

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY (March 2024)

Policy statement

At Riding Mill Outdoor Preschool we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures aiming to ensure that all people working looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role. We have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with children are suitable.

We follow this procedure each and every time we recruit a new member of staff to join our team.

Procedures

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 including our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

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 preschool or is still under investigation. Please refer to the child protection/safeguarding policy for further information.

Notifying Ofsted of changes

We inform Ofsted of any changes to our Registered Person and our leader.

Advertising

- We use reputable newspapers, websites, job sites and the local job centre to advertise for any vacancies and the local area.
- We ensure that all recruitment literature includes details of our equal opportunities policy and our safe recruitment procedures; including an enhanced DBS check and at least two independent references for every new employee. We also include the requirement for an additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.
- We work towards offering equality of opportunity by using non-discriminatory procedures for staff recruitment and selection.
- All our staff have job descriptions, which set out their roles and responsibilities.
- We welcome applications from all sections of the community.
- Applicants will be considered on the basis 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. Applicants will not be placed at a disadvantage by our imposing conditions or requirements that are not justifiable.

Interview stage

- We shortlist all suitable candidates against a pre-set specification and ensure all applicants receive correspondence regardless of whether they are successful in reaching the interview stage or not
- All shortlisted candidates receive a job description, a person specification, an equal opportunities monitoring form and a request for identification prior to the interview. The Chair decides the most appropriate people for the interview panel. There will be at least two people involved in the overall decision making
- At the start of each interview all candidates' identities are checked using, for example, their passport and/or photo card driving licence. All candidates are required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK. The interview will also cover any gaps in the candidate's employment history
- All candidates reaching the interview stage are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. These cover specific areas of childcare, including safeguarding the children in their care, planning suitable activities to enhance the child's development and their understanding of the legal frameworks applied to childcare and used in the pre school. The questions are value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as RMOP with regards to the safety and welfare of the children in their care.
- Shortlisted candidates will be expected to spend time in the pre school interacting with the children, staff and where appropriate parents prior to interview.
- Every candidate will receive communication from RMOP stating whether they have been successful or not. Unsuccessful candidates are offered feedback.

Starting work

- The successful candidate will be offered the position subject to at least two references from previous employment or, in the case of a newly qualified student, their tutor and a personal or professional reference. These references will be taken up BEFORE employment commences. This may be verbal initially and then followed up with a written reference which will form part of their personnel file
- The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked and copies taken for their personnel files where applicable
- RMOP reserves the right to take any further advice necessary in relation to a person's physical and mental fitness to carry out their role. Please see the absence management policy for more details about how RMOP manages health problems including access to medical records
- All new starters, other than those who have registered for the continuous updating service (see below), will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will be initiated before the member of staff commences work in RMOP and they will not have unsupervised access to any child or their records before this check comes back clear. Further to

this, the new starter will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, look at their learning and development log or change the nappy of any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check (whether supervised or not) . The DBS check is carried out through <http://UKCRBs.co.uk> by committee member Jen Stephenson.

- An additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) should also be made for anyone who has lived or worked abroad.

- RMOP will record and retain details about the individual including staff qualifications, identity checks carried out and the vetting process completed. This will include the disclosure and barring service reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it, along with details of our suitability decision. RMOP will not retain copies of the disclosure itself once the employment decision is taken.

- There may be occasions when a DBS check is not clear, but the individual is still suitable to work with children. This will be treated on an individual case basis and at the leader/committee's discretion taking into account the following:

- seriousness of the offence or other information

- accuracy of the person's self-disclosure on the application form

- nature of the appointment including levels of supervision

- age of the individual at the time of the offence or other information

- the length of time that has elapsed since the offence or other information

- relevance of the offence or information to working or being in regular contact with children.

- Where an individual is subscribed to the DBS Update Service we 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.

- New starters are required to sign (either application form, contract or separate form) to state that they have no criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or unsuitable to do so

- Our staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children - whether received before, or at any time during, their employment with us.

- We obtain consent from our staff and volunteers to carry out on-going status checks of the Update Service to establish that their DBS certificate is up-to-date for the duration of their employment with us.

- Where we become aware of any relevant information which may lead to the disqualification of an employee, we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children. In the event of disqualification, that person's employment with us will be terminated.

- All new members of staff will undergo a 2 week intensive induction period during which time they will read and discuss the RMOP policies and procedures and be assigned a 'mentor' who will introduce them to the way in which RMOP operates .During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedure, emergency evacuation procedures, equality policy and health and safety issues

- The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the leader/mentor during their

induction period to discuss their progress, support required and/or further training and professional development opportunities.

Ongoing support and checks

- All staff are responsible for notifying the RMOP leader in person if there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children. This includes any incidents occurring outside the preschool. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the leader immediately
- It is recommended that staff use the updating system during their employment
- There are more details about how RMOP deals with any health problems in the absence management policy
- The leader/committee 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. Please see the Disciplinary Policy for further details
- Every member of staff will have an annual meeting with the leader: a formal appraisal This will provide an opportunity for the leader and member of staff to discuss training needs for the following year as well as evaluate and discuss their performance in the previous year.

Training and staff development

- Our leader and deputy hold the CACHE Level 3 Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce or an equivalent qualification and all of our other staff members hold the CACHE Level 2 Certificate for the Children and Young People's Workforce or an equivalent or higher qualification.
- We provide regular in-service training to all our staff - whether paid staff or volunteers - through the Early Years Alliance, Northumberland County Council and external agencies.
- Our budget allocates resources to training via the SLA with Northumberland County Council.
- We provide our staff with induction training in the first week of their employment. This induction includes our Health and Safety Policy and Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy. Other policies and procedures are introduced within an induction plan.
- All staff are trained in paediatric first aid and regularly update their training.
- We support the work of our staff by holding regular supervision meetings, appraisals and staff meetings.
- We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice
- RMOP will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.

Staff taking medication/other substances

- If a member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, we ensure that they seek further medical advice. Our staff will only work directly with the children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children properly.
- Staff medication on the premises will be stored securely and kept out of reach of the children at all times.
- If we have reason to believe that a member of our staff is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may affect their ability to care for children, they will not be allowed to work directly with the children and further action will be taken

Students

- We recognise that qualifications and training make an important contribution to the quality of the care and education we provide. As part of our commitment to quality, we offer placements to students undertaking early years qualifications and training. We also offer placements for school pupils on work experience.
- We aim to provide for students on placement with us, experiences that contribute to the successful completion of their studies and that provide examples of quality practice in early years care and education.
- We require students on qualification courses to meet the Suitable Person requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and have a satisfactory enhanced DBS check with barred list check(s).
- We require students in our setting to have a sufficient understanding and use of English to contribute to the well-being of children in our care.
- We require schools, colleges or universities placing students under the age of 17 years with us to vouch for their good character.
- We supervise students under the age of 17 years at all times and do not allow them to have unsupervised access to children.
- Students undertaking qualification courses who are placed in our setting on a short-term basis are not counted in our staffing ratios.
- Students and apprentices, over the age of 17, who are undertaking a level 3 qualification may be considered to be counted in the ratios if our leader deems them to be suitably qualified and experienced.
- We take out employers' liability insurance and public liability insurance, which covers both students and voluntary helpers.
- We co-operate with students' tutors in order to help students to fulfil the requirements of their course of study.
- We provide students, at the first session of their placement, with a short induction on how our setting is managed, how our sessions are organised and our policies and procedures.
- We communicate a positive message to students about the value of qualifications and training.
- We make the needs of the children paramount by not admitting students in numbers that hinder the essential work of the setting.

-We ensure that trainees and students placed with us are engaged in bona fide early years training, which provides the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.

Volunteers

-Our outdoor pre-school warmly welcomes parents and carers to volunteer their time.

-No volunteers will be left alone with our children nor will they be involved in any intimate care of the children.

-Offers of volunteering from the wider community will be assessed on a case by case basis and will depend on the qualification and skills of the individual.

-The needs of the children will always be paramount and any potential effects on the smooth-running of our preschool will be taken into account.

-Regular volunteers will receive a short induction on how our sessions are organised, how preschool is managed and our policies and procedures