signatory, will be recorded in the staff file and kept securely in the setting. Disclosures are handled in accordance with the DBS's Code of Practice.
- If the DBS check reveals any convictions, cautions or police information we would seek guidance from Ofsted's helpline on 0300-123-1231 and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer **without** revealing the identity of the candidate.
- DBS checks cannot be relied upon solely to ensure that the successful candidate is suitable to work with children, so we believe it is important to use other evidence such as Health Declarations (including existing conditions and known allergies and any medication needs), ID checks and written references as well.

### **Job descriptions, contracts and records**

- All staff and volunteers are given job descriptions on their first day, which accurately set out their roles and responsibilities. These job descriptions are reviewed annually through the appraisal process, and updated if necessary.
- All job descriptions are formulated in line with the Equality of Opportunities policy and accurately reflect the requirements of the job, including the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- All employees are given two copies of their terms and conditions (i.e. contracts) to sign within two months of starting work and one copy is returned to and kept by the employer. These are rewritten if there is a change in staff responsibilities, line management, hours of work, rates of pay or any other condition within.
- Information about a new employee's probationary period is included within the terms and conditions of employment.
- We have a clear, written salary scale which recognises both experience and qualifications.
- All records relating to staff, students and volunteers are kept securely at the setting and are current and accessible.
- Records will be retained for a specified time then disposed of appropriately.
- keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with DFE requirements
- ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. We monitor the compliance with these measures.

### **Induction**

- We provide staff induction training for all new staff, students and volunteers in the first months of employment.

- An induction development plan is drawn up and monitored by the new staff member's line manager over the first few months to provide the essential knowledge and skills that workers need in their job role and setting.
- New employees' performance will be monitored against their job description, and any identified training needs and other specific issues will be addressed well before the end of the probationary period. This period can be extended if necessary.
- The initial part of the induction includes the Safeguarding Children Child Protection policy; whistle blowing policy; safe working practice; the Health and Safety policies, including the emergency evacuation procedures, the Equality policy, and a guided tour of the premises.
- For candidates who are new to the children's workforce, induction is linked to the Induction Standards which are based on the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce. These set out what new staff should know and be able to do within the first six months of starting work.

## **Appraisals and supervision**

- We ensure that all staff have access to regular supervision meetings and appraisals.
- Line managers will supervise the work of staff on a day-to-day basis so that staff are able to work as effectively as possible.
- Formal supervision meetings with a line manager will give staff an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues confidentially, and to identify training needs.
- Supervision will provide staff with the opportunities to:
  - Discuss any issues, particularly concerning children's development or well-being;
  - Identify solutions to address issues as they arise and
  - Receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness.
- In addition to formal and informal supervision, all staff will have an annual appraisal. This will cover feedback from both the employee and employer on performance, and identify targets and training needs for the forthcoming year.
- Information from appraisals is fed into the Continuing Professional Development Plan for the setting. (See *Continuing Professional Development Policy*)

## **Training**

- We recognise that we have a responsibility to monitor training needs of staff and to facilitate their access to appropriate training.
- Records of attendance on training attended will be kept and stored securely in the school setting.
- Staff will be responsible for keeping their own portfolios up-to-date, and the portfolios should include qualification certificates and certificates from training attended.
- Staff who have attended training will have an opportunity to disseminate training to the rest of the staff team. They will be expected to determine how the training will impact on practice and on outcomes for children.
- We will endeavour to support staff to improve their qualification levels wherever possible.

## **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure**

- Our disciplinary procedure is in line with current employment legislation and is designed to encourage employees to reach the highest standards of conduct and to be fair and effective when dealing with disciplinary matters.

- Our grievance procedure is in line with current employment legislation and we aim to settle grievances quickly and fairly.

## **Volunteers and Students**

- All volunteers are vetted to ensure their suitability to be in contact with the school setting and an Enhanced DBS Disclosure will be required.
- All volunteers and students are made aware of our confidentiality and safeguarding children procedures before they start.
- All volunteers and students are made to feel welcome and are not given duties which members of staff would not be happy to perform.
- We welcome students as they often bring new ideas from their learning to the school setting. However, we always meet with students before they start to verify documentation and ensure they understand the ethos of the school.
- Students are never left unsupervised with children as they are not included in the child:adult ratios; unless they are aged 17 and over, on a long term placement and suitably qualified to be counted.
- We always assign a named mentor to each student to ensure they gain as much as possible from their placement.

This policy was adopted in March 2014

This policy was reviewed in March 2015

Also refer to other policies and procedures:

Safeguarding – Child Protection;

Confidentiality and Information Sharing;

Secure storage of records and Data Protection;

Internet use;

Whistle – blowing

