

Reviewed: September 2022

Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

Pen Green Centre Governing Body is the registered provider.

Recruitment and selection process

The Integrated Centre ensures it creates a culture of safe recruitment and as part of that adopts recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2022).

The Integrated Centre will ensure that safer recruitment practices in line with our safer recruitment policy, KCSIE, Right to Work and North Northamptonshire Council's Schools HR Handbook will be followed at all times.

Prior to any selection process we ensure potential applicants are given the right messages about the Centre's responsibility to recruit suitable people. Our initial correspondence with any potential applicants will outline our commitment to maintain a culture that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Our robust advertising and recruitment procedures are in place to deter and prevent people who are unsuitable to work with children from applying or securing employment in our Centre.

All the staff who are employed in the setting have been through the recruitment, interview and selection process. Through this process we check that the person has the essential identity checks, relevant experience and skills needed for the role, and holds the necessary qualifications to fulfil the requirements of the post applied for. This process assists us in ensuring those selected are suitable to undertake the job. For staff employed to work with children this process ensures their suitability to work with and care for children unsupervised.

Application forms

We use the Local Authority's application form for external recruitment. We remind potential applicants to address all sections of the application form and check they have completed it in full. As part of our application process, we always include a copy of our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and refer potential applicants to our website for further information

We do not accept curriculum vitae in place of an application form.

Shortlisting

- There will be a minimum of two people shortlisting.
- All submitted applications will be scrutinised and considered by the shortlisting panel members.
- The shortlisting panel, as part of the shortlisting process, will interrogate the information recorded on the application forms.

- Applicants will be short-listed in relation to selected essential criteria identified on the person specification.
- Any gaps in the application form or areas of concern will be highlighted during the short-listing process for further discussion and clarification if selected for interview. For successful applicants, the shortlisting panel will agree areas to be followed up at interview including, gaps in employment history and reasons given, inconsistencies or potential concerns needing further clarification, or additional questions relating to the application form.
- As part of our due diligence we will, where possible, carry out an online search for shortlisted applicants. Any identification of incidents or issues will be followed up at interview.
- Short-listed applicants will be invited to attend interview.

Employment history and references

- Verbal references will be sought, prior to interview where authorised by the candidate. This will enable us to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions and allow us to explore any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.
- Where we are unable to obtain a verbal reference prior to the interview, we will always obtain written references prior to commencement of employment from their current or most recent employer.
- We will not accept open references.
- We will not rely on applicants to obtain their references.
- We will always seek references from the candidate's current or most recent employer and ensure these have been completed by a senior person with the appropriate authority.
- If the referee is school or college based the reference should be confirmed by the Head Teacher/Principal as accurate in respect of any disciplinary investigations.
- We will obtain verification of the individuals most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed.
- We will obtain reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children.
- If the application is for a support post and the applicant has never worked with children then we will ensure a reference is obtained from their current employer.
- We will always verify any information with the person who provides the reference.
- We will check to ensure any electronic references originate from a legitimate source.
- If information contained in the reference is vague or insufficient we will contact the referee for further clarification.
- We will compare the information from the referee with the application form and take up any discrepancies with the candidate during interview.
- We will discuss with the referee the reason why the candidate is leaving their current post.
- We will thoroughly investigate any areas of concern and ensure they are resolved satisfactorily before any appointment is confirmed.
- Any offer of post would always be conditional on satisfactory references.

Selection

On being offered an interview, candidates are asked to bring the following evidence with them to their interview:

- Evidence of their right to work in the UK e.g., passport and evidence of National Insurance (See Appendix A for process to check Right to Work from 6 April 2022)
- Photographic evidence (if passport not provided to satisfy Right to Work)
- Original qualification certificates
- Original DBS certificate, if they currently have one
- A completed Criminal Records Self-Disclosure Form (See Appendix B for Pen Green Centre's Self-disclosure template)

Interview process

Candidates will be interviewed by a panel, always consisting of

- a member of the Centre Leadership Team/Domain Leader/Senior Worker
- leaders/workers from the relevant domain within the Integrated Centre.
- a parent/governor (where possible).

At least one member of the panel will have completed and have up to date safer recruitment training.

The HR Manager will ensure that:

- All of the pre-requested evidence (as outlined above) are checked and copied where necessary, and the information is recorded. Evidence submitted by unsuccessful candidates will be securely destroyed in line with UK GDPR legislation.
- Panel members have the relevant documentation prior to the interview.
- Reasonable adjustments are made for candidates who disclose a disability.
- A range of selection activities, set and specific questions, notes and non-verbal responses are used to address the job description, person specification, skills and experience of the candidate and their suitability for the role.
- If the interview process involves direct contact with children and families, this will be supervised and observed. Any notes taken or verbal feedback will be used as part of the process
- The structure of the interview is appropriate to the post available and a range of standard questions are used for all candidates.
- Some interviews may require a two-stage interview process.
- Depending on the role some interviews may require an observation of the candidate in the setting and, should this be the case, the candidate will be notified prior to interview.
- Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and given feedback if requested.

Interview panel members will:

- Ask all candidates the pre-set standard set of questions plus supplementary and follow up questions may be used in the light of the candidate's responses.
- Assess candidates against the key points noted against each question.
- Assess the language, general attitude and approach of the candidate to ensure best

fit to the Centre's culture and values.

- Determine the candidate's suitability to work with children for those roles where they will be directly working with children.
- Follow up questions about gaps in employment, inconsistencies, or potential concerns. This will be done by the panel member who is Safer Recruitment trained.
- Record the candidate's responses to questions and additional interview notes.
- Use the scoring matrix on the interview record template and engage in discussion to make a decision to select a preferred candidate, invite candidate/s back for further interview/observation of practice or agree not to appoint.
- Inform candidates that all appointments are subject to the receipt of:
 - Necessary qualifications
 - Satisfactory references
 - DBS clearance
 - Medical clearance.

If the successful candidate is disabled, the line manager will explore in detail any reasonable adjustments that must be made in order for them to carry out their duties.

Once an offer of employment has been accepted, the HR Manager will ensure all the pre-employment checks are in place:

Identity check

Right to Work (Employers Guide to Right to Work Checks, 6 April 2022)

Qualifications

References (obtaining outstanding references if not already in place prior to interview)

Medical clearance

DBS clearance

Barred List checks

Probation checks will also be carried out for teachers

Where the post is for a qualified teacher, the Teacher Services system will be used to verify any award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and the completion of teacher induction or probation. A Section 128 check will also be carried out where relevant.

Pre-appointment vetting checks and recording information

All the pre-appointment checks are part of our commitment to safeguarding ensuring we employ people who are suitable to work with children.

Following interviews and conditionally offering a position, the enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process will be initiated. DBS checks (previously known as Criminal Records Bureau checks) are processed using an online 'portal' provided by Strictly Education Limited, who also act as our Counter Signatory. All of the information is completed using the online system and the relevant identification is checked by the HR Manager. The application is submitted to Strictly Education Limited and is then processed by the DBS. Notification of DBS clearance is given directly to the applicant via hard copy and the online 'portal' is updated with the clearance information.

Barred List checks, for the Children's workforce, are carried out by Strictly Education on receipt of the DBS application online.

A separate check of the Children's Barred List will be carried out if the DBS certificate has not been received by the commencement of employment. As well as this a risk assessment would be put in place and the member of staff would never be alone with children or vulnerable adults. A screenshot of the Children's Barred List check undertaken will be retained on the individual's personnel file and confirmation recorded on the Single Central Record. (See KCSIE, 2022)

All staff employed within the setting will undertake an Enhanced DBS check. Confirmation of the individual check will be held on individual personnel files and in a secure central location – Single Central Record – this will include reference numbers and the date they are obtained.

Where a DBS check has shown that there is a 'disclosure' the online 'portal' will be updated accordingly, however without giving specific details of the disclosure. The applicant will be asked to produce their original DBS certificate and a discussion will then take place with the applicant and one of the Joint Heads of Centre. A decision will be made regarding the appropriateness of the person to work in the Integrated Centre, or not.

Consideration will be given to the nature of the criminal record, the severity of the crime, the frequency of criminal activity and the length of time since the incident(s) occurred. We will not automatically refuse to employ a particular individual just because he/she has a previous criminal conviction however, failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or termination of employment.

DBS checks are renewed every three years in line with Ofsted best practice. From April 2021 all new employees, volunteers and sessional workers will be strongly encouraged to register with the DBS update service so that an annual check on their criminal record status may be carried out. Information on registering with the DBS update service will be provided at the point of the offer of employment.

Existing members of staff will be asked at their next renewal to sign up to the DBS update service and from then on we will check their criminal record status on a yearly basis.

The cost of subscribing to the DBS update service will be reimbursed for all employees, volunteers and sessional workers upon appropriate proof of subscription.

We rarely use Early Years practitioners from supply agencies. Should the need arise, we will obtain written notification from the agency or third party organisation that they have carried out the same checks as the Centre would otherwise perform on a person who is working in the Centre. We will ensure that a written notification confirms the DBS certificate has been obtained by the agency or third party organisation. (Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 3, 2022).

The HR manager will carry out checks to ensure managers and staff are suitable to work with children. Identity checks, qualifications, a DBS check, children's barred list check, medical check, a check of evidence of the Right to Work in the UK and references will be carried out to ensure suitability. Probation checks will also be carried out for teachers.

Written information about previous employment history will be sought and checked to ensure that the information is not contradictory or incomplete (see Keeping Children Safe in Education, Part 3, 2022). Where a candidate is not currently employed, verification of their most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving will be obtained.

All supervisors and managers hold a minimum of a relevant Level 3 qualification and have appropriate post qualifying experience.

Managers have a commitment to ensuring staff attend regular training and have access to professional development opportunities to further enhance their qualifications.

All staff are given copies of job descriptions relevant to their post.

All staff will be given an opportunity to settle into their role when commencing employment in the setting. They will be given an induction period and follow an induction programme both for the organisation as a whole and for the specific domain they will be working in (Please refer to the Induction Policy and Induction templates).

During the induction programme, the new staff will have a tour of the premises and meet key staff within the organisation. New staff will be required to read all statutory policies. There will also be opportunities to discuss the principles, wider Centre policies and procedures of the setting. During induction new staff will be required to complete Safeguarding training.

Within each domain, we have specific procedures to follow. It is during the induction period that new members of staff will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the procedures through reading the policies and observing colleagues in the setting. All contracted staff directly working with children and families are required to hold or be working towards a Level 3 qualification (for those working towards their level 3 qualification, a clear timetable of completion will be required). It is preferable for casual or sessional staff to hold a Level 3 qualification however, a basic level qualification in early years together with relevant experience would also be acceptable.

During the induction programme each new member of staff will be allocated a named supervisor. The supervisor will conduct their regular supervision sessions (see Supervision Policy). A record of the induction programme will be kept in each worker's personnel file. A record of their supervision sessions will be retained electronically or within supervision files.

All contracted staff participate in annual appraisals and six-monthly reviews following North Northamptonshire Council guidelines.

We will complete a Personnel Agreement with all external agencies to ensure current DBS checks are in place for workers delivering services at the Integrated Centre.

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Staff members / volunteers awaiting a DBS check (Disclosure & Barring Service)

- The Enhanced DBS process will be initiated (as described in the main policy) as soon as possible by the HR Manager.
- In the event that a DBS check has not been received prior to the start date of the worker, they may be allowed to begin work; decisions will be made on an individual basis. A risk assessment will be completed detailing the control measures in place to ensure that the worker is appropriately supervised until the DBS clearance is received.
- Under no circumstances will a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained ever be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.
- A 'Barred List' check for the Children's Workforce will be obtained. A copy of the clearance will be retained on the individual's personnel file and recorded on the Single Central Record.
- An individual awaiting a DBS will never be left alone with children. Senior members of staff will ensure that appropriate rotas, planning, **risk assessment** and arrangements for the supervision of children are in place.
- An individual awaiting a DBS should not ever a change a child's nappy. However a staff member awaiting a DBS can assist with dressing/undressing children, provided that they are supervised by a contracted member of staff.
- An individual awaiting a DBS will be accompanied by a colleague on home-visits to families.
- If any issues/concerns are brought to the attention of the person awaiting a DBS they must seek out a senior colleague for advice, support and guidance.
- If any member of staff has any concerns about an individual awaiting a DBS, they must report this immediately to one of the Joint Heads of Centre.

Staff moving to new employment

When a member of staff ceases employment within the Centre we would carefully consider if we have to notify DBS.

We will refer to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) if:

- A worker was dismissed because they harmed a child or adult
- A worker was dismissed because they might have harmed a child or adult
- A worker committed a criminal offence against or related to a child

- A worker behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- A worker behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children
- We were planning to dismiss a worker for any of these reasons, but the person resigned first.

We would also notify Ofsted.

(Please also see policy for Managing allegations against staff).

Disqualification Guidance (all registered providers)

To be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022 Part 3

As part of our ongoing vigilance and commitment to maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour, we ask all staff to reconfirm if they have been subject to any criminal convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children. This is completed bi-annually and is recorded on an internal template which is reviewed by HR and stored on individual personnel files.

Where a member of staff answers 'yes' to this question, one of the Joint Heads of Centre must be informed immediately. The Joint Heads of Centre will carry out a thorough investigation with the member of staff. In addition, all staff are encouraged to share any concerns about a colleague with one of the Joint Heads; such concerns will be raised in confidence. As a Centre we have created a culture and environment that encourages staff to feel comfortable to discuss matters both within and outside of the workplace which may have implications for the safeguarding of children.

Should the Governing Body or Centre Leadership Team become aware of relevant information about a member of staff which may lead to their disqualification, appropriate action will be taken immediately to ensure the safety of the children within the Nursery, Early Years provision and Corby Children's Centres. The Joint Heads of Centre would contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and guidance of the actions to be taken. Following discussion with the LADO next steps will be agreed. If appropriate the member of staff will be given information about the implications of the disqualification and whether they will be able to apply for a waiver from Ofsted. Following discussion with the LADO a decision will be made as to whether the member of staff can be redeployed in any interim period where a waiver application has been made.

Where an individual decides not to apply for a waiver, or a waiver is declined, a decision will be made as to whether the member of staff can be permanently redeployed, the appropriateness of redeployment, or whether steps should be taken to terminate their employment. At all stages advice will be sought from the LADO and then our HR provider.

In the case of disqualification of a member of staff the Joint Heads of Centre will provide Ofsted with relevant information as outlined in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2021) within a maximum of 14 days of becoming aware of the information.

We will refer to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) if:

- A worker was dismissed because they harmed a child or adult
- A worker was dismissed because they might have harmed a child or adult
- A worker committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- A worker behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
- A worker behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children
- We were planning to dismiss a worker for any of these reasons, but the person resigned first.

Appendix B
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

**CRIMINAL SELF DISCLOSURE AND
BARRED LISTS FORM**

**THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED BY ANY APPLICANT WHO HAS BEEN
SHORT-LISTED FOR AN INTERVIEW**

You are required to disclose any 'unspent' convictions in line with The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. This Act allows for a person who has been convicted of a criminal offence involving a sentence of not more than two and a half years imprisonment and who has since lived trouble free for a specified period of time (related to the severity of the offence) to be treated as if the offence, conviction or sentence had never occurred. This is known as a spent conviction.

The job for which you are applying is one of those to which the provisions of the above Act in relation to spent convictions, **do not apply**. You must therefore, disclose whether you have **ANY previous** convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings, **whether or not they are spent** and **any** other information that has a bearing on your suitability for the position applied for.

However, the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected' and are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions can be found at the Disclosure and Barring Service website – www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service

Only relevant convictions and other information will be taken into account so disclosure need not necessarily be a bar to obtaining this position.

Should you identify that you have a criminal record, this will be discussed in confidence at interview.

An Enhanced Criminal Records Check, with a check against the barred lists, will be sought in the event of you being successful in your application for employment.

APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF:		
Have you ever been convicted by any court or tribunal or cautioned, reprimanded or given a final warning by the police or any enforcement authority (in any country)? YES / NO		
If YES, please give details of the offence(s), penalties and date(s).		
Offence	Date	Sentence

3. If between completion of this application form and taking up employment with Pen Green, you are convicted of a criminal offence, you must inform us immediately.
4. If you are shortlisted and have submitted your application electronically, you will be required to sign a Declaration at a later date that the information you have given on your application form, any supplementary sheets or forms is true and correct at the time of completion.
5. If you have lived overseas, you will be required to apply to the Embassy of the country you resided in for a certificate of good conduct/extract from criminal records, the cost of which you will be required to meet.