



## 1.13 Safer Recruitment

### Policy statement and aims

Buttercups Pre-school adopts a robust recruitment process in order to prevent unsuitable people being employed or volunteering to work with children. In doing so we acknowledge the Bichard Report, 2004 p12 para 79 "For those agencies whose jobs it is to protect children and vulnerable people, the harsh reality is that if a sufficiently devious person is determined to seek out opportunities to work their evil, no one can guarantee that they will be stopped. Our task is to make it as difficult as possible for them to succeed."

There is a legal requirement (Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 2024 3:10) that: 'Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable, they must have the relevant qualifications, training and have passed any required checks to fulfil their roles. Providers must take appropriate steps to verify qualifications, including in cases where physical evidence cannot be produced. Providers must also ensure that any person who is likely to have regular contact with children (for example someone living or working on the same premises as the early years provision is provided) are suitable.'

### Recruitment Procedure

#### Advertising

- Adverts will be placed on Indeed, our Facebook page and the Norfolk County Council's Early Years and Childcare jobs Facebook group <https://Facebook.com/groups/446077753725727>,
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants will be considered in respect of their suitability for the post, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, age, marriage or civil partnership.
- All advertisements will contain the following statement: **'Buttercups is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'**.

#### Application Forms

- All applicants must complete a Buttercups Job application form (which is regularly updated to reflect best practice) and is stored in the Group's Recruitment Folder.

## Short listing

- After the closing date the Chair/ members of the Committee, Preschool Leader/ Deputy will analyse the received criteria in line with the requirements detailed in the person specification and job description.
- A short list will then be drawn up and subsequent interviews arranged etc.

## Interviewing and decision making

- Short listed applicants will be contacted and invited for interview.
- As part of the interview process applicants documents and qualifications will be checked so if the applicant is successful we will be able to proceed with an enhanced DBS application [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/documents](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/documents). All applicants will be required to bring proof of identity (e.g. passport, driving licence, original certificates, proof of eligibility to work in the UK (Overseas applicants will be subject to further checks through Embassy requests and Police services see Directgov website, P45 (if appropriate). These will all be photocopied and held on the new employee's personal file if successful. Unsuccessful applicants details will be shredded once an employment decision has been reached.
- **Two written satisfactory references will be taken prior to interview unless the applicant has specifically requested that a reference should not be obtained until a formal offer of employment has been made. In addition to written references further enquires may be made by telephone which will be recorded and held on the personal file.**
- **All references must be addressed to the Chairperson or Group Leader unless they will be discounted.**
- All applicants will be interviewed by at least two people (usually the Chair and the Pre-school Leader/Deputy, at least one of whom will have attended a Safer Recruitment course, and will be assessed against the person specification as well as for their motivation and suitability to work with children.
- All applicants will be asked if they have ever had an allegation or concern made against them as part of the interview process.
- All applicants will be told that any offer of employment will be conditional and subject to successful references (if not already received) and an enhanced DBS check.
- All interview notes for unsuccessful candidates will be held for 6 months before being shredded. Notes for successful candidates will be retained in their personal files.
- The same interview scoring process will apply to each applicant and a scoring sheet for this purpose is available in the Group's Recruitment file.
- Standard letters based on the Early Year's Alliance written guidance are available in the Recruitment file for both inviting an applicant to interview and also for declining. **After the interview**

- After a decision has been reached and the offer of appointment confirmed, with agreed start dates, then a letter of confirmation will be sent. This will confirm that it is a conditional offer which is subject to a clear DBS check being received and also references, if not already received. No applicants will be allowed unsupervised access to children prior to the receipt of a clear DBS being received.
- The unsuccessful applicants will be notified by letter and will be given the opportunity to obtain feedback either in writing or by telephone. Details of unsuccessful applicants will be retained for a minimum of 6 months in case of challenge to the decision or complaint.
- If no suitable applicants have been identified then the application process should be completed again.

### **References and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

As previously mentioned two written references must be received and Buttercups Pre-school will use a reference form for referees. All reference requests will include a commitment statement to safeguarding children:

**‘This organisation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.’**

- Once received and checked any gaps will be followed up by telephone and diarised to ensure they are obtained.
- All applicants have a right to request to see references.

### **DBS Guidance on storage, handling, use, retention and disposal.**

- We use a recruitment vetting service (currently Education Staffing Link) in order to process enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Staff and Committee members DBS’s will be renewed by the Group from April 2024 every 3 years.

- **General principles**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Buttercups Pre-school complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

- **Storage and access**

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

- **Handling**

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

To note: organisations which are inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) or Ofsted, and those establishments which are inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW ) may be legally entitled to retain the certificate for the purposes of inspection.

In addition, organisations that require retention of certificates in order to demonstrate 'safer recruitment' practice for the purpose of safeguarding audits may be legally entitled to retain the certificate. This practice will need to be compliant with the Data Protection Act, Human Rights Act, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and incorporated within the individual organisation's policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of DBS certificate information.

- **Usage**

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

- **Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints, or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

- **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

- **Acting as an umbrella body**

Before acting as an umbrella body (an umbrella body being a registered body which countersigns applications and receives certificate information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations), we will take all reasonable steps to satisfy ourselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of certificate information in full compliance with the code of practice and in full accordance with this policy.

- Where an individual is subscribed to the DBS Update Service we/ll carry out a status check of their DBS certificate, after checking their identity and viewing their original enhanced DBS certificate to ensure that it does not reveal any information that would affect their suitability for the post.
- Once a DBS is returned and is clear, the setting will maintain details of each DBS reference, on a **single central record (which forms part of the Group’s Operational Plan)** and is readily available for all to access.
- If an allegation has been made about a staff member or volunteer, then our organisation has a legal duty to make a barring referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if the following conditions are met. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy 1.1 for more information.
- All employees will be subject to a probationary period of at least 6 months, work under close supervision of a more experienced member of staff and receive a comprehensive induction (see policy 2.2).

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Buttercups Pre-school
Held on	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024</u>
Date to be reviewed	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2026</u>
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	<u>Jo Reed</u>
Role of signatory	<u>Chair Person</u>

Staff/Committee Member	Date read	Signature
Sue Fuller		
Christine Fletcher		
Charlotte Chilvers		
Sarah Jacobs		
Ruby Kilvington		