



Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure

Rationale

The Little Acorns Nursery, Montessori Playschool & Acorns Afterschool Recruitment Policy specifies the procedure that is followed when hiring employees and unpaid workers, including the steps to be taken to check and verify references, qualifications and vetting documentation.

The goals of this policy are:

- To recruit the best possible people to *Little Acorns & Acorns Afterschool* and provide clear guidelines to management and employees on the recruitment and selection process.
- To ensure, through the recruitment and selection process, that children are protected and *Little Acorns & Acorns Afterschool* fulfils its duty of care relating to safe recruitment and selection practice.
- To ensure the process is managed fairly without either direct or indirect discrimination towards any individual or group.
- To ensure that *Little Acorns & Acorns Afterschool* is compliant with all relevant legislation and quality practice in this area.

Legislation and regulatory requirements

- Under Regulation 9 of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#), our service ensures that an effective management structure is in place, and appropriate people are recruited to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided to the children attending Little Acorns and Acorns Afterschool.
- Having a clear, written policy and procedure on Recruitment is a requirement under Regulation 10 of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#). The policy must cover both paid and unpaid workers.
- [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#).



1

Children's needs

Children need:

- To be cared for and educated by adults who are appropriately qualified. ●
The adults who care for them and provide for their education to have the attributes, knowledge, skills and competencies to provide their curriculum/programmes of activities and meet their wellbeing, learning and development needs safely, responsibly and according to the highest quality standards.
- To be safe when in the company of adults in the setting who are there to assist their main educators (such as contractors, volunteers and students).

Parents'/Families' needs

Parents/guardians need to:

- Be assured that our service's approach to recruiting and selecting the childcare practitioners and other staff members who will be responsible for planning and providing for their child's care and education, while in this setting are professional, fair and safe.
- Know that their young child will be safe in the company of any other workers who will spend time interacting with them while they are this service, either paid or unpaid.

Staff needs

All staff members need to know:

- That our service's recruitment and selection processes are fair, open and transparent and are not discriminatory.
- How our service recruits staff.

Management needs

Management needs to:

- Know that the recruitment and selection process is clear and transparent for all stakeholders.
- Know that they have established safe and appropriate systems and



procedures to ensure that the best possible people are recruited to the staff team to ensure the provision of a safe and good quality service.

2

- Ensure that this service fulfils it's duty of care to all stakeholders, especially the children in their care, and that all relevant legislation and regulations are fully complied with.

National Quality Frameworks

- [Tusla: Quality Regulatory Framework](#)
- [Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education](#)

Policy Statement

All recruitment, selection and promotion carried out in this service is in compliance with employment and equality legislation, and is informed by quality evidence-based human resource practices. Our aim is to ensure the selection of the best candidate possible for whichever post is to be filled.

All processes are fair and transparent and all appointments are made on merit and in an open and accountable manner.

All necessary steps are taken to ensure that children are protected, as far as possible, in the recruitment and selection processes, and that *Little Acorns & Acorns Afterschool* fulfils its duty of care in relation to the safe recruitment and selection of all those who will have access to the children. This includes requiring appropriate Garda/Police Vetting and written references in accordance with Children First.

Successful recruitment depends on finding people with the necessary skills, attributes, experience and appropriately recognised qualifications to carry out their roles competently, and the ability to make a positive contribution to upholding our service's operating principles and values and meeting its goals.



Equal Opportunities

Selection of applicants is based on the applicants having the relevant qualifications, skills, competencies and experience to meet the requirements of the post, without bias on grounds of gender, marital or family status, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, race or membership of the Traveller community (Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004).

3

Positions are open to all suitably qualified applicants who satisfy the educational and experience selection criteria relevant to each specific post. Applicants who meet the selection criteria have equal access to the selection process.

Garda/Police Vetting

Directors, Registered Operators and all employees of this service will each have two references taken up and will also be appropriately Garda/Police Vetted. Garda Vetting is renewed every three years.

All other persons who work in our service such as contractors, students and volunteers will be appropriately vetted to ensure that children are protected at all times. Parents/guardians who go on occasional outings and/or who work in a supportive role with our service are not required to be vetted as they will not have unsupervised access to children other than their own.

Procedures & Practices

Job description

All posts must have:

- A standard job description (*see information in Appendix C*) outlining the functions and objectives of the role, responsibilities and expectations, and minimum qualifications;
- A person specification of desirable attributes, skills and competencies associated with the job; and
- Details of terms and conditions of employment.



(Appendix D outlines sample occupational profiles.)

Advertising

Recruitment advertisements will contain nothing of a discriminatory nature and will aim to encourage applications from the broadest possible base. They will comply with all relevant legislation including the Equal Status legislation.

The application process

4

All applicants must be given a comprehensive job description, person specification, information on the terms and conditions of employment, a Garda Vetting form and appropriate background information on the post, at application stage.

All candidates will be required to submit an up-to-date curriculum vitae detailing their education, training and employment history.

Any identified gaps in an applicant's education/ training/employment history will be investigated.

False or misleading information given on the application, Garda Vetting form or medical form may be considered a breach of trust and may lead to non-appointment, disciplinary procedures or may prevent the employee being confirmed in post.

Shortlisting for interview

Candidates are selected for interview based on the objective requirements of the post and those with relevant qualifications and experience at the level of the post, based on the job description and person specification, will normally be selected for interview.

All applicants are screened and replied to within 4 weeks. Candidates who clearly best meet the requirements of the position, based on their application, are brought forward to the next stage of the recruitment process.



Should the number of applicants who meet the basic requirements of the post be too large to interview all of the candidates, then further shortlisting may be required giving preference to those candidates who, on the basis of the quality of their application, are most likely to succeed at interview stage.

Methods of assessment

All those who apply for a position are assessed on the following:

1. Application Form/Curriculum Vitae
2. Interview (*See Appendix E for an interview template that is used by our service*)

5

3. Satisfactory identity confirmation
4. Satisfactory reference checks
5. Satisfactory Garda/Police Vetting

1. Application form / Curriculum Vitae

Applications/ CVs are assessed at the shortlisting stage to determine whether the applicant meets the essential requirements for the position. The quality of the application may also form part of this assessment.

2. Interview

Prior to interviews, an interview panel is convened to agree the interview format and core areas of questioning. This panel normally comprises three people (always a minimum of two people) with at least one external. A competency-based, weighted marking scheme in line with the Job Description and Person Specification will be drafted and agreed (*see sample in Appendix C*).

A member of the interview board who has a personal or professional relationship to an applicant must declare that relationship to other members of the board and a decision will be taken by the *Erika Deery or Sarah Quigley Burns* as to whether their participation as an interviewer is appropriate.



Candidates invited for interview are informed of the time, date and venue for interview in writing as early as possible.

Before the interview is completed the candidate is informed of the next step in the process.

The shortlisted candidate from the interview process is informed of *Little Acorns and Acorns Afterschool's* interest but also informed that a formal offer will only be made when satisfactory reference and Garda/Police Vetting information are obtained.

All candidates are informed of the outcome in writing within 1 Week..

3. Confirmation of identity

6

Prior to an appointee taking up any post their identity must be confirmed against some statutory documentation (such as a passport, driver's licence, public services card or ID card), which gives their full name, address, signature and photograph. A copy of the ID will be kept on file.

4. Reference checks

An applicant must submit names of two referees who will be contacted by Erika Deery or Sarah Quigley Burns in confidence, one of whom must be a current employer if the person is employed or the most recent employer if not.

Where the applicant has been employed in the early years sector, a reference will be sought where practicable.

In the case of internal applicants who have been employed in this service for five years or more *Erika Deery or Sarah Quigley Burns*, as their employer, can provide a reference.

Where a reference from a previous employer is not available, references will be sought from other reputable persons¹. Character references will not be obtained



instead of appropriate employer references.

It is the responsibility of *Erika Deery* or *Sarah Quigley Burns* to check references and to ensure that they are satisfied as to the character and suitability and relevant experience of the candidate prior to any person being appointed or allowed access to a child in our service.

All referees must be contacted in person/by phone in order to:

- Either obtain a verbal reference, which must be documented on a verbal reference form, signed and dated by *Erika Deery* or *Sarah Quigley Burns* and recorded confidentially on the employee's file; or
- Verify a written reference from the referee. The referee is asked to confirm that they authored the written reference. The reference, once verified, is signed and dated by Sarah Quigley Burns or Erika Deery.

References will only be obtained from a current employer with the candidate's permission and after all other references have been taken up.

¹ A highly regarded, well thought of, respected person who is independent, unbiased and not a family member.

7

5. Qualifications

Each person appointed to work directly with children must either hold the appropriate minimum qualifications for the post or a confirmed exemption under the Grandfathering Clause or the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

[The appendices Includes an breakdown of the appropriate minimum qualifications and exemptions which are referenced on www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/earlyyears/20171018DCYAEarlyYearsRecognisedQualifications.pdf.

Qualifications are verified by viewing the original certificate, a certified copy of the certificate, the original transcript or certified copy of the transcript. *Erika Deery* and *Sarah Quigley Burns* will document that the appropriate document has been verified.

6. Garda Vetting



All applicants must submit a properly completed Garda Vetting Form when an offer of position has been made.

[Police vetting is also submitted when an offer of a position has been made and where a person has worked in a state or country outside of Ireland for 6 consecutive months where it is practicable to do so.]

Little Acorns and Acorns Afterschool reserves the right not to appoint an applicant if any unacceptable² previous criminal conviction/s record, prosecution/s (successful or not, pending or completed), or a query related to their identity comes to light and/or was not disclosed at application stage. [If you have a Records and Record Keeping Policy and/or a Confidentiality Policy refer to them here. Note they are not required policies but may be useful to have.]

[Note: Assessing a Disclosure

If you find someone has a criminal record it doesn't automatically mean they will be unsuitable.

² Management reserves the right to decide whether the information on the Garda Vetting Disclosure makes the record 'unacceptable' having considered all the circumstances and the available information.

8

Management considers:

- *The nature of the offence*
- *How long ago it took place*
- *Its relevance to the job*
- *The risk to children if it were to be repeated*

Motoring offences, for example, is not a prohibition to an offer of employment as our service does not transport children.

Where a vetting disclosure is received which causes concern regarding a candidate, our service must undertake a comprehensive risk assessment to determine the suitability of the candidate for employment.]

Please note: Further important detailed information from Tusla on qualifications,



references and Garda/Police Vetting is included in Regulation 9 of [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](#).

Canvassing

Canvassing – that is, making an approach to secure advantage – is an unacceptable practice and may lead to disqualification. However, it is entirely reasonable for a candidate to seek information about *Inishowen Montessori Playschools Ltd*. This contact is not part of the interview process and candidates will not be advantaged or disadvantaged by such contact.

Following selection

All employees will be given a written statement of their terms and conditions of employment on application where possible and at least within two months of commencement of employment.

All employees are given an information pack and a copy of the Staff Handbook on commencement of employment.

Probation

All new employees are on probation for the first 11 months of employment.

A review of the employee's performance must take place with the employee half way through the probation period and again at the end of the probation period.

9

The manager must set standards and goals and the candidate must be clear on our service's expectations.

Little Acorns and Acorns Afterschool reserves the right to extend the probation period if appropriate or terminate employment during this period should the employee prove unsuitable for the post. Probation periods may be extended to compensate for extended absences during the probation period.

The employee will be informed in writing as to the outcome at the end of the probation period.

Induction, supervision, support and training during probation period (see Staff Training Policy)



All new employees must be given induction training on commencement of employment with *Little Acorns and Acorns Afterschool*. The employee is required to sign the induction checklist confirming they are happy that all areas listed were appropriately covered.

During the induction period, new staff members will be required to familiarise themselves with all of our service's policies, procedures and statements. All staff members will receive regular support and supervision to enable them to perform their role effectively.

Contracts of service

- Careful consideration must be given to the type of contract offered to prospective employees. All staff working directly and indirectly with children in our service are given a Statement of Main Terms of Employment within 2 weeks of commencement of employment. A Staff Employment Handbook and Employee Health and Safety Handbook is also provided to them electronically.

Contract of Employment

The Contract of Employment will include the following:

- The employee's name, address and telephone number.
- Their date of birth, photographic proof of identity confirming that they are over 18 years of age.

10

- The name and telephone number of the employee's next of kin to be notified in an emergency.
- The date of commencement in our service.
- The job description to include role and responsibility.
- Terms and conditions of employment.

Record keeping

- A Personnel Records file must be opened and maintained for each



employee of *Inishowen Montessori Playschools Ltd (T/A Little Acorns Nursery, Montessori Playschool and Acorns Afterschool)* (Organisation of Working Time Act 1997). Staff members may have access to their own personnel files.

- Little Acorns and Acorns After School will keep:
 - References, Garda vetting and police vetting for a period of 5 years after the person starts working in our service. This includes current staff and staff who are no longer working in our service
 - All other records on ex-employees for at least three years. After three years the files are reduced and only essential information is retained in accordance with GDPR requirements.
- Paperwork on candidates who were unsuccessful at interview is kept in accordance with GDPR requirements.
- Personnel records are stored in a confidential folder at *in Reception Office* in accordance with GDPR requirements.
- All confidential personnel information is disposed of safely by *Erika Deery* following required retention periods, by shredding.

5. Communication Plan

A copy of this Policy and Procedures and its Appendices will be available during all hours of operation to all staff team members and parents in the Policy Folder located in Reception (Room 14a), electronically on Little Vista Childcare App, Bright HR Portal and on our company website www.mylittleacorns.com

Parents/guardians may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

11

Parents/guardians and staff members will receive written notification of any updates.

6. Related Policies, Procedures and Forms *[List of all related documents. The*



policies in bold are those required under the Early Years Regulations 2016.] •

Inclusion Policy

7. References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation *[List of any relevant Legislation and Practice Guides referred to in drafting the Policy] •*

[Tusla: Quality Regulatory Framework](#)

- [Child Care Act 1991](#)
- [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016 and Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [Registrations, Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla](#)
- [Our Duty to Care: The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People](#)
- [National Vetting Bureau, An Garda Síochána](#)
- [NPCC: ACRO Criminal Records Office, International Child Protection Certificate \(UK\)](#)
- [UK Government, Disclosure and Barring Service](#)
- [Barnardos Vetting Service](#)
- [Early Childhood Ireland Garda Vetting](#)
- [Equal Status \(Amendment\) Act 2012](#)
- [Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Early Years Recognised Qualifications.](#)
- [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012 • Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education • Children First Act, 2015](#)
- [NERA: The National Employment Rights Agency](#)
- [Recruitment and Retention: A good practice guide for early years, Childcare and playwork providers](#) Sure Start DfES, 2003

12

8. Who Must Observe This Policy

This policy must be observed by all registered providers, managers and all staff



members.

10. Contact Information


If you need more information about this policy, contact:

Name	Erika Deery
Phone number or email	erika@mylittleacorns.com

11. Policy Created

Date this policy was created	23/07/2023
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12. Signatures

	Name and position	Signature
Approved by	Erika Deery Manager	

13. Review Date

Date this policy will be reviewed	23/07/2024
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