

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Suitable People

Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their roles.

Hollytree Community Pre-school – Policies and Procedures

2.3 Safer Recruitment

Policy statement

This policy describes the effective system in place at Hollytree Preschool to recruit staff, volunteers, students and parent/carer helpers. This policy supports us to determine whether an individual is suitable to work, be responsible for, and have regular contact with children. It is crucial that our recruitment culture helps to identify and eliminate people who might pose a safeguarding or welfare threat. This policy also covers the recruitment of ex-offenders, and is made available to all enhanced disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

Introduction:

At Hollytree preschool we are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of our services, regardless of ethnicity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, disability or offending background. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

Our effective recruitment procedure for paid employees:

- An enhanced disclosure is always carried out for any positions at Hollytree. All application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an enhanced disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- Candidates will receive a job description and person specification for the role applied for.
- Candidates applying for a position must complete our application form (we do not accept CVs). On the application form all applicants must provide:
 - Personal details, current and former names, current address and national insurance number
 - Details of their present (or last) employment and reason for leaving
 - Full employment history (since leaving school, including education, employment and voluntary work) including reasons for any gaps in employment which may be discussed at interview
 - Qualifications, the awarding body and date of award. Original copies of candidates' qualification certificates will be seen by the managers and copies will be made
 - Details of two referees/references one of which must be the candidates current/last employer. If the applicant is not currently working with children, one referee must be a relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children

- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that the applicant believes are relevant to their suitability for the post advertised and how they meet the person specification
- Managers along with the chair of committee will carry out the shortlisting exercise after the application deadline. At least two people must complete the shortlisting exercise and the same people will carry out the interview process.
- As part of the shortlisting process, we may carry out an online search. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we may want to discuss with the applicant during interview. Shortlisted applicants will be informed that online checks may be carried out as part of our due diligence checks
- References:

The purpose of seeking references is to allow employers to obtain factual information to support appointment decisions. We will aim to obtain references before interview, where possible, this allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.

We will:

- not accept open references e.g. to whom it may concern
- not rely on applicants to obtain their reference
- ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority
- obtain verification of the individual's most recent relevant period of employment where the applicant is not currently employed
- secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children), if the applicant has never worked with children, then ensure a reference from their current employer
- always verify any information with the person who provided the reference
- ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source
- contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided
- compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate
- establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent post, and,
- ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before appointment is confirmed
- Short-listed candidates are required to attend an interview. During the interview, we will check with the candidate to make sure they can legally work in UK. They will be asked to sign a self-declaration of their criminal record or information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. This process also requires one form of ID to be seen and checked. As part of the interview process, we invite candidates to spend supervised time with the children.
- When interviewing we will use structured questions which will include:

- finding out what attracted the candidate to the post being applied for and their motivation for working with children
- exploring their skills and asking for examples of experience of working with children which are relevant to the role, and,
- probing any gaps in employment or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, asking about the reasons for this.

Once an offer of employment has been made:

- An Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check is carried out for all employees. During this check we will ask for 3 original identity documents.
- Hollytree will pay for the DBS check to be carried out, however if the applicant does not complete his/her probationary period successfully, the full payment of the DBS check will be required to be repaid by the applicant. If the applicant leaves the setting within a year of their start date, 50% of the cost of the original DBS check will be required to be repaid by the applicant.
- A health declaration form is completed which must satisfy us that the candidate is suitable to care for children. This will include verification of the candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- A photocopy of one item of photographic ID is taken for their personal file to support the candidate's right to work in the UK.
- A probationary period of a minimum of 3 months is set.
- A disclosure of criminal record and disqualification declaration for early year's settings is completed annually, if the person is employed for more than a year.

Specific procedures relating to ex-offenders:

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. We encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to the management committee and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Unless the nature of the position allows Hollytree to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about unspent convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those at Hollytree preschool who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. At interview or in a separate discussion we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make certain that every subject of a DBS is aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available, upon request. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in an enhanced disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Our effective recruitment procedure for volunteers: (We class these as adults 18 and over)

- All candidates are invited into preschool to talk through the voluntary position; however, completing an application form is not necessary. Volunteers are invited to spend supervised time with the children.
- An Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check is completed. During this check we will ask for identity documentation (originals). Volunteers are expected to sign up to the DBS update service.
- A photocopy of 1 item of photographic ID is taken.

Our effective recruitment procedure for students: (We class these as up to the age of 18 years and are usually still at school or college wishing to complete Duke of Edinburgh volunteering or similar work experience)

- All students are required to attend an interview.
- A reference from the school or college will be sought.
- All students 16 years and above require an Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check. During this check we will ask for identity documentation (originals).
- All students under 16 years old will require two references; one from their school or college and one personal reference

Our effective recruitment procedure for regular parent/carers helpers:

- All parent helpers who regularly come into the setting (by which we mean at least once a week) and have contact with the children will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check. During this check we will ask for identity documentation (original copies). The cost of this check will be met by the setting.
- Parents/carers who have less frequent visits to the setting (for example helping with walks to the Infant school) will not be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check.

Hollytree preschool will ensure:

- A member of the management team has completed safer recruitment training and will update their training every 3 years.
- During probation periods, paid employees are given additional support to enable them to follow Hollytree's policies and procedures as set out in the staff induction document and Policy folder.
- Enhanced DBS check has come back with a suitable result. Hollytree preschool complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested. For example: suitability for working, either paid or voluntarily within the setting, and for which the applicant's full consent has been given. Hollytree undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- Students, volunteers and parents/carers helpers are never left alone with the children

- No candidate is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, and offending background.
- The company called GBG Online Disclosures will usually be used for all Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks.

This policy was adopted by	Hollytree Community Pre-school
Last review	August 2023
Date of next review	August 2024
Signed on behalf of the provider	<i>J Goldspink</i>
Name of signatory	Jo Goldspink
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Joint Manager