



# Safer Recruitment Policy

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October 2021

To be reviewed October 2022

## Introduction

This policy statement is a vital part of Riverside Nursery Schools overarching safeguarding policies and procedures. It sets out our organisations commitment to recruiting staff and volunteers who are suitable to work with children.

This policy is intended to ensure the prioritisation of children's welfare and safety. Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd are committed to providing the best care and education to the children in our care whilst always ensuring safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd, will ensure that it meets its commitments under both the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Disqualification Under the Child Care Act 2006, when undertaking recruitment of new or promoted staff as well as paying due regard to Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) September 2021.

## Aims and Objectives

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd recognises that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

The aims of this safer recruitment policy is:

- To ensure that the most suited staff are recruited on the basis of their qualifications, experience, capability and overall suitability for the position.
- To ensure that all job applications are considered equally and consistently according to our organisations equal opportunities policy.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance – EYFS, KCSIE, Working together to Safeguard Children
- To ensure that the Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

## Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd to

- Ensure the nursery schools have effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with current DfE statutory guidance and legal requirements.
- To ensure that at least one member of staff on any interview panel is safer recruitment trained.
- Monitor each Nursery Schools compliance with them.



It is the responsibility of the Principal, Nursery Managers, HR Manager and other managers involved in recruitment to

- Ensure that the Nursery Schools operate safe recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work within Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd.
- To monitor contractors and agencies compliance with this policy document.
- Promote welfare with children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Riverside Nursery Schools has delegated responsibility to the Principal and each Nursery Manager to lead in all appointments relating to their specific setting within Riverside Nursery Schools. Other managers e.g., Deputy Managers may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the appropriate Nursery Manager and Principal of Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd.

All employees who are involved in and responsible for recruitment and selection of new staff members, are responsible for familiarising themselves and complying with the provisions of this policy.

## **Recruitment and Selection Procedure**

### **Advertising**

To ensure equal opportunities, Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd advertises all vacant roles encouraging as wide a field of applicants as possible. The external job boards used regularly are: Nursery World, Reed, CV Library, The Guardian, Linked In, Facebook Groups & Montessori Jobs.

All job advertisements contain a clear statement of Riverside's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the Riverside Nursery Schools data protection policy and employee privacy notice, which are in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

### **Equality Diversity and Inclusion**

Riverside Nursey Schools are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion at all stages of recruitment and selection. We always carry out shortlisting, interviewing and selection without regard to an applicant's sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, skin colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership.

We will never exclude any candidate with a disability unless it is clear that the candidate is unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments.

To prevent any candidate from being disadvantaged because of a disability, the individual responsible for communicating with applicants should ask each candidate whether or not they require any reasonable adjustments to be made.

The HR Manager is available to provide guidance on reasonable adjustments.

### **Application Forms**

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd use their own application form and all applicants for employment will be required to complete this application form containing questions about their full academic and full employment history, and their suitability for the role (in addition, all applicants are required to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history).

**Applicants submitting an incomplete application form will not be short listed.**

The application form includes the applicant's declaration regarding convictions and working with children. It is unlawful for Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd to employ anyone who is barred



from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position at the Nursery Schools. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and/or DBS and/or LADO.

### **Job Descriptions**

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the process. It clearly and accurately outlines the duties and responsibilities of the job role.

All Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd job descriptions contain a clear statement of Riverside's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

### **References**

References will be taken up on successful candidates immediately after interview. All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory by the Nursery School. One of the two references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second reference should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children.

The referee should not be a relative. References will always be sought or obtained directly from the referee and their purpose is to provide objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the role for which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.

Please note that no questions will be asked about health or medical fitness prior to any offer of employment being made.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd does not accept open references, testimonials, or references from relatives.

### **Interviews**

Riverside Nursery Schools will invite all shortlisted candidates to a face-to-face interview where possible. A minimum of two interviewers will see the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the interviewers to explore anomalies or gaps which have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action, or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process, if it has been disclosed on the application form.

At least one member of any interview panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training or refresher training as applicable.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken.

Candidates will be asked to bring:

- Either current driving licence, passport or full birth certificate
- A utility bill or statement, showing name and address within 3 months
- Documentation showing their national insurance number (NI card, P45 or P60)





- Documents confirming any educational or professional qualifications referred to in their application form.
- Eligibility to work in the UK for example work Visas or post Brexit settlement documentation.
- Their criminal history (disclosing anything that will show up on a DBS)

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll, the correct documentation will be requested.

Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed 6 months after the recruitment process.

### **Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process**

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the formal interview, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of an employment agreement incorporating the Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd standard terms and conditions of employment;
- Verification of the applicant's identity (if not already verified);
- The receipt of two references which the Nursery School considers to be satisfactory according to the reference requirements stated above;
- The receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS including barred information, which the Nursery Schools considers to be satisfactory;
- Confirmation that the applicant is not names on the Children's Barred List; Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from working in a position which involves regular contact with children; and including the requirement of the Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 for working in a child care setting.
- Confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent education institution (if the person has been appointed or promoted to a management position)
- Verification of the applicant's medical fitness for the role;
- Verification of the applicants right to work in the UK;
- Any further checks which are necessary

A personnel file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with and relevant to our safer recruitment procedure. The checklist will be retained on personnel files.

### **DBS Check**

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd applies for an enhanced disclosure from the DBS in respect of all positions within the organisation. It is the organisations policy that the DBS disclosure must be obtained before the commencement of the employment of any new employee. For any reason that this is not obtained, before the mutually agreed start date, the employee will be supervised at all times by a senior member of staff when around children.

Staff may wish to join the DBS update service if they are likely to require another check in the future. Applicants may sign up to the service for a fee of £13 per year, this is payable by the applicant.

This allows for portability of a certificate across employers. The organisation will:

- Obtain consent from the applicant to carry out an update search
- Confirm the certificate matches the individual's identity
- Examine the original certificate to ensure that it is for the appropriate workforce and level of check i.e., enhanced certificate.

### **Dealing with convictions**





Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence;
- How long ago the offence occurred;
- One-off or history of offences;
- Changes in circumstances;
- Decriminalisation and remorse.

If an applicant wishes to dispute any information contained in a disclosure, they may do so by contacting the DBS. In cases where the applicant would otherwise be offered a position were it not for the disputed information, the organisation may, where practicable and at its discretion defer a final decision about the appointment until the applicant has had a reasonable opportunity to challenge the disclosure information.

#### **Medical fitness**

Riverside Nursery Schools are legally required to verify the medical fitness, to carry out any role applied for effectively, of anyone to be appointed to a post in the organisation, after an offer of employment has been made, but before the appointment can be confirmed.

All applicants are requested to complete a medical questionnaire and where appropriate a doctor's medical report may be required. This information will be reviewed against the job description and the person specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements for the role.

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd are aware of their responsibility and duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, obtaining medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.

#### **Overseas checks**

Applicants who have lived or travelled abroad for more than 3 months will need to obtain a criminal record check from the relevant country. If a police check cannot be sought in a timely manner, then references can be sought from professional people residing in that country who knows the applicant such as university tutor, priest etc. The applicant will not be permitted to commence work until the overseas information has been received and is considered satisfactory by the organisation. For any reason that this is not obtained, before the mutually agreed start date, the employee will be supervised at all times by a senior member of staff when around children.

#### **Induction Programme**

All new employees will be inducted effectively through the Riverside Nursery School Ltd induction checklist and with the Riverside Employee Handbook. This clearly outlines and identifies the organisations policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and will make clear the expectations which will govern how staff carry out their roles and responsibilities. Our inductions at Riverside Nursery Schools also include training for all new employee's and a buddy programme where senior staff are paired with a new member to ensure that best practice is relayed and coached from the beginning.

All staff are expected to have read and understood Part 1, Part 4, Part 5, and Annexe A of KCSIE Sept 21.

#### **Single Centralised Register of Members of Staff**

All staff information is kept in individual personnel files and on a single central record in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Riverside Nursery Schools GDPR Policy and Employee Privacy Notice. This is kept up-to-date and retained by the Riverside Nursery Schools Administrator and Bursar.

The Single Central Record will contain information on:





- All employees who are on payroll at Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd;
- All other members who are chosen by Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd to work in regular contact with children. This covers volunteers, governors, other people brought into the school to provide additional teaching, i.e., yoga teacher, sports coach, art teacher etc.

#### **Record Retention/Date Protection**

Riverside Nursery Schools are legally required to undertake the above employment checks, therefore if an applicant is successful in their application, the organisation will retain on their personnel file, any relevant information provided as part of the application process. This is specified and included in the Riverside Nursery Schools Employee Privacy Notice and GDPR Data Protection Policy Statement. All information retained on employees is kept in each of the Riverside Nursery School settings for the particular individual based at the relevant setting. All support staff information is kept at one of the Riverside Nursery School settings. Personnel files are stored in locked and secured cabinets.

This also applies to any suitability information obtained about volunteers or work placement students involved with Riverside Nursery School activities.

Riverside Nursery Schools will retain all interview notes on all unsuccessful applicants for a period of six months, after which time the notes will be confidentially destroyed (i.e., shredded). The 6-month retention period is in accordance with the GDPR DPA18.

#### **Ongoing Employment**

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. The organisation therefore provides ongoing training and support for all staff, as identified through the annual review / appraisal procedure. Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd also offer regular

#### **Leaving Employment at Riverside Nursery Schools**

This policy is primarily concerned with the promotion or safer recruitment and details with the pre-employment checks that will be undertaken prior to employment being confirmed. Whilst these are pre-employment checks the organisation also has a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS and LADO in circumstances where an individual:

- Has applied for a position at the organisation despite being barred from working with children; or
- Has been removed by the organisation from working in regulated activity (whether paid or unpaid), or has resigned prior being removed, because they have harmed or pose a risk of harm to, a child.

#### **Contractors and Agency Staff**

Contractors engaged by Riverside Nursery Schools must complete the same checks for their employees that the organisation is required to complete for its staff. The organisation requires formal written confirmation that these checks have been completed before contractors or employees of the contractor can commence work at the Nursery Schools.

Agencies who supply staff at the Nursery Schools must also complete the pre-employment checks which the organisation would otherwise complete for its staff. Again, the organisation requires formal confirmation in writing that these checks have been completed before an individual can commence work at the Nursery Schools.

Riverside Nursery Schools will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency and will require the provision of the original DBS certificate before contractors or agency staff can commence work at the Nursery Schools.

#### **Volunteers/Work Placements**

Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd will request an enhanced DBS disclosure on all volunteers and work placement students undertaking and work that involved regular contact with children.



Under no circumstances will the organisation permit an unchecked volunteer or work placement student to have unsupervised contact with children.

It is the organisations policy that a new DBS certificate will be required for volunteers or work placement students who will engage in regular contact with the children, but who have not been involved in any activities with the organisation for three consecutive months or more. Those who are likely to be involved in activities with Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd on a regular basis may be required to sign up to the DBS update service as this permits the organisation to obtain up to date criminal records information without delay prior to each new activity in which a volunteer participates.

In addition, Riverside Nursery Schools will seek to obtain such further

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Riverside Nursery Schools Ltd Head of Compliance and HR manager will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated throughout the Nursery School settings.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

