# Safer Recruitment and Employment Policy

## Policy Statement

Clopton Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children who attend the nursery. We recognise that safer recruitment is an essential part of protecting children and that safeguarding begins before an individual is appointed and continues throughout their employment or involvement with the nursery.
We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that staff, volunteers, students, agency workers and other adults working with children are suitable to do so.

## Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- children are protected from unsuitable adults;
- recruitment decisions are fair, consistent and safeguarding-focused;
- appropriate checks are completed before staff work with children;
- staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities from the beginning of their employment;

This policy applies to:

- permanent and temporary employees;
- managers and senior staff;
- bank and casual staff;
- agency workers;
- volunteers;
- students and work-experience placements;
- contractors who may have contact with children.

## Application and Shortlisting

Applicants will be required to complete an application form rather than relying solely on a CV.
Applications will be checked for:

- unexplained gaps in employment;
- inconsistencies in employment history;
- relevant qualifications and experience;
- previous work with children;
- information that may raise safeguarding concerns.

Any gaps or discrepancies will be explored during the recruitment process.
Shortlisting will be based on the requirements of the role and safeguarding considerations.

## Obtaining references

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment and in line with the EYFS statutory requirements Clopton Nursery will always obtain references from applicants including staff, students and volunteers for roles in our setting. Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.
Obtaining references is an essential element of our recruitment process. We will always obtain at least one written reference before an individual is recruited in line with the requirements of the EYFS as follows:

- Our application process requires candidates, to supply us with the contact details of a suitable referee from:
    - Their current employer, training provider or early years education and care setting
    - A senior person within the organisation who is authorised to provide a reference.
- If the applicant is not currently employed, or is not currently working with children we will:
    - Obtain verification of the applicants most recent relevant employment if they are not currently employed
    - Obtain a reference from the applicants most recent relevant employer from the last time they worked with children
- If the applicant has never worked with children we will obtain a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting.
- We do not rely on applicants to obtain their own references
- We do not accept references from the following
    - Family members
    - A generic reference i.e. 'to whom it may concern'.

**Applicants Who Have Previously Worked With Children**
Where an applicant has previously worked with children, referees must also be asked to provide information about:

- Any disciplinary offences or concerns relating to children.
- Any child protection or safeguarding concerns involving the applicant.
- The outcome of any safeguarding queries, investigations or concerns about the applicant's behaviour.
- The outcome of any disciplinary proceedings or investigations.
- Any other information that may be relevant to the applicant's suitability to work with children.

**Once a reference is received**

- A reference received electronically will be checked to ensure that it originates from a legitimate source.
- We will compare the information on the original application form against relevant information given in the reference, for example, checking that dates align, and roles and responsibilities listed are consistent. Where this is not the case, we will take up any discrepancies with the applicant.
- If information is incomplete or we feel it is insufficient for us to make an informed decision about the applicant's suitability, we will contact the referee for clarification.
- Before an offer of employment is made, we will ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily.
- In line with best practice, we will seek to gain explanations for any gaps in employment.

## Interviews

All shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview.
Interview questions will explore:

- experience of working with children;
- understanding of safeguarding;
- professional boundaries;
- recognising and responding to concerns;
- working with parents and colleagues;
- behaviour and values;
- the candidate's suitability for the particular role.

Safeguarding-related questions will form part of the selection process.
Any concerns identified during interview will be explored before an appointment is made.

## Pre-Employment Checks

No person will commence unsupervised work with children until the appropriate pre-employment checks have been completed.
Checks will include, as appropriate:

- identity;
- right to work;
- qualifications;
- employment history;
- references;
- DBS check at the appropriate level;
- other checks required for the individual's circumstances.

The nursery will maintain appropriate records of completed checks. Where agency or supply staff are used, the nursery will obtain appropriate confirmation from the supplying organisation that required checks have been completed. We do not need to ask to see the DBS certificate of an individual employed by the agency; appropriate written confirmation should be obtained instead.

## Volunteers and Students

Volunteers and students will be subject to appropriate safeguarding checks and risk assessment.
The level of checking will depend on the nature of their role, the length of time they will spend at the nursery and whether they will have unsupervised access to children.
Students and volunteers will receive an appropriate induction and will be supervised according to their level of experience and responsibility.

## Induction

All new staff must receive a safeguarding induction before undertaking unsupervised work with children.
Induction will include:

- the nursery's safeguarding and child protection procedures;
- the identity and role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL);
- procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns;
- procedures for reporting concerns about adults;
- the staff code of conduct;
- whistleblowing procedures;
- behaviour management;
- confidentiality;
- online safety and appropriate use of technology;
- mobile phone and photography arrangements;
- health and safety;
- other relevant nursery policies.

Staff have an opportunity to ask questions and clarify any safeguarding responsibilities before working independently with children.
Staff receive safeguarding policies as part of induction and should understand how to report concerns and allegations.

## Recording and Confidentiality

Safeguarding and employment records will be:

- accurate;
- factual;
- dated;
- securely stored;
- accessible only to those who need the information.

Information will be shared appropriately where necessary to safeguard children. Records relating to supervision and safeguarding concerns will be kept securely. The source guidance specifically states that supervision records should be confidential and securely stored.

## Leaving Employment

Where a staff member leaves the nursery following safeguarding concerns or disciplinary action, the nursery will consider whether any information needs to be shared with the relevant safeguarding authorities. Where required, referrals will be made to the appropriate statutory body. Where an individual is removed from work because they pose a risk of harm to children, the appropriate referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service must be considered and made where required.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Nursery Manager

The Nursery Manager is responsible for ensuring that:

- recruitment procedures are followed;
- appropriate checks are completed;
- staff receive safeguarding induction;
- staff receive appropriate training and supervision;
- concerns are acted upon promptly;
- safeguarding records are maintained securely.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is responsible for providing advice and support regarding safeguarding concerns and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed.
The source guidance states that the DSL should have appropriate authority, resources, training and support to undertake the role effectively.

### Trustees

The committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate safer recruitment and safeguarding arrangements are in place and that the nursery's safeguarding culture is effective.

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| This policy was adopted by | Clopton Nursery Trust | *(Name of provider)* |
| On | 26/08/26 | *(date)* |
| Date to be reviewed | 26/08/27 | *(date)* |