



## Little Fishes Pre-School Safer Recruitment Policy

Little Fishes Pre-School is committed to safeguarding all children. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework September 2025 states: *Providers must ensure that people looking after children are suitable; they must have the relevant qualifications, training and have passed any required checks to fulfil their role.*

We will follow guidance from West Northants Safer Recruitment Checklist.

When advertising any jobs we will.

- Post the advert as widely as possible
- Include in the advert the required commitment to safeguarding children
- State on the advert the need for the successful applicant to undertake an enhanced criminal record check
- State on the advert the applicant will be expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders except those that are protected for the purpose of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Include the safeguarding responsibilities of the job and personal specifications.
- State that proof of identity and the right to work in the UK will be required.
- Include the final date for applications.
- State that references will be obtained prior to interview.
- Refer to the Safer Recruitment checklist issued by WNC.

We will require an application to be completed and not accept CVs. The job application will include.

- Identifying details of the applicant including current and former names, current address and NI number.
- Details of academic and vocational qualifications with details of awarding body and date awarded.
- Full history of gained qualifications since secondary school.
- Details of full and part time employment history and explanations of any periods not in employment.
- Details of at least 2 referees. The application will also state what referees are suitable.
- Opportunity for applicant to state skills and abilities they have that they feel relevant to the job application.
- Include a statement reflecting inclusion and equal opportunity law.

- Space for the applicant to sign a statement confirming the accuracy and truth of the information they have provided.

An information pack will be sent to all applicants and will include.

- A job description and person specification.
- Instruction about what to expect in the interview.
- Relevant information about the pre-school.
- Our Safeguarding policy.
- A statement of the terms and conditions relating to the post.
- Permission given to request references prior to interview.
- A statement that online searches of publicly available content will be made on shortlisted candidates as part of due diligence.

### Scrutinising and shortlisting applicants.

- Ensure at least two people shortlist applicants and the same 2 people conduct the interview for consistency.
- Ensure all information is checked for consistency and discrepancies.
- Ensure all gaps in employment/training are identified and explanation is asked for at interview.
- Ensure applications are reviewed against the essential and desirable criteria.
- Ensure at least one member who is shortlisting has undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Use a rating system to score each applicant – disregard any that score zero.

### Shortlisted applicants

- Invite applicants to interview
- If conducting an online search as part of due diligence ensure there are clear procedures on where you check, how you record the check and what you do with the information you find.
- Ensure referees are contacted for all shortlisted candidates before interview.
- Shortlisted applicants must be asked to complete a self-declaration of their criminal record of information that would make them unsuitable to work with children. Any relevant information can be discussed at interview prior to a DBS.

### References

- Ensure a copy of the job description and person specification is included with all reference requests.
- Request one referee to be the applicants current or most recent employer/training provider or education setting. To be completed by a senior person with appropriate authority.

- If an applicant is not currently working with children obtain a reference from their last place of employment with children as well as their current or most recent employer.
- Ensure references from family members are not accepted.
- Ensure references are not open-ended i.e. 'To whom it may concern'.
- Ensure references are not obtained by the applicant.
- When requesting professional references ask the referee to confirm if the applicant is suitable to work with children. Ask them to provide facts, not opinions, of any substantiated safeguarding allegations.
- Ask the professional referee to confirm the applicants post, sickness record, performance history and conduct.
- Establish the reason for leaving their current or most recent post.
- Contact the referee by telephone to clarify any vague or insufficient information.

### Interview

- Ensure the interview panel consists of at least 2 people, with at least one having been trained in safer recruitment.
- Ensure a list of questions are prepared and asked to all applicants.
- Ensure any gaps in the applicants' employment or where the applicant has changed employment frequently are discussed.
- Ensure any concerns arising from online searches are discussed.
- Ensure applicants are asked about any criminal convictions.
- Discuss the applicants understanding of the role and their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure applicants are asked about any issues arising from their references.
- Stress any offer of appointment would be conditional and dependant on satisfactory pre-employment checks i.e. DBS, right to work in the UK.

### Pre-employment checks

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory written references, which have been verified.
- Verification of the successful applicant's identity – See WNC notes.
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS to be obtained before the job is commenced.
- Verification of the successful applicants right to work in the UK – See WNC notes.
- Verification of qualifications of the successful applicant.

**Date policy adopted / reviewed** December 2025

**Signed on behalf of the Pre-School Trustees .....**

**Name and position of signatory** Denise Smith (Chair)

**Policy review date** November 2026