

Safer Recruitment Policy

St Paulinus Pre-school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. The suitability of all prospective employees or volunteers will be assessed during the recruitment process in line with this commitment.

Policy Statement

St Paulinus Pre-school Committee's aim is to recruit staff who are appropriately qualified, dedicated and suitable to work with children, thus reinforcing our safeguarding policy. We consider all applications without any prejudice regarding gender, race, religion, age or any other factor that is irrelevant to the person specification. It is our policy to take up references for all employees, and to request enhanced DBS checks for all staff, committee members and regular volunteers, in order to ensure to the best of our ability the safety of the children who attend the setting. All new staff will be welcomed into the setting and will receive a standard induction. Our procedure for recruiting new staff is laid out below. Person specification, job description, reference request forms are provided as a job application pack.

Procedure

1. A job description should be drawn up, ideally by the last person to hold the role, or if that is not possible then the most recent job description for the role should be checked by the manager and chair and then that should be used.
2. Using the job description as a guide, a person specification should be drawn up, indicating any necessary and/or desired qualifications and personal qualities and the method of confirming that such qualifications are held (e.g. certificates, references checked at interview).
3. Application packs are assembled which will include a letter detailing who to respond to and the application deadline, an application form, a job description and a person specification.
4. The post will be advertised externally. For some positions, adverts posted at Pre-school are probably sufficient; for more substantial roles such as manager, adverts should be placed more widely, e.g. at the Jobcentre, newspapers or online. The advert should state the job title, rate of pay, hours, necessary qualifications, desirable experience/qualities, how to obtain an application pack and the application deadline, which would ideally be two weeks from the adverts going out. Confirm that a Disclosure and Barring Service check is required.
5. Application forms should be checked for appropriate qualifications and experience, and any that fall short of the mark may be discarded at this stage. Ensure disabled candidates who may need help to complete an application form or flexibility to provide all the required information in an alternative format are supported.

Author:
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6. References will be taken up for successful applicants, provided permission has been granted to do so by the applicant. Confirmation that any previous employer may be asked for a reference and that referees will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to vulnerable groups and whether the applicant has been the subject of any safeguarding concerns. It is vitally important to obtain at least one reference for all candidates, ideally two, and preferably prior to the interviews. If this is not possible, it should be made clear at the interview that any job offer would be conditional on adequate references being obtained.

7. Short list for interview. If there are 3 or less candidates they should be interviewed in order to be certain of the best possible assessment of the prospective employees; a poor application form does not necessarily indicate that someone is unsuited to work in childcare, and likewise an excellent application is no guarantee of an appropriate personality to work at pre-school. The selection process for people who will work with children should always include a face-to face interview even if there is only one candidate. For larger numbers of applications it may be possible to narrow them down before interview. Ensure that dates line up and there are no unexplained gaps in employment history.

8. Interviews should be held in a single block, with at least two interviewers present (normally Chair and manager), although if interviewing for a manager a panel of three should carry out the interviews. At least one person on the interview panel should have completed Safer Recruitment Training course. The interview should assess the merits of each candidate against the job requirements, and explore their suitability to work with children. It is advisable to use an interview form with pre-arranged questions, on which notes and scores out of 5 can be written for each question. Confirm that the candidate understands the requirement for a DBS check and the kind of information that will be disclosed and ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS check.

9. Following the interviews, and once careful deliberation has taken place and a decision made, all applicants should be contacted as soon as possible to notify them of the outcome, using whatever method of communication they have indicated at interview. It is important to thank people for their time, and may be a good idea to tell promising candidates that they are welcome to apply for any other roles that arise at Pre-school. It is recommended to phone the successful candidate last, making them an offer of the job on condition of a "suitable" DBS check outcome. Arrangements can then be made for the successful candidate to attend the setting for an induction and DBS check.

10. The induction will normally be carried out by the manager as per the induction checklist in the staff handbook. DBS checks for staff are carried out online by the Chair, and require 3 types of ID including at least one photo ID.

11. On receipt of a suitable decision from the DBS, the job offer can be finalised, and a contract drawn up. It may be advisable to draw up a provisional contract and covering letter lasting for a term initially, then following a review by the committee and manager at the end of that period a permanent contract can be drawn up.

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DBS - formerly CRB checks

It is not good practice to accept disclosure certificates produced by the applicant and requested by another organisation as additional information not shown on the applicant's certificate may have been disclosed to this employer by the police. DBS disclosures are a 'snapshot in time' on the day issued and are not updated with any new offences committed after this date. If the applicant is not registered with the DBS Update Service a new DBS check should be obtained.

If an individual is registered with the DBS Update Service, employers can instead obtain permission from the individual to view their original DBS check and carry out an instant free online check on the Update Service of any new information relating to the individual's record. DBS checks do not include overseas information so applicants from abroad should be asked for a 'certificate of good conduct' from their home country or embassy.

Self-disclosure: The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

When considering information from a self-disclosure or DBS check certain factors should be carefully weighed up, to ensure that an applicant is not being unfairly treated or disadvantaged because they may have been convicted of an offence in the past. Consider:

- the nature and severity of the offence/s
- the date/s when it took place
- whether it is relevant to the type of work which could be offered
- whether the offence/s took place in the UK or overseas (if the latter, is it a criminal offence here?) • whether the offence has now been de-criminalised
- whether there is a pattern of offending
- whether there is any evidence of remorse or recognition of wrong-doing?

A completed self-disclosure form does not remove the need to get an Enhanced DBS if the applicant is offered the post.

Disqualification statement

It is important to note that it is unlawful to employ someone in a role working with children if a person living at the same address as the worker is barred from working with children. The connection between the worker and the partner, spouse, family member or friend greatly increases the chance that children may be placed at risk.

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Volunteers

If an individual is helping out with a one-off event (for example, a day trip), it is unnecessary to engage in a full recruitment procedure. However, all safeguarding precautions related to visitors to a setting are followed and observed.

Volunteers are not left unsupervised with children or their records at any time

A volunteer recruitment procedure includes:

- The volunteer's roles and responsibilities should be clearly stated
- An induction including the Pre-school's safeguarding policies
- an Enhanced DBS disclosure if the volunteer is at the setting for more than a one off event