2.8 Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Statement

St Christopher's Playgroup takes it's commitment to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People very seriously and expects all staff, students and volunteers to do the same.

We aim to ensure that all people working with children are suitable to do so and we are therefore extremely vigilant when recruiting new staff to join our team.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of a recruitment process that aims to:

- Attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- Deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people
- Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children or young people.

The appointment of all employees will be made on merit and in accordance with the provisions of Employment Law, Keeping Children Safe in Education. We will ensure that people are treated solely on the basis of their abilities and potential and will comply with the requirements of DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education.

We have a member of staff who is trained on Safer Recruitment and will be present at any interviews held. This person should renew their training every two years to keep up with any changes. Our Safer Recruitment Lead is

Karen Cookes – Playgroup Manager

1. **Advertising a Job Vacancy**

All job vacancy posts will be advertised to ensure equality of opportunity and encourage as wider field of candidates as possible. This will mean placing an advert externally. However, should we feel there is sufficient, suitably qualified internal candidates vacancies may be advertised internally also. Any internal recruitment process will follow the procedures set out in this policy. All advertisements for posts whether paid or unpaid will include our company's safeguarding statement.

2. **Information for Applicants**

All applicants for job vacancies will be provided with:

- A Job Description, outlining the duties of the post, including our Safeguarding statement
- A Personal Specification including essential and desirable criteria
- An Application Form
- An outline of terms of employment such as hours of work, rate of pay etc
- The closing date for the receipt of applications.

3. **Shortlisting Candidates**

The Manager and Chair of the Committee (or another member of the Committee/Senior staff in Chair's absence) will shortlist applicants for the post and agree which ones will be invited to interview. The criteria for selection will be consistently applied to all applicants.

4. **Interviews**

Before the interviews, the Manager and Chair (or other committee/staff member who will be on the interview panel) will agree on the interview format and the questions to be asked. Interviews will always be face-to-face.

Candidates invited to interview will receive:

- An email or phone call confirming the interview
- Details of the interview process
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process
- The opportunity to ask any questions or discuss the process prior to the interview

Candidates will be asked to bring the following along to their interview

- Photographic ID such as a passport or drivers licence
- Proof of address such as a utility bill
- Any certificates that may be relevant to the post such as a childcare qualification or valid Safeguarding or Paediatric First Aid certificates
- A current DBS certificate that is subscribed to the Update Service

The questions asked in the interview will be aimed at obtaining evidence of how each candidate meets the requirement of the Job Description and each candidate will be assessed against all of the criteria for the post. Candidates will all be asked the same questions. No questions which would discriminate directly or indirectly on protected characteristics under The Equality Act will be asked.

The selection process for every post will include exploration of the candidates understanding of child protection and safeguarding issues.

Candidates will always be required to:

- Explain any gaps in their employment history
- Declare any information that is likely to appear on a DBS disclosure
- Demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people

5. **Offer of Employment**

The offer of employment and acceptance by the successful candidate is binding on both parties. A conditional offer will be made subject to the completion of the Safer Recruitment Policy checks and satisfactory references. The candidate will be informed by letter or telephone call that the appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of these checks.

These include:

- Verifying a candidates identity from current, original photo ID and original proof of address if not already done so at the interview
- Obtaining a certificate for an enhanced DBS check with a barred list information or checking a current certificate with the Update Service for any new information recorded. If the applicant is not subscribed to the update service then a new DBS check must be carried out.
- Verifying the candidate's right to work in the UK
- Making any further checks that we consider appropriate, if the candidate has lived or worked outside of the UK
- Verifying professional qualifications as appropriate
- A candidate must not start employment until the DBS check has been completed and certificate received.

6. **Reference Requests**

A conditional offer will be made subject to satisfactory references. References named on the candidates application form will be contacted. We will send them a pro forma reference request form that must be completed.

- At least two references will need to be obtained, one of which must be from the candidate's current or most recent employer
- We will not accept references from family members
- At least one must be in written form, the other can be a telephone call which is recorded

- Candidates are entitled to see and receive copies of their employment references and should request these from their referees
- References should be sought directly from the referee and will be contacted via telephone also to verify them and where necessary to clarify and anomalies or discrepancies
- If a candidate for a post working with children is not currently employed in a post working with children, a reference will be sought from the most recent employment in which the candidate has worked with children to confirm details of the candidates employment and their reasons for leaving
- if a candidate has applied straight from education and has no previous employment the we will accept a reference from a senior person at school/college along with a personal reference as long as it is not from a family member
- References received must be to the standard of St Christopher's Playgroup - excellent and good gradings for all areas of the applicant's performance.

Reference requests will ask the referee to confirm in writing:

- The referee's name, role and relationship to the candidate
- Details of the candidate's current post
- The candidate's performance history and conduct
- Whether the candidate has been subject disciplinary action relating to the safety and welfare of children, including where the sanction has expired, and the outcome of this
- Details of any substantiated allegations or concerns about the candidate relating to the safety and welfare of children
- Whether the referee has any reservations as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people
- The candidate's suitability for the post with reference to the Job Description

7. **Documentation of Checks**

All checks will be;

- Documented and retained on their personal file
- Recorded on the Staff Central Record
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received

A Staff Personnel File and Staff Central Record will be retained securely and confidentially for the duration of the candidates employment. These will include the following:

- Application form signed by the applicant
- Interview notes

- References
- Proof of Identity
- Proof of right to work in the UK
- Proof of relevant qualifications
- Evidence of DBS clearance and barred list if applicable (DBS certificates are not kept on file, just a record of the certificate number and issue date)
- Signed contract of Employment
- Job Description and Personal Specification

8. **Induction Process**

Once all checks are completed and satisfactory, all new employees will go through a robust induction programme which will cover relevant matters of the Playgroup such as Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures, Whistleblowing, Health and Safety policies, Staff Code of Conduct and guidance on Safer Working Practices.

9. **Volunteers**

Volunteers who help on a regular basis will have a short interview and induction covering our policies on Safeguarding, Child Protection and Whistleblowing. They will sign a Volunteer's Job Description. Volunteers who help on an occasional basis such as parent duty rota and trips are supervised in accordance with current legislation. Volunteers in regular contact with children must now have an Enhanced DBS check

10. **Ongoing Suitability Checks**

During the employees employment with us they will be subject to ongoing suitability checks. This includes;

- Regular DBS checks via the Update Service to see if any new information has been recorded (at least three times a year during staff appraisals and supervisions)
- Employee to sign an annual declaration to confirm that they are still suitable to work with children eg, no new convictions or police information etc.
- We will pay for an employees original DBS if this is required when they accept a job offer but the employee must pay for the fee to subscribe to the update service and it is their responsibility to make sure this is paid annually.

11. **Training**

New staff will be asked to complete mandatory training as soon as possible once their employment starts in Safeguarding Children and Young People and Paediatric First Aid and will be renewed

before their expiry date. Training in other areas of Safeguarding and Welfare of children is made available to staff.

12. **Notification to Ofsted**

If the appointee is employed in the position of Manager, their details will be communicated with Ofsted

Related Policies

1.2 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

2.2 Induction of Staff, Volunteers and Managers

2.4 Recruitment Policy

2.5 Supervision of Employees and Volunteers

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	St Christopher's Playgroup	name of setting
Held on	September 2026	(date)
Date to be reviewed	September 2027	(date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	KJCookes	
Name of signatory	Karen Cookes	
Role of signatory (chair)	Playgroup Manager	