

Safer Recruitment Policy



Statement of intent

It is our intention that we are vigilant in our recruitment procedures, aiming to ensure that all people working and looking after children at Ollie Owl Day Nurseries are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role. We believe it is essential that we have effective systems in place to ensure that practitioners and any other person who may have regular contact with the children in our care are suitable.

Aims

The aim of this procedure is to ensure that practitioners working at Ollie Owl Day Nurseries are suitable to work with the children entrusted to our care, and to set out the robust and consistent methods used when we recruit new members of staff to join our team and how we monitor their on-going suitability to work with children.

Legal requirements

- We abide by all legal requirements relating to safe recruitment set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2026) (EYFS) and accompanying regulations including our legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.
- We also follow any requirements or guidance given by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in relation to carrying out checks; and abide by the employer's responsibilities relating to informing the DBS of any changes to the suitability of their staff, whether this member of staff has left the nursery or is still under investigation. Please refer to the child protection/safeguarding policy for further information.

Methods

Ollie Owl Nursery will evaluate and review every candidate and is committed to equality of opportunity and non-discrimination in its recruitment and employment practices and aims to ensure that employment and progression within its organisation are determined solely by using safer recruitment guidelines.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates for interviews based on their skills, qualifications and experiences.

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Recruitment Advertising

We use websites, job sites, social media and recruitment agencies to advertise for any vacancies. Our adverts give detailed but brief accounts of the vacancy along with the requirements needed. It is made clear that we are committed to the safeguarding requirements and that strict checks are made through the DBS- Disclosure and Barring Services for the successful applicant.

We ensure that all recruitment literature includes details of our equal opportunities policy and our safe recruitment procedures; including an enhanced DBS check and at least one professional satisfactory reference for every new employee and a second satisfactory reference which can be from another recognised source. Such as a college/school teacher. We also include the requirement for an additional criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) for anyone who has lived or worked abroad outside of the UK for less than five years consistently.

Applicants:

Candidates interested in a vacancy are asked to contact the setting for an application pack which includes an application form, job description, our applicant privacy notice and a staff suitability form.

The application pack is emailed to the applicant and the applicant is asked to return their completed application form and staff suitability form prior to attending an interview with us.

All applicants will be carefully considered by the management team before short listing for interviews.

Interview stage

- We shortlist all suitable candidates against a pre-set specification and ensure all applicants receive correspondence regardless of whether they are successful in reaching the interview stage or not.
All candidates are asked to bring a photo ID with them for the interview process along with their qualifications and training certificates. We check the candidates ID upon arrival prior to the interview being carried out. The manager decides the most appropriate people for the interview panel. We aim to have at least two people in the interview panel. Senior management team are involved and consulted in the overall decision making.
- All candidates are required to prove they are eligible to work in the UK. The interview will also cover any gaps in the candidate's employment history.
- All candidates reaching the interview stage are questioned using the same set criteria and questions. These cover specific areas of childcare, including safeguarding the children in their care, planning suitable activities to enhance the child's development and their understanding of the legal frameworks applied to

childcare and used in the nursery. The questions are value based and will ensure the candidate has the same values as the nursery with regards to the safety and welfare of the children in their care.

- The manager and deputy will then select the most suitable person for this position based on their knowledge and understanding of the early years framework as well as the needs of the nursery
- Every candidate will receive communication from the nursery stating whether they have been successful or not.

Starting work

Each successful candidate will be offered a conditional offer to the position subject to at least two satisfactory references, proof of qualifications, and a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The following procedures are then followed.

- Referees are contacted prior to the candidate starting with us. We do not accept verbal references and will only accept written references.
- One reference must be from the most current previous or current employer. We will not accept references in the following: Open reference, References supplied by the applicant themselves or by a family member. All references will be electronic references originating from legitimate sources. We will check references against the candidates application forms and bring up any necessary discrepancies. We will also establish why the candidate left their previous post and ensure any concerns are resolved before appointing them.
- The successful candidate will be asked to provide proof of their qualifications, where applicable. All qualifications will be checked and copies taken for their personnel files where applicable.
- All new starters, other than those who have registered for the continuous updating service (see below), will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. This will be processed before the new member of staff commences work in the nursery and they will not have unsupervised access to any child or their records before this check comes back clear. If the DBS is not received before the start date a DBS risk assessment will be completed. Further to this, the new starter will not be allowed to take photographs of any child, look at their learning and development log or change the nappy of any child without an up-to-date enhanced DBS check (whether supervised or not).
- A criminal records check (or checks if more than one country) is also obtained for any new employee who has not lived or worked in the UK consistently for a minimum of five years. This process must be started before their start date.
- A full staff induction, which also includes a health and safety induction, will be completed by each new member of staff on their first day.
- All newly appointed staff have a six month probationary period where they will be supervised, observed and monitored. All aspects of their employment, performance and conduct will be recorded and reviewed. The probationary period

is to ensure that the newly appointed staff are fulfilling their roles and responsibilities well and are meeting the standards and expectations set out by Ollie Owl when caring for children.

- At the end of the probationary period, the member of staff will be told in a staff review/appraisal whether he/she has successfully completed their probationary period.
- If the newly appointed member is not fulfilling their roles and responsibilities well during probation period then these concerns will be raised with them in a supervision meeting. In some circumstances we may also extend a staff member's probationary period.
- If at the end of the probation period Ollie Owl has not seen significant improvement in the staff member's performance, conduct and fulfilment of responsibilities then Ollie Owl will deem the staff member as unsuccessful and may terminate their contract providing them with the adequate notice period.
- The nursery will record and retain details about the individual staff including qualifications, identity checks carried out and the vetting process completed. This will include the disclosure and barring service reference number, the date the disclosure was obtained and details of who obtained it. The nursery will not retain copies of the disclosure itself once the employment decision is taken.
- There may be occasions when a DBS check is not clear, but the individual is still suitable to work with children. This will be treated on an individual case basis and at the manager's/owner's discretion taking into account the following:
 - i. seriousness of the offence or other information
 - ii. accuracy of the person's self-disclosure on the application form
 - iii. nature of the appointment including levels of supervision
 - iv. age of the individual at the time of the offence or other information
 - v. the length of time that has elapsed since the offence or other information
 - vi. relevance of the offence or information to working or being in regular contact with children.
- If the individual has registered on the DBS update service system since 17 July 2013, managers will use the update service with the candidate's permission instead of carrying out an enhanced DBS check.
- New starters are required to sign a staff suitability form to state that they have no criminal convictions, court orders or any other reasons that disqualify them from working with children or unsuitable to do so. Staff members will complete this form and a health declaration form annually.
- All new members of staff will undergo an intensive induction period during which time they will read and discuss the nursery policies and procedures and be introduced to the ways in which the nursery operates.
- All mandatory training will be required to be completed within a month of starting as part of the induction process.
- Apprentices will not be included in the ratio until paediatric first aid is completed.

- During their probation period all new staff will receive training on how to safeguard children in their care and follow the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection policy and procedure, emergency evacuation procedures, equality policy and health and safety issues.
- The new member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager during their probation period to discuss their progress, support required and/or further training and professional development opportunities.

Ongoing support and checks

- All staff are responsible for notifying the manager in person if any there are any changes to their circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children (staff suitability status will also be checked through an annual 'staff suitability questionnaire'). This includes any incidents occurring outside the nursery. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the nursery manager **immediately**.
- The nursery manager will review any significant changes to an individual's circumstances that may suggest they are no longer suitable to work with children and take appropriate action to ensure any unsuitable or potentially unsuitable employee does not have unsupervised contact with children until the matter is resolved. The nursery disciplinary and whistleblowing policy will be followed regarding any notifications that require us to implement these policies.
- Every member of staff will have regular meetings with the manager: a formal appraisal and a more informal review. This will provide an opportunity for the manager and member of staff to discuss training needs for the following six months as well as evaluate and discuss their performance in the previous six months.
- The manager, deputy and room leaders will be responsible for any support the staff team may have between these reviews. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, ongoing supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback.
- The nursery will provide appropriate opportunities for all staff to undertake professional development and training to help improve the quality of experiences provided for children.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>31st July 2026</i>	<i>Dick Tillett</i>	<i>1 August 2027</i>