

3. Safer Recruitment

Early Years Foundation Stage -2025 Statutory Guidance: Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

Guidance for this policy has been taken from the EYFS Statutory Framework (DfE, 2025), Inspecting Safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings, Working Together to Safeguard Children, March 2026, Equality Act 2010, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

Signed by (Trustee): Diane McVey

Date: 28.05.2026

Next Review: 31.05.2027

Review date	Description	Proposed by	Approved by
19.12.22	No amendments required	Sadie Clarke (Centre Manager)	John Keighery
April 2023	Minor amendments by John Keighery	John Keighery	John Keighery/ Catherine Cook
April 2024	No amendments required	Sadie Clarke (Centre Manager)	Diane McVey
May 2025	Updated to include; Social media checks on shortlisted candidates. Information on how long recruitment records are kept	Sadie Clarke (Centre Manager)	Diane Mcvey
21.08.25	Updated to include more detail about references from EYFS 2025	(Sadie Clarke) Centre Manager	Catherine Cook (CEO)
27.10.25	Updated student reference requirement	(Sadie Clarke) Centre Manager	Catherine Cook (CEO)
28.05.2026	Guidance section updated to reflect WTTSC 2026 and other guidance sources Updated information re social media checks Strengthened wording around candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK Included sentence about ensuring that relevant staff are not disqualified from childcare	Kirsty Perry (Family Support Manager)	Catherine Cook (CEO)

Review of Policy

The Centre Manager will review the content of this policy every year or earlier in the event that there are changes in legislation or as a result of a change in good practice. Every effort will be made to give reasonable notice of any changes to this Policy but the right is reserved to make amendments without further notice should circumstances warrant it.

Context

The Peter Pan Centre recognises and understands that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. All organisations should work together effectively to promote the welfare and safety of children and to prevent harm and exploitation as all children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential into adulthood.

We therefore recognise the importance of safe and robust recruitment and selection procedures when employing a new member of staff and recruiting volunteers. This policy aims to

- Ensure a consistent and fair approach to recruitment and selection
- Ensure compliance with statutory responsibilities to carry out checks that enable a decision to be taken on the suitability of staff who work with children
- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance and legal obligations
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children
- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies

Key Principles

- Only applications submitted on the allocated application form will be considered
- Only the highest achieving candidates will be appointed
- The selection process will conform to all legal and statutory requirements and will reflect the importance of safeguarding children
- The appointing manager will ensure that other staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of safer recruitment procedures
- All appointments are subject to a DBS, reference, identity and eligibility checks
- References will be sought to be obtained before interviews, however where this is not possible, the successful candidate will be subject to a conditional offer of employment until references have been checked

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and the Centre Manager in conjunction with all other staff involved in the recruitment process to

- Ensure that the charity operates Safe Recruitment procedures
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at the Centre
- To monitor contractors and agencies in compliance with this policy

- Ensure that any applicants known to a member of staff are declared by the member of staff as soon as they are aware of the application, to ensure fair selection procedures
- Ensure that recruitment processes are reviewed annually, sooner if required by legislation or guidance
- Ensure there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within the Centre
- Ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel has undertaken safer recruitment training

Recruitment decisions will not normally be made by one individual. There must be consensus of at least 2 senior managers in making appointments.

Recruitment and Selection Panel

Consultation

Prior to a vacancy post being advertised, the Chief Executive and Centre Manager will meet to discuss the requirements of the post. This will include discussions around qualifications, job description and person specification required to meet the needs of the children and the available post. The interview process must be finalised. Any agreed post vacancies will be agreed by Trustees.

Early Years Staff- A formal interview will be arranged. During the interview the candidate will be asked to spend a practical session of the interview within the nursery room.

Support Staff – A formal interview will be arranged and will include a task or activity.

Volunteers- A more informal interview will be arranged, during the interview the candidate will be asked to spend a practical session of the interview within the nursery room.

Job descriptions and Person Specifications

The Chief Executive and Centre Manager will set aside time for planning and structuring the recruitment process to

- Have a clear job role and person specification, clearly detailing boundaries and expectations of the role, including a statement of responsibility and requirements for Safeguarding
- Clearly state messages about safeguarding, including links to the safeguarding policy in every vacancy advert
- Use application forms, not CVs

Advertisements

Adverts for all posts will include the Centre's commitment to Safeguarding and highlight the fact that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of offenders Act. Available positions are subject to the following conditions:

- 1.Receipt of two satisfactory references
- 2.Receipt of satisfactory DBS disclosure
- 3.Compliance with the relevant statutory provisions e.g. health and safety requirements
- 4.Adherence to the Company's policies, procedures, terms and conditions

References

- The Chief Executive and Centre Manager are responsible for collecting and storing candidate references
- Two references will be requested, one must be from a current or most recent employer (or the last time the applicant worked with children, if not currently working with children), training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority. This applies to staff and volunteers. For students we will aim to seek two references, however, for students on short placements one reference will suffice (assuming it meets our reference criteria.)
- Open references will not be accepted, and we will not accept references from a family member
- Confirmation will be sought of the applicants' current job role and responsibilities as described in the application form and relevant period of employment is verified
- All requests for references will enclose a copy of the job description and person specification
- References will ask the referee to state whether they are aware of anything that might give rise for concern about the person's suitability to work with children, and if so to provide details. Information regarding any disciplinary action taken will be asked for
- References will be used to confirm details provided by the applicant in the application form e.g. experience and qualifications
- References will always be sought directly from the referee
- Electronic references are checked that they originate from a legitimate source.
- Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone in order to clarify any anomalies, discrepancies or to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient. A detailed written note of conversation will be kept.
- References will be sought to be obtained before interviews, however where this is not possible, the successful candidate will be subject to a conditional offer of employment until references have been checked and verified.

Shortlisting

Members of the interviewing panel will assign time to read all applications. A 'shortlisting requirements' form will be completed, based on the job descriptions and person specifications. Panel members must mark all candidates based on their suitability for the post with reference to the job description and person specification.-

Internet and social media checks will be carried out on shortlisted candidates. These checks will only consider information relevant to the candidate's suitability to work with children and will not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics.

Those who are shortlisted for the position will be contacted to arrange a date for the interview.

Formal Interview

The formal interview panel will be agreed by the appointing manager prior to the interview day. Members of the panel will agree upon a number of questions before the interview based

on the person specification. Panel members will be allocated to ask each question, notes will be made by all panel members during the formal and practical aspect of the interview.

Candidates will always be required to

- Explain any gaps in employment
- Explain any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel
- Declare any information regarding self-disclosures
- Demonstrate their capacity and commitment to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people
- Bring with them evidence of their identity, and qualifications. Original documents will be accepted only
- Recruitment records relating to unsuccessful candidates will be stored securely and destroyed after 12 months in accordance with the Centre's Data Protection Policy.

Offer of Appointment

The appointing manager will

- Verify a candidate's identity, following the DBS identity checking guidelines
- Obtain a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information where the person will be engaging in regulated activity
- If the appointed candidate commences work prior to a completed DBS, they will be fully supervised at all times and undertake no intimate care routines.
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK
- Where a candidate has lived or worked outside the UK, the Centre will obtain criminal record information or a certificate of good conduct from the relevant country wherever available, alongside any other checks considered necessary.
- Verify professional qualifications by requesting certificate of evidence as appropriate

The Centre will ensure that all relevant staff are suitable to work with children and are not disqualified from childcare in accordance with current EYFS requirements and relevant legislation.