



St. Thomas a Becket Nursery School
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Registered Charity No. 1097448

Safe Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Responsibility: Nursery Lead / Trustees

Review Cycle: Every two years

Date of adoption / last review:	Signed / Role	Date of next review:
January 2024	CJH	January 2026

St Thomas a Becket Nursery **Safe Recruitment of Staff Policy**

Policy Statement

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/supporting-safer-recruitment-in-the-early-years-and-education-sector>

St Thomas a Becket Nursery are committed to protecting children from child abuse and from those who abuse children, and why this is relevant to safer recruitment. It is important to understand that there are individuals who wish harm to children and Safer Recruitment practice is necessary to prevent unsuitable people working with children; promote safe practice and provide a safe environment for children to grow and learn in.

We are vigilant in our recruitment procedures, promoting a 'best practice' approach to safer recruitment within our nursery right from the outset of advertising a vacancy. We ensure all people working with children are suitable to do so. We follow this procedure each and every time we recruit a new member to join our team.

Our Safer Recruitment procedures involve:

- The recruitment process of volunteers and employees;
- Supervision and Management of new employees and volunteers.

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

Information

Adults who intend to cause children harm often hide their behaviour and true intentions. A predatory adult will purposely seek out vulnerable children to build relationships with to create opportunities to commit child abuse. Children instinctively trust adults they know and nursery aged children do not yet possess the skills to recognise a predatory adult behaviours. Vulnerable children are at a heightened risk in their seeking attention and affection from any source.

Information sharing is key and following the Bichard Inquiry into the deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman, a police national database was created allowing all forces across the country to store and share intelligence on individuals. The inquiry also established the key principles and practices for safer recruitment from that day onwards and recommended a registration scheme for people working with children and vulnerable adults.

Safer Recruitment processes enable us to:
Safeguard all children and staff in our setting;
Provide a safe environment for all;
Ensure our nursery has qualified staff and safe employees.

Process

We acknowledge and practice 3 key steps to safer recruitment :

Deter
Reject
Prevent

Deter - Advertising

We ensure that recruitment literature includes details of our commitment to safeguarding, equal opportunities culture and our safe recruitment procedures; we are clear in any advert that we place that our organisation has a rigorous recruitment process **including the need to provide an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check and at least two independent references for every new employee.**

We use reputable newspapers, websites and the local job centre to advertise for any vacancies such as those noted below (list is not exhaustive):

- Local Paper
- School and Nursery Newsletters
- Job Centre

Applicants pack

The management decide what is wanted and the following items will be set to applicants:

- Job Description
- Terms and Conditions
- Person Specification (Essential and Desirable Criteria)
- Full Application Form, requesting Personal Details, Education and Training, Employment History, References – including current or most recent employer, Signed Declaration.

Reject - Shortlisting

- We shortlist all suitable candidates against a pre-set Essential and Desirable criteria specification and ensure all applicants receive correspondence regardless of whether they are successful in reaching the interview stage or not
- We identify suitability for the role and working with children, any gaps or inconsistencies in information through the above
- The top applicants who meet the essential criteria should be interviewed.
- Candidates will be informed if we carry out any digital screening (as additional due diligence) by doing an online / social media search
- We obtain references prior to the interview where permission is given for this
- All shortlisted candidates will receive an invitation for interview and a request for identification at their interview date.

Prevent - Proof of Identity

- 2 of the following will be requested: passport, driving licence or birth certificate.

Qualification Certificates

- Interviewees will be asked to show the originals of their certificates of qualifications or certified duplicates for checking. Photocopies are not acceptable but will be taken for our own records.

Interview

- At least one of either the Nursery Lead or the Nursery Manager will have attended Safer Recruitment Training and will be present on the interviewing panel. There will be at least two people, and a maximum of three, from the following list: the Nursery Lead, Nursery Manager and a Trustee. All interview panel members are involved in the overall decision making
- At the start of each interview all candidates' identities will be checked.
- All candidates will be required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK.
- Candidates are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. The interview will cover any gaps in the candidate's employment history, 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 nursery. The questions will be value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as the nursery with regards to the safety and welfare of the children in their care.
- All interviews will include a statement about our dedication to protecting children in our care and a candidate question about their knowledge of safeguarding and an example of safeguarding practice.
- Candidates will be given a score for their answers including a score for their individual experience and qualifications. Only information provided by applicants during the interview will be used in the selection process.
- Every shortlisted candidate will be asked to take part in a supervised practical exercise which will involve spending time in a particular age group in the nursery interacting with the children, staff and where appropriate parents
- The panel will then select the most suitable person for this position based on these scores and their knowledge and understanding of the early years framework as well as the needs of the nursery

- Every candidate will receive communication from the nursery stating whether they have been successful or not. Unsuccessful candidates are offered feedback if requested.
- Volunteers will receive a lighter interview format but be asked key questions about why they are applying for the volunteering role that they have expressed an interest in.

Pre – Employment checks

- 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, or in the case of a volunteer one personal and one professional reference. These references will be taken up BEFORE employment / volunteering commences and are via a set proforma which asks confirmation of:
 - Dates of employment
 - Any conduct issues, resolved or outstanding. Further information would be sought from the employer or the candidate before any further activity takes place.
 - Any concerns, including specifically any reasons why the candidate should not work with children and families
 - Referees views on applicants suitability to the job (JD included with reference request)

In the event of non-returned written references, these will be followed up by email initially, then may be sought verbally and final further request for a written reference, which will form part of the candidates personnel file. Any queries about references will be followed up by the Nursery Lead or Nursery Manager.

- The candidates eligibility to work in the UK will be checked if they were born overseas or recently moved to the UK.
- A copy of the successful candidate's qualifications and training certificates will be copied for their personnel file.
- Prior to employment but after the job has been offered a health check questionnaire will be given to the employee and its results will be taken into account in making an overall decision about suitability. The nursery reserves the right to take any further advice necessary in relation to a person's physical and mental fitness to carry out their role in respect of the children's welfare and safety.
- 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. [About us - Disclosure and Barring Service - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
This will be applied for before the member of staff commences work in the nursery. No new starter will have unsupervised access to any child or their individual child and family records before this check comes back clear. Further to this, the new starter will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, (strict setting approved devices only policy in place), look at children's learning and development logs, or provide personal or intimate care to any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check (whether supervised or not).
- If the individual has registered on the DBS update service managers will use the update service to perform a status check (with the candidate's permission) instead of carrying out an enhanced DBS check
<https://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service>
- Overseas checks will be carried out for candidates with employment or residential periods in countries other than England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man if these periods are subsequent to their last DBS check.

- The Nursery consider it their legal duty to report to the DBS, any applicant whom nursery have a genuine concern as to their unsuitability to be working with children.
- The nursery will record and retain details about the individual including staff qualifications, identity checks carried out – ID, reference numbers and person checking the ID, and the vetting process completion. This will include the disclosure and barring service reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it. The nursery will not retain copies of the disclosure itself once the employment decision is taken
- There may be occasions when a DBS check has a confidential disclosure but the individual is still suitable to work with children. This will be treated on an individual case basis and strictly at the manager'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

A discussion will be held with the candidate and support will be sought from the DBS website or ESCC in the event of uncertainty arising from a disclosure.

Induction

- All new members of staff will undergo an induction period.
- Please see our Induction Policy and checklist for full detail as to what the induction process covers.
- The induction will include read and discussing the Staff Code of Conduct and the nursery policies and procedures.
- New starters will be assigned a 'mentor/ buddy' who will introduce them to the way in which the nursery operates.
- During their induction period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow all Safeguarding Children/Child Protection (includes information about Prevent, child sexual and criminal exploitation, acceptable use of ICT), DSL names and role and Whistleblowing policies and procedures, emergency evacuation procedures, equality of opportunity, policy and health and safety issues. Please see our separate Induction Policy and Checklist.
- The new member of staff will receive regular support from the manager and their room mentor during their induction period to ensure and discuss their progress.
- The induction period is an opportunity to monitor and identify any issues of concern or gaps in the new employees knowledge. Arising issues will be dealt with as soon as possible with records kept of any concerns and resolutions.

Contract

A contract will be issued with a statement of Terms and Conditions within 2 months of starting date. Contract to include the following terms and conditions:

- Names of employer and employee
- Date when the employment commenced
- Length of probation period
- If employment is not intended to be continuous
- Rate of pay and method of calculating pay

- How often it will be paid (weekly, monthly) and how (by direct debit)
- Job title or job description
- Place/location of work
- Hours of work and holiday entitlement
- Entitlement to sick leave
- Pensions or pension schemes
- Length of notice required by each side

Ongoing support and checks

- All staff are responsible for notifying the manager in person if any there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children. This includes any incidents occurring outside the nursery.
- Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the manager **immediately**.
- Staff wellbeing is enquired about at each supervision to ensure management have a good knowledge of any changes that may require support or additional resources to aid them to carry out their day-to-day duties. Management may require this more regularly where health circumstances change. There are more details about how the nursery deals with any health problems in the absence management policy.
- The Nursery Lead and Manager 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. This may include requiring the individual to obtain a waiver from Ofsted in relation to any disqualification. Please see the Disciplinary Policy for further details
- Every member of staff will have regular supervisions with the manager. This will provide an opportunity for the manager and member of staff to discuss training needs for the following year as well as evaluate and discuss their performance in the previous year.
- The Manager and Deputies/Room Leaders will be responsible for any support the staff team may have between these reviews. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, ongoing supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback
- The nursery will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.