



Recruitment and Retention Policy

We believe that recruiting and retaining the right staff is at the heart of improving the well-being of children and families – as well as being the key to a flourishing business. Having the right staff enables us to deliver quality early years provision in our setting. We are committed to safeguarding the children in our care and part of this process includes a robust recruitment and retention policy.

Our Recruitment Procedure

1. Identifying Vacancies

When the potential need for recruitment arises; all staff are to discuss this with the manager considering the following

- What do we want from this post?
- How will the new post compliment our existing staff team?
- How does the post fit into the future plans for our setting?

NB. If we're replacing someone, are there different ways we can fulfil the role, for example, using a job share system rather than employing a direct replacement.

2. Selection Panel

A selection panel should then be formed consisting of three people, one of which should be the manager, a committee member and another relevant person. **It is important that at least one member of the panel has completed the training in safer recruitment or completed the safeguarding level 3 course.**

If there is one or more internal applicant then it is important that the third member of the selection panel is someone from outside the pre-school, for example the school headteacher or early years teacher or an Early Years advisor from DCC (see contact details at end).

The panel will take responsibility for composing the recruitment information such as job descriptions, person specifications and the advertisement as well as taking an active role in short listing, referencing and interviewing applicants.

It is the panel's responsibility to make the final employment decision.

3. Defining the role

The selection panel will then work together to create a job description, person specification and application pack for the candidates. When compiling these documents, they will refer to the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention' page 8-12 and the appropriate sample forms at:

www.devon.gov.uk/index/childrenfamilies/eycs/eycs-childcareproviders/eycs-childcareproviders-recruitment/eycs-recruitment-saferrecruitment/staffing-matters-templates.htm

It is All Saints Wise Owls policy to ask for two references and not to accept CVs. Each applicant is required to fill in a standardised application form.

The application pack to be given to all applicants, will include; an application form, job description, person specification, information about the pre-school, information on the timings involved including the start date, a self disclosure form, a copy of our safeguarding policy and a clear safeguarding message namely that *'All Saints Wise Owls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'*

NB. The person specification needs to be clear, specific and up to date regarding current legislation (e.g. The disabilities act). The skills, qualities, knowledge and experience required for the post listed in the specification must be able to be tested at interview. It will include the details as suggested on page 9 of the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention'. In addition to this it will reinforce the need for personal commitment to safeguarding the children in our care.

4. Setting timescales

Before advertising the post, the selection panel will need to work out a realistic timetable for the recruitment process.

5. Advertising the vacancy

All Saints Wise Owls policy is to create an advert that includes the following:

- Our commitment to safeguarding
- Requirement for a DBS check
- Safeguarding responsibilities of the post
- Salary details
- Job term and hours
- Closing date and method of applying
- Qualification requirements
- Contact details for further information
- A visit to the setting prior to interview is considered highly desirable

In addition to the above points page 10 of the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention' gives further ideas on what should be included.

When the content of the advert is agreed refer to page 11 of the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention' for how to submit it. **In addition to this the advert will be placed in the local press and suitable social media.**

6. Shortlisting applicants for interview

The selection panel should individually consider each application, assessing the application against the criteria outlined in the person specification and the job description. The application form must be signed and dated. Page 13 of the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention' provides a helpful model in this process and the website

www.education.gov.uk/eypqd/qualification-search

provides information on the relevance of Early Years qualifications.

Panel members should be looking for gaps in employment history and any inconsistent information submitted.

7. Interviews

It is the responsibility of the interview panel to get the best out of the applicants and it is the main opportunity for applicants to ask questions about the post.

All candidates selected for interview will be asked to bring their certificates to the interview knowing that their validity will be verified if they are offered the job. They are also required to bring photographic ID (passport, driving licence).

The selection panel will discuss beforehand the questions they are going to ask and what is required of a good answer. All interview candidates must be asked the same questions and these should not discriminate on the grounds of: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity.

Interviewing is an important aspect of safer recruitment. As well as asking questions about the applicant's qualifications, experience, role-related competencies, and general knowledge of children's learning and development, it is important to include questions that probe an individual's motivation for working with children, emotional maturity and resilience, values and ethics, as well as their knowledge of safeguarding policy and procedure. Also, during the interview the panel must explore the validity of the applicants' statements and if there are any inconsistencies and/or gaps in employment history these must be probed.

When compiling the questions the selection panel must refer to page 16-17 of the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention', the website www.devon.gov.uk/index/childrenfamilies/eycs/eycs-childcareproviders/eycs-childcareproviders-recruitment/eycs-recruitment-saferrecruitment/staffing-matters-templates.htm and the Value Based Interview Techniques handout attached to this document.

8. Taking up References

References should be taken up at least two weeks prior to interview and cover the last five years. It is All Saints Wise Owls policy to ask for two references and that one of them is the applicant's most recent employer. If the applicant has worked with children previously then a reference should be obtained from the childcare employer.

The reference request must include a job description and person specification so the referee can comment on the applicant's suitability for the post.

All referees must be asked about:

- any disciplinary action including cautions/allegations,
- sickness and timekeeping
- applicant's overview of their position and responsibilities

9. Scrutinising references

The selection panel should compare the information provided by the referee and the information provided by the applicant.

If there are any inconsistencies, disciplinary issues, allegations or timekeeping issues then these must be followed up with the referee (if necessary reminding them of their 'duty of care'). A written record of any such conversations must be kept.

Character references must be sought if employer references are not available.

10. Making an offer of employment

Once the interviews have concluded, the panel can make its decision.

A verbal offer of employment is made to the chosen applicant, subject to satisfactory references and suitability checks being completed.

The successful applicant will not begin working at All Saints Wise Owls until all the checks (including the DBS) have been returned and the panel is satisfied with the outcome. The chosen applicant must then complete a DBS check, Health Declaration and Self Disclosure. We require ALL staff to then sign up to the update service and maintain that.

For further information on DBS checks see page 19-20 of the Devon County Council booklet 'Staffing Matters: A guide to recruitment and retention'.

If the applicant's DBS check returns with issues then the panel needs to discuss and seek advice from DCC Early Years Team and refer to the DBS website at:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service.

A written offer of employment is only sent out when the panel are completely satisfied with:

- the references,
- the validity of the applicant's qualifications,
- DBS check,
- Health Declaration and Self Disclosure checks
- And have confirmed the applicant's right to work in the UK, identity and employment history.

The written offer should include the following:

- an agreed start date,
- formal contract of employment
- details of pension arrangements,
- payroll form,
- emergency contact details.

If there is any uncertainty on any element of making an offer of employment, contact HR ONE on: 01392 385555.

The unsuccessful applicants should be informed and offered feedback if they wish to receive it.

11. Managing staff records

All Saints Wise Owls will set up a confidential staff file for each staff member, including (where available):

- the original application form,
- personal contact details, and details of who to contact in an emergency,
- a copy of recent photo ID,
- photocopies of certificates for qualifications and short courses,
- references, including details of when and how they were obtained and any recorded follow up conversations,
- Health Declaration
- Self Disclosure form
- details of their DBS disclosure number and date of issue (and updates)
- supervision and appraisal forms
- personal training and development plans
- other information which shows a comprehensive record of each staff member's employment.

These files should be kept in the setting in a safe and secure, lockable cabinet or storage facility.

Retention Procedures

- Staff are subject to a 3 month probation period. At the end of these 3 months, they will meet with the manager/chair of the committee. The probation period will include an induction programme.
- A mentor will be assigned
- Pre-school policies and procedures will be shared and discussed in detail. Copies will be emailed to them.
- What to do if your worried a child is being abused document is shared
- Information on Prevent Duty is shared and online training provided
- Staff are encouraged to attend further training as part of their CPD. They are required to attend staff meetings as scheduled by the manager. They are invited to attend half termly committee meetings.
- Gaps in statutory training will have been highlighted and plans made to ensure this training is up to date.
- Staff will have termly Supervision and annual appraisal meetings with the manager. Within these meetings, personal targets will be set/reviewed. Staff will be asked about their suitability to continue working with children and to declare any health issues/review ongoing health needs.
- The Staff Code of Conduct is shared and discussed

Helpful Contacts

Recruitment Helpline 01392 385398
childrensworkforce-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

HR ONE 01392 385555 (HR helpdesk)
hrdirect@devon.gov.uk

Kerry Thorne 01392 385421 (Early Years Advisor)
Kerry.thorne@devon.gov.uk

Natalie Elston 01392 383000(Early Years Recruitment Service)
Natalie.elston@devon.gov.uk

Check qualifications on the DfE website at:
www.education.gov.uk/eypgd/qualification-search

Right to work information at:
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

*Website with sample forms for the entire recruitment process (including Health Declaration and Self Disclosure):

www.devon.gov.uk/index/childrenfamilies/eys/eys-childcareproviders/eys-childcareproviders-recruitment/eys-recruitment-saferrecruitment/staffing-matters-templates.htm