

Safer Recruitment of Staff



At **Little Elms** we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures aiming to ensure all people working with children are suitable to do so. We follow this procedure each and every time we recruit a new member to join our team.

Legal Requirements

- We abide by all legal requirements relating to safe recruitment set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and accompanying regulations
- We also follow any requirements or guidance given by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in relation to carrying out checks; and abide by the employer's responsibilities relating to informing the DBS of any changes to the suitability of their staff, whether this member of staff has left the nursery or is still under investigation. Please refer to the child protection/safeguarding policy for further information.
- We follow requirements set out within The Department of Education document 'Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 Statutory guidance for local authorities and schools (dated 31 August 2018)'.

Advertising

- We ensure that our recruitment adverts and literature include details of our equal opportunities policy, a commitment to safeguarding children statement and our safe recruitment procedures; including an enhanced DBS check, references and the requirement to complete safeguarding training.

Interview Stage

- We shortlist all suitable candidates using selection criteria required for the position and ensure all applicants receive feedback following interview, regardless of whether they are successful in receiving an offer of employment
- All shortlisted candidates will receive an application form and a request for identification prior to the interview
- The manager will decide the most appropriate people for the interview panel. Where possible, there will be two people involved in the overall decision making process.
- Consistent and role appropriate interview questions are used in all interviews, designed to assess the candidates suitability, knowledge, skills and experience for the role. For childcare roles, these will safeguarding, child protection, child development, EYFS and the understanding of the legal frameworks applied to childcare and used in the nursery.
- Every shortlisted candidate for a childcare role will be asked to take part in a supervised practical exercise which will involve spending time in the nursery interacting with the children, staff and where appropriate parents. This practical exercise will be supervised, will not include any personal care of a child/children and the candidate will never have the opportunity to be alone with a child/children.
- The manager and deputy will select the most suitable person for the position based on performance at interview, the practical exercise, knowledge and understanding of the EYFS, as well as the needs of the nursery.

Starting Work

- All Nursery Managers at Little Elms will complete and sign off our Safer Recruitment Checklist before a new employee commences work. The checklist will be retained on the individual's personal file to evidence the vetting process followed.
- Nursery Manager and Deputy Managers will be provided with advice, guidance and training as required regarding Little Elms safer recruitment procedures.

References

- The successful candidate will be offered the position subject to a minimum of two references from previous employment AND that cover a minimum of a two year period. In the case of a newly qualified student or apprentice, their tutor and a personal or professional reference can be accepted. These

references will be taken up before employment commences. This may be verbal initially and followed up with a written reference which will form part of their personnel file.

- Any reference that confirm there were safeguarding concerns during previous employment may not be accepted as a satisfactory reference and the conditional offer of employment may be withdrawn.
- One reference will be from the current or most recent employer.
- Previous employment references must be completed by Nursery Management or HR. We will not accept references from a colleague.

DBS Checks

- All new starters will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with Barred List check. This will either be facilitated through the DBS update service (with the individuals permission) or a new DBS application will be processed by Little Elms. Individuals will not be permitted to start work with Little Elms, until we have one of the following:
 - DBS Update Service check is clear
 - Little Elms DBS check is returned and is clear
 - Little Elms DBS check is in progress AND a previous Enhanced DBS with Barred List check has been issued within the last 3 years AND a DBS Risk Assessment has been completed and approved by the Head of Operations.
- The original DBS certificate must be seen and checked before the individual will be permitted to start work. This includes when the person is registered with the DBS Update Service.
- The nursery will not retain copies of DBS disclosure certificates but will keep records of the DBS reference number, issue date and countersignatory name and the name of the person who has seen the original DBS certificate.
- An additional criminals records check (or checks if more than one country) will also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad in the last five years and who has spent three months or longer in the same country. We follow government guidelines on how to obtain this information from the relevant country (countries).
- In the event that it comes to a Nursery Managers attention that an existing member of staff may be disqualified from working with children (via either a disclosure from the individuals, DBS check or staff suitability declaration) the Nursery Manager must immediately restrict duties to ensure the individual has no further contact with children until the following process has been carried out.
- For future and existing staff, if a DBS check, staff suitability declaration or disclosure from the individual, reveals any information that brings their DBS status into question, the Nursery Manager must complete a DBS Suitability and Disqualification Risk Assessment. In all cases, approval of the risk assessment must be sought from both the Head of Operations and the HR Manager.
- Approval on whether the individual is suitable to work with children will be treated on an individual case basis and will take account of the following:
 - whether the individual is disqualified from working with children
 - seriousness of the offence and number of offences
 - accuracy of the person's self-disclosure on the application form, staff suitability questionnaire and interview
 - nature of the role including level of supervision
 - age of the individual at the time of the offence(s)
 - the length of time that has elapsed since the offence(s)
 - Relevance of the offence(s) or information to working or being in regular contact with children.
- A decision will be made by the Head of Operations and the HR Manager to either withdraw an offer of employment, restrict duties, suspend or consider requesting the individual to make an application to Ofsted for a waiver. Little Elms will only request and support the individual to apply for an Ofsted Waiver in exceptional circumstances, and when approved by the Registered Person.

Right to Work

- All candidates will be required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK and copies will be taken of documents to prove their right to work in the UK. These documents will be stored on their personal file and retained for the duration of their employment.

Gaps in Employment History

- The Manager is responsible for identifying any gaps in the individual's employment history. Individuals will be required to explain and evidence (where appropriate) all gaps in employment history.
- The Manager will compare and cross check dates of employment and/or education from the interview, application form, CV and references. Any inconsistencies identified will be discussed with the individual and their response will form part of the decision regarding their suitability for the role.

Qualifications

- The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked to ensure they are full and relevant in Early Years against the Department of Education lists and copies taken for their personal file.

Health

- After the job has been offered a health questionnaire 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 out their role. Please see the Absence Management and Employee Health policy for more details about how the nursery manages health problems including access to medical records

Staff Suitability Questionnaire

- Individuals are required to sign a declaration on the application form AND a staff suitability questionnaire, to disclose whether they have any criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or may make them unsuitable to do so.

Ongoing support and checks

- All employees will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the relevant Little Elms policies and procedures.
- All new employees will undergo an induction programme will be assigned a 'mentor/ buddy' who will introduce them to the way in which the nursery operates
- All employees are responsible for notifying the manager in person if any 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 questionnaire'. This includes any incidents occurring outside the nursery, any child protection orders regarding their own children and medical conditions / medication that may impact suitability. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the manager **immediately** of any changes in their suitability to work with children.
- All employees will have a new DBS check completed or the update service checked, a minimum of every three years, to check for any status changes.
- All employees will re-complete a questionnaire if any changes occur impacting their health, to ensure management have a good knowledge of any changes that may require support or reasonable adjustments to enable them to carry out their day-to-day duties. This will also be discussed at staff supervision/review meetings. Management may require this more regularly where health circumstances change.
- 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. This may include requiring the individual to obtain a waiver from Ofsted in relation to any disqualification. The Nursery Manager will escalate any concerns regarding staff suitability to the Head of Operations and HR Manager.

- All employees will have regular supervisions and one to one meetings with their manager. This will provide an opportunity for discussion and review of performance, any training / development needs and any changes that may affect their suitability.
- The manager, deputy, room managers 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 employees to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children. Employees are expected to be self-motivated and take ownership to drive their own personal and professional development.

Associated Documents:

- *Safer Recruitment Checklist*
- *DBS Risk Assessment*
- *DBS Suitability and Disqualification Risk Assessment*
- *Health Questionnaire*
- *Staff Suitability Declaration*
- *Supervision and 1-2-1 records*
- *Application Form*
- *Absence Management and Employee Health Policy*