

Child Safety Recruitment Practices and Procedures

Purpose

Hamlyn Views School has rigorous procedures in place for staff recruitment and screening, to meet the child safety requirements for staff selection, supervision and management practices (Clause 10 Ministerial Order No 870). A strong focus of these processes is our commitment to **Child Safety - Zero Tolerance of Child Abuse** to minimise the risk of appointment of a person posing a risk to a child.

This procedure outlines the important aspects our school must consider when recruiting new staff or volunteers. It includes guidelines and a checklist for ensuring staff selection processes consider an applicant's suitability to undertake child-connected work and to ensure natural justice for applicants during the staff selection process.

Planning the recruitment and selection of staff the school will ensure that:

<p>1. Each job or category of jobs that involves child-connected work has a clear statement that sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety b. The job applicants' essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
<p>2. All applicants for jobs that involve child-connected work at our school are informed about our school's Child Safety practices (including Child Safety Code of Conduct).</p>
<p>3. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, reasonable efforts are made to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child-connected work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Working with Children Check (WWCC) or Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration (VIT) status b. Proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications c. The person's history of work involving children d. References that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children. <p>Note: The school need not comply with the requirement in step (3) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in steps (3)(a) to (d), above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.</p>
<p>4. Appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to inducting a new staff member on school's policies, codes, practices and procedures governing child safety and child-connected work.</p>
<p>5. Practices will be implemented that enable the School Council to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.</p> <p>Explanatory note: To be 'satisfied', it is not necessary that the School Council make each decision about the selection and supervision of school staff engaged in child-connected work. The School Council needs to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the school's arrangements that would regulate or guide other people who make such decisions for or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.</p> <p>Please note that the Ministerial Order defines some terms broadly. A full list of definitions is available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes.</p>

School considerations when recruiting and selecting new staff and volunteers

When recruiting new staff or volunteers some important child safety areas for assessment include the applicants:

- a. Motivation to work with children (personal or professional)
- b. Relevant and verifiable child-related work experience
- c. Understanding of professional boundaries
- d. Communication skills.

Specialist roles may present different child safety risks for the school. Such roles include, engagement and wellbeing staff, bus drivers, therapists or other allied health professionals, sports coaches or camp instructors. The school will ensure that role descriptions are accurate and encompass all relevant aspects of child-connected work. Information obtained through a criminal records check will be handled in accordance with the school's Privacy Policy.

Prior to a person commencing employment, the Principal must be satisfied that the person is suitable for child-connected work as defined in Ministerial Order 870. This includes where a person is being employed for a subsequent period of employment where this check was performed more than 12 months previously. (See note on pg. 1)

Contracts and Induction

Hamlyn Views School can offer probation contracts to new staff members to assess their performance and suitability prior to confirming permanent employment. Probation length can vary and offers an opportunity to set goals and identify training and other support needs.

The school will promote the Child Safety Code of Conduct with all new and existing staff to support the embedding of a child-safe environment. As part of the school's Induction process, all new staff will be provided with a copy of the school's Child Safety Policy and a school Child Safety Code of Conduct to sign.

Selection Criteria – Does it include and/or clearly state?

Developing appropriate selection criteria for a staff position is a valuable first step to reducing the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk. It will also ensure that applicants have the specific knowledge and skills required for the position.

Applicants will have the opportunity to indicate their understanding of, or any experience they have in working with children with diverse needs and/or backgrounds. The selection criteria should clearly state the following:

Depending on the requirements of the advertised position, include one or both of the selection criteria below:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must have experience working with children - Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children
Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children
Experience, qualifications, qualities and attributes expected from the successful applicant
the supervision and accountability processes in place which support child safety
Demonstration of the needs of children with a disability
Demonstration of Aboriginal cultural safety and awareness
Demonstration of cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

Advertising - Does the advertisement include?

To demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children and deter would-be offenders our advertised statements will include:

A message about our school's commitment to Child Safety
Reference the school's Code of Conduct & Child Safety Policy
That appropriate rigorous reference and background checks will be undertaken, such as WWCC, VIT status, National Police Record check and identity check
A statement about our school's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability
A statement about our school's commitment to cultural safety, inclusion and empowerment of Aboriginal children, their families and communities
A statement about our commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

Pre-selection – Ensuring transparency and natural justice in the selection process

To ensure the pre-selection process is transparent and follows natural justice we will ensure the following:

The applicant been provided with a statement that sets out the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety
The applicant been informed about the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct
The applicant been informed of their role in ensuring a child safe environment
The applicant been informed the selection process will involve a rigorous background check, including a WWCC

Interviews – Does the interview include Child Safe questions?

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for our school and to identify any people who may pose a risk to children. Sufficient time is given to plan and prepare for the interview, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the process, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires.

Including open-ended, behavioural-based questioning (see below) will give us insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability. Include at least two of these questions:

Tell us about why you want to work with children
Describe a time when you had to manage a child whose behaviour you found challenging
Tell us about a time you comforted a distressed child
Did you notice any warning signs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unexplained lengthy gaps in their employment history - The applicant says they don't value or need supervision - The applicant gives evasive or inconsistent answers

Screening/Background Checks – Verifying the applicants identity, suitability and qualifications

Screening applicants and conducting background checks are good tools for helping to prevent people who may abuse children from entering our school.

Working with Children Check

Under the Working with Children Act 2005, people who are doing child-related work, and who are not exempt, need a Working with Children Check. Full details of the Working with Children Check process can be found on the Working with Children website: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au


Police Checks

It is important to be upfront and ask the applicant if they have any criminal convictions, formal disciplinary action taken against them, or any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct. This could involve the applicant signing a declaration as part of an application form http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=274 This may also be covered in the face-to-face interview with the applicant with specific questions about child safety.

Referee Checks

The panel will contact at least two referees as this can provide insight into the applicant's character and skills. The most recent people that the person has worked with, are the ones likely to provide the school with the most accurate reference. Where possible, referees that can provide insights into the applicant's experience working with children should be contacted.

Do you have any concerns about the applicant working with children?
Would you employ this person again?

HAMLIN VIEWS SCHOOL - RECRUITMENT SCREENING AND BACKGROUND CHECKLIST 	
Position: Teacher / Education Support Staff / Other Applicant's Name: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep this document in their personnel or volunteer's file. • Complete ALL sections – write N/A if a question does not apply. 	YES / NO or COMMENT
Have you checked <u>at least two</u> forms of personal identification eg. Driver's license, passport. Is the name and address the same as provided by the applicant?	
Does the applicant have an original academic transcript or qualification/s that confirms their claims about their qualifications or registration?	
If the applicant is registered with the VIT have you verified their registration and ensured it is current? (VIT registered teachers don't need a WWCC)	
Have you sighted and retained a copy of the applicant's current WWCC?	
COMPLETED BY: Administration Officer Name: Position: Date:	
Are there any unexplained gaps in the applicant's employment history? If so, are there satisfactory explanations such as travel, study or family leave?	
Have you conducted any other background searches eg. Google, Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn?	
Has the applicant nominated <u>at least two</u> referees including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the current or most recent employer - direct supervisor/line manager 	
Is there any personal relationship between the applicant and his previous supervisor/manager? (This may affect the objectivity of the reference)	
Have you checked with the referee(s) that the previous work history and employment details the applicant has provided are accurate?	
Has the referee(s) directly supervised the applicant and observed their work with children?	
Would the referee(s) employ the person again?	
Did a referee(s) have any concerns about the applicant working directly with children?	
Have you asked a referee about a time they observed the applicant managing the behaviour of a child?	
Has any disciplinary action been taken against the applicant for inappropriate or unprofessional conduct towards a child?	
Did a referee(s) have any concerns about the applicant's adherence to the organisations code of conduct, eg. Showed a lack of integrity?	
If the reference is in writing, have you contacted the referee to confirm its authenticity?	
Does the applicant have experience working with children outside their employment eg. Volunteering, private tutoring, coaching, non-commercial child-minding etc.	
COMPLETED BY: Principal Class Officer Name: Position: Date:	

HVS has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse