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THE OASIS PARTNERSHIP

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy Statement

The safe recruitment of staff is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Oasis is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Oasis recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds with different skills and abilities. We are committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work for us is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality and opportunity. Oasis will uphold its obligations under law to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed. This document provides a good practice framework to comply with the principles set down in the Oasis Equality & Diversity Policy.

All applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent and have an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure. Oasis is committed to ensuring people who have been convicted are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for position.

Oasis will:

1. ensure that appropriate staff who undertake recruitment have an understanding of safer recruitment.
2. ensure that every appointment panel includes one member who has a full understanding of safer recruitment.
3. implement robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, or who is disqualified from working with children or vulnerable adults, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role.
4. keep and maintain a single central record of recruitment and vetting checks in line with statutory requirements
5. ensure that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in this procedure. Oasis will monitor the compliance with these measures.
6. require staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment to notify the management in writing of the offence and the penalty.

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references, one of which will be from the former or most recent employer
- Verification of the candidate's identity in line with the requirements of The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
- Verification of right to work in the UK (GOV.UK website)
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS clearance with a barred list information check where the person will be engaging in regulated activity
- Verification of the candidate's (mental and physical fitness) medical fitness
- Verification of (professional) qualifications as appropriate

Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to:

- Ensure Oasis has effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all staff and volunteers in accordance with guidance and legal requirements.

- Monitor the staff's compliance with them

It is the responsibility of the CEO and other managers involved in recruitment to:

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

It is the responsibility of all potential and existing workers, including volunteers to comply with this document.

It is the responsibility of all contractors and agencies to comply with safe recruitment pre-employment checks.

The Procedure

Advertising

To ensure equality of opportunity, Oasis will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of candidates as possible, normally this will entail an external advertisement. However, where there is a reasonable expectation that there are sufficient qualified internal candidates or where staff are at risk of redundancy, an internal advertisement may be considered appropriate.

Applications

CVs will be accepted, however an application form may be requested.

Oasis requires candidates to account for any gaps or discrepancies in employment history. Where an applicant is shortlisted, these gaps will be discussed at interview.

Applicants should be aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police or other professional bodies

References

References for shortlisted candidates will be sent for immediately after an employment offer is made. The only exception to this is where candidates have indicated on application that they do not wish their current employer to be contacted. In such cases, this reference will be taken up as soon as permission has been given.

References must be in writing and be specific to the job for which the candidate has applied – open references or testimonials are not acceptable. Oasis will not accept references from relatives or people writing solely in the capacity as a friend. Wherever possible, only reference from a trusted authoritative source will be acceptable.

Reference requests will specifically ask:

- About the referee's relationship with the candidate
- Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with our client base, and if not, for specific details of the concerns and the reasons why the referee believes that the person might be unsuitable.

Referees will also be asked to confirm details of:

- The applicant's current post, salary and attendance record
- Performance history and conduct
- Any disciplinary procedures in which the sanction is current
- Any disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people
- Details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised that relate to the safeguarding of children or young people.

References will be compared to the application to ensure that the information provided is consistent. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant before commencing in post.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns or issues are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

Self-declaration of convictions by job applicants

Oasis's policy requires shortlisted applicants for all posts (including volunteers) to declare all criminal convictions whether "spent" or "unspent" and include any cautions and pending prosecution.

The chair of the panel will discuss relevant, positive declarations confidentially with the applicant at interview.

The disclosure of convictions, cautions or pending cases will not necessarily prevent employment but will be considered in the same way as positive DBS disclosures.

Interviews

The selection process will always include the following:

- Face to face professional interview including questions related to safeguarding children (in line with Safer Recruitment Training), wherever possible.

Proof of Identity and Right to Work in the UK & Verification of Qualifications and/or Professional Status

Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of identity by producing documents in line with those set out in The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Similar information is also required to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau check on the preferred candidate.

Successful candidates will also be required to provide original proof of their qualifications and professional status by producing documentation prior to their start date. Oasis will verify that candidates have actually obtained any qualifications legally required or deemed essential for the job and claimed in their application by asking to see the relevant certificate, or a letter of confirmation from the awarding body/institution. If the original documents are not available, Oasis will require sight of a properly certified copy. Proof of identity and other documentation will be verified by the HR Administrator.

Commencement of Employment prior to DBS check being received

In exceptional circumstances it is permitted to commence employment prior to receiving a DBS check. However a risk assessment must be completed by a senior manager in post.

Employment Offer

It may be possible to negotiate a provisional start date with the preferred candidate, however, with the exception of DBS disclosures, the checks details above must all be completed before a person's appointment is confirmed. In the case of DBS disclosures, the certificate must be obtained before or as soon as practicable after appointment.

Once all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed/received, an offer of employment will be confirmed and the contract of employment issued on the first day of employment, in accordance with employment legislation.

Record Retention/Data Protection

Oasis will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a 6 month period, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e shredded). The 6 month retention period will allow the school to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an employment tribunal.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, applicants have a right to request access to notes written about them during the recruitment process. Applicants who wish to access their interview notes must make a subject access request (SAR) in writing to the chair of the panel within 6 months of the interview date.

Personal file records

The school will retain the following information which will make up part of the personal file, for the successful candidate:

- Application form/CV
- References
- Disclosure of convictions form
- Proof of identification
- Proof of academic qualifications
- Certificate of Good Conduct (where applicable)
- Evidence of medical clearance from Occupational Health (where applicable)
- Evidence of the DBS clearance

Oasis staff to be provided with a copy of the Safer Recruitment Policy and asked to sign a declaration that they have read and understood the document and will follow the guidelines required to maintain professional boundaries at all time.

Oasis is committed to adopting a culture of vigilance where all staff, volunteers & clients' concerns are listened to and taken seriously.