



# Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:

## **Safer Recruitment**

## **25. Safer Recruitment**

### **Policy Statement**

Harvard Park is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all staff, service users and children. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Therefore, it is vital that Harvard Park applies recruitment and selection procedures that identify people who are suitable to work with children.

The measure described in this policy should be applied in relation to everyone who has responsibility for the care of children for any length of time and, at the discretion of the setting manager, those who regularly come into contact with children in a supporting capacity.

### **Aims**

The aims of this policy are to :

- Help deter, reject or identify people who might harm children, young people or vulnerable adults or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for employing staff.
- Operate such procedures consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about candidates.
- Seek to secure an on-going safe and secure environment for children by ensuring all staff are suitably trained in recognising and responding to signs of harm.

### **Recruitment procedures**

All persons responsible for recruitment will:

- Ensure that when a post is advertised, the advertisement makes clear the organisations commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Ensure each role has a full job description and person specification which refers to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Collect detailed information from applicants and thoroughly review it to address and resolve any inconsistencies or issues.
- Obtain 2 independent references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with or near children and follow up any concerns. One of which will be from the applicant's most recent employer, where applicable.
- Conduct a face-to-face interview to explore the candidates suitability to work with or near children as well as their suitability for the position.
- Verify the successful candidates identity and eligibility to work in the UK.
- Verify, where necessary, that the successful applicant has all the academic or vocational qualifications they have claimed to have.

- Check their previous employment history and experience by completing a thorough review of the job application form. Any gaps in employment will be thoroughly explored to understand the reason for such gaps.
- Conduct an enhanced disclosure criminal record check via the Disclosure and barring service (DBS). Suitability will be continually checked and reviewed through regular supervisions, any changes following a candidates appointment should be notified to Director as soon as reasonably practical.
- Ensure all new staff are familiarised with our Safeguarding policies and Safer Working Practices. As a part of the probationary period, all new employees are required to complete Safeguarding training which will be periodically updated.
- not accept any open references e.g. to whom it may concern.
- not rely on applicant to obtain their references; it will be a joint effort.
- ensure any references are from the candidates current employer, training provider or education setting and have been completed by a senior person with appropriate authority.
- not accept references from a family member under any circumstances, regardless of their profession.
- Ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source. A screen shot will be taken of the electronic email to be kept on file alongside the reference.
- Contact referees to clarify content where information is vague or insufficient information is provided.
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any discrepancies with the candidate.
- Establish the reason for the candidate leaving their current or most recent position
- Ensure any concerns are resolved satisfactorily before an appointment is confirmed.

Where a candidate may not already be in employment:

- we will obtain verification of the individuals most recent relevant period of employment
- we will secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children (if not currently working with children).
- If the applicant has never worked with children, then we will ensure a reference is from their current employer, training provider or education setting.

References should be provided for previous employees upon request in a timely manner. When asked to provide references, providers should ensure the information confirms whether they are satisfied with the applicants suitability to work with children and provide the facts (not opinions) of any substantiated safeguarding concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold. They should not include information about concerns/allegations which are unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious.

The harm test is explained in the Disclosure and Barring Service:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-referrals-guidance--2> and Section 35(4) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/section/35>

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on 30/04/2026

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

**Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead**