



SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in educational settings. Bale's Farm is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care. As an employer, our outdoor learning provision expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the Bale's Farms recruitment policy are as follows:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (**DfE**), Keeping Children Safe in Education - (**KCSIE 2022**), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2015 (the **Prevent Duty Guidance**) and any guidance or code of practice published by the Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (**DBS**); and
- to ensure that Bale's Farm meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Director – James Bosworth to:

- Ensure that Bale's Farm has effective policies and procedures in place for recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with all guidance and legal requirements.
- Monitor Bale's Farm compliance with them.

It is the responsibility of the Director involved in recruitment to:

- Ensure that Bale's Farm operates safe recruitment procedures and makes sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers who work at Bale's Farm.
- To monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

Planning and Advertising

At Bale's Farm we will be clear about the mix of qualities, qualifications and experience a successful candidate will need to demonstrate, and whether there are any particular matters that need to be stated in the advertisement for the post, in order to prevent unwanted applications. The recruitment process will be planned, including who will be involved, responsibilities and timescales.

The advertisement will include a statement about the employer's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and Adults at Risk and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake an enhanced criminal record check where appropriate.

Job Description

Once a post becomes vacant or a new post is created the job description and person specification will be reviewed/agreed to ensure compliance with safe recruitment guidance.

This will clearly state:

- The main duties of the post;
- The extent of contact/responsibility for children and young people;
- The individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the children / young people / Adults at Risk they are responsible for, or comes into contact with.*

***This includes where the post holder will work mainly or exclusively with adults. Some of these adults will be parents, grandparents or carers and will have contact with children and young people.**

Person Specification

At Bale's Farm we will include:

- The essential and desirable qualifications and experience;
- Other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people;
- The competencies and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate.

Application Form

At Bale's Farm we use an application form to obtain a common set of core data. The applicant form refers to bale's Farm commitment to safeguarding children.

Our application forms;

- Identify details of the applicant including current and former names, current address and National Insurance Number (not date of birth);
- A statement of any academic and/ or vocational qualifications with details of awarding body and date of award;
- A full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/training and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training and reasons for leaving employment;
- Details of referees. One referee should be the applicant's current or most recent employer/line manager, not a colleague. Normally two referees should be sufficient;
 - Where an applicant is not currently working with children, but has done so in the past, we will ensure that a reference is also obtained from the employer by whom the person was most recently employed in work with children in addition to the current or most recent employer;
 - References will not be accepted from relatives or friends.
- A statement of the skills and abilities, and competencies/experience that the applicant believes are relevant to his/her suitability for the post and how s/he meets the person specification;
- There is an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- Information is requested about any previous - including spent - convictions, cautions, reprimands, warnings or bind-overs.

Scrutinising and Shortlisting

The same selection panel will both short list and interview the candidate. At least one member of Bale's Farm panel will have undertaken safe recruitment and selection training.

- All application forms are scrutinised to ensure:
 - They are fully and properly completed;
 - The information is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies;
 - Gaps in employment/training or a history of repeated changes of employment are identified;
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted;
- Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment and the reasons for this is noted, so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant, as well as a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid career move from a permanent to temporary post;

- All candidates will be assessed equally against the criteria contained in the person specification.

References

- One reference will be from the current or most recent employer/line manager or HR (not from a colleague within the organisation);
- They will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee;
- A copy of the job description and person specification will be included with all requests;
- References or testimonials provided by the candidate, or open references, i.e. To Whom It May Concern will not be accepted.
- References will be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones. If possible, these will be obtained prior to interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.
- Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before the interview, once received it will be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the person's appointment is confirmed;
- References will seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion.

Interviews

- The interview will assess the merits of each candidate against the job description and person specification, and explore their suitability to work with children/young people/Adults at Risk;
- The interview will stress that the identity of the successful candidate will be checked thoroughly and, that where a Disclosure and Barring Service check is appropriate, prior to appointment there will be a requirement to complete an application for a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure;
- All candidates will bring with them documentary evidence of their right to work in the UK and their identity. Evidence should be as prescribed by UK Visas and Immigration and the Disclosure and Barring Service, and can include a current driving license or passport including a photograph, or a full birth certificate, and a document such as a utility bill or financial statement that shows the candidate's current name and address (please note that these latter two are time-limited and must be no more than 3 months old), and where appropriate change of name documentation. Some form of photographic ID must be seen;
- Candidates will bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualification(s). If this is not possible, written confirmation must be obtained from the awarding body. Also documentation of registration with appropriate professional body;
- A copy of the documents used to verify the successful candidate's identity and qualifications are kept for the personnel file.

Interview Panel

A panel of at least two people will always be used, allowing one member to observe and assess the candidate and make notes, while the candidate is talking to the other. One member of the panel is always trained in safe recruitment practice.

The members of the panel will:

- Have the necessary authority to make decisions about the appointment;
- Meet before the interview to agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification and to prepare a list of questions they will ask all candidates relating to the requirements of the post;
- Identify any issues they wish to explore with each candidate based on the information provided in their application form and in the references;
- Notes of the applicant's interview answers should be collated by chair of the panel and stored (by HR).

Participation of Children and Young People

Children and young people can make a valuable contribution to the recruitment process and their participation will be considered for key strategic and managerial posts as well as posts where staff will have a high level of responsibility for children's day to day care

Staff Records

In relation to each member of staff appointed a record will be kept to show:

- Written references obtained and confirmed by telephone, who made the telephone call with date and time;
- Gaps in employment history checked;
- A satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service /Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate obtained, with unique reference number and date;
- Reasons/decision to appoint despite criminal convictions (i.e. a Risk Assessment);
- Evidence of proof of identity (this will have been provided for the Disclosure and Barring Service check);
- Evidence of qualifications;
- Details of registration with appropriate professional body;
- Confirmation of right to work in UK;
- Record of interview questions and answers.

Records will be signed and dated by appointing manager/chair of the interview panel.

Post Appointment Induction

There will be an induction programme for **all** staff and volunteers. The purpose of the induction is to:

- Provide training and information about Bale's Farm safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. This training will be at a level appropriate to the member of staff role and responsibilities with regard to children;
- Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for their role;
- Confirm the conduct expected of staff;

- Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities;
- Enable the line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately;
- Ensure that the person receives written statements of:
 - Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding;
 - The identity and responsibilities of staff with designated safeguarding responsibilities;
 - Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behavior expected; ○ Other relevant personnel procedures e.g. whistleblowing, disciplinary procedures.

Monitoring

Monitoring of both the recruitment process and induction arrangements allow for future recruitment practices to be better informed. It covers:

- Staff turnover and reasons for leaving;
- Exit interviews;
- Attendance of new personnel at safeguarding training.

Supervision and Staff Review and Development

Annual staff reviews are important elements in ensuring safe practice. They;

- Ensure staff are up to date with current safe practices;
- Identify areas for development;
- Openly address any concerns about behavior and attitudes;
- Put in place action plan and arrangements for review.

Last reviewed: 16.10.2024

Next review: October 2025