Safeguarding: Recruitment Procedures

Phoenix Early Learners has a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting and follows selection and vetting procedures that include checks into the eligibility and the suitability of all trustees, staff and volunteers who have direct or indirect contact with children.
At the heart of our procedures is the role of the Appointing Manager and their specific responsibilities for managing the process, risk assessment and 'sign off' of all appointments / placements.

- All job descriptions, person specifications and selection criteria will be reviewed by the Appointing Manager prior to advertisement.
- Appropriate selection and testing methods will be drawn up that cover all criteria relevant for the role. This will form the basis of the selection decision.
- A range of specific and detailed checks will be undertaken before appointment begins: DBS, barring list, references, qualifications verification, identity verification. All checks will be signed off by the Appointing Manager.

Appropriate selection and testing methods will be drawn up that cover all criteria. We will obtain key relevant and comprehensive information on all candidates by applying consistent procedures. Suitable probing during interview questioning will be carried out in order to elicit complete responses - probing applicants regarding their motivation to do the work, how they deal with difficult issues and how they maintain safe and appropriate boundaries through professional working relationships. Selection panel members are suitably trained – at least two members of the Interview Panel will have received safer recruitment training.

Recruitment

Obtaining references

As part of our commitment to safer recruitment we obtain references from applicants for roles in Phoenix Early Learners. Robust recruitment checks are essential to ensuring that unsuitable persons cannot have contact with children through employment with us.

Obtaining references is an essential element of our recruitment process. We will always obtain a reference prior to employment commencing in line with the requirements of the EYFS as follows:

- Our application process requires candidates, including those applying for a childminder assistant role, to supply us with the contact details of a suitable referee from:
  - Their current employer, training provider or early years education and care setting
  - A senior person within the organisation who is authorised to provide a reference.
- If the applicant is not currently employed, or is not currently working with children we will:
  - Obtain verification of the applicants most recent relevant employment if they are not currently employed
  - Obtain a reference from the applicants most recent relevant employer from the last time they worked with children
- If the applicant has never worked with children we will obtain a reference from their current employer, training provider or education setting.
- We do not accept references from the following
  - Family members
  - A generic reference i.e. 'to whom it may concern'.

Once a reference is received

- A reference received electronically will be checked to ensure that it originates from a legitimate source.
- We will compare the information on the original application form against relevant information given in the reference, for example, checking that dates align, and roles and responsibilities listed are consistent. Where this is not the case, we will take up any discrepancies with the applicant.
- If information is incomplete or we feel it is insufficient for us to make an informed decision about the applicant's suitability, we will contact the referee for clarification.
- Before an offer of employment is made, we will ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily.
- In line with best practice, we will seek to gain explanations for any gaps in employment.

To increase the threshold of protection, a combination of positive selection steps will be implemented:

- All candidates must complete a written declaration on whether they are a barred person as part of the application form and will be subject to a DBS check.
- Staff will not commence employment without references or any other essential check. If there is an urgent need to put staff in place before all checks are made, employment will cease if the safeguarding checks are not satisfactory in any way once they are received.
- The applicant's identity will be confirmed through official documents (birth certificate, passport etc.) to ensure the person who starts work is the same person who attended for interview and assessments.
- Employers are required by law to satisfy themselves as to the applicant's right to work in the UK and this will be carried out.
- We will verify the authenticity of qualifications and references directly (e.g. telephone contact, website information, check referee is legitimate, headed paper etc.) and insist on original documents.

Post recruitment responsibilities

We will retain responsibility post recruitment to ensure that people are eligible to practice and that checks are made via DBS routes either through the update service or at least every three years.

Sources of additional information

http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/a00 209802/disclosure-barring