**The Family Information Group**

**8. Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Policy**

This policy is made available to parents, prospective parents, staff and prospective employees of The Family Information Group as required.

**1. Introduction**

This Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Policy applies to all aspects of The Family Information Group’s work, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Committee and Chief Executive of The Family Information Group are committed to providing the best possible care to its users, and to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment to all our members of staff. We recognise that, in order to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre who share this commitment.

**The aims of our Safer Recruitment policy are to:**

• Comply with all relevant government recommendations and guidance.

• Safeguard and promote the welfare of children by carrying out all necessary pre- employment checks.

• Deter prospective candidates who are unsuitable to work with children.

• Identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children.

• Give clarity to all those applying for posts so that we can recruit the best possible staff on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position.

• Support our Equal Opportunities policy by ensuring that all job applicants are considered equitably and consistently, so that no applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds, including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, disability or age.

The Chief Executive and other senior staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for complying with the provisions of this policy. Whenever we are involved in the appointment procedure for any staff post, at least one member of the recruitment panel will have been trained in Safer Recruitment by the local authority, or will have received this training from the Children’s Workforce and Development Council.

**2. Recruitment and Selection Procedure**

**2.1. Inviting Applications**

Advertisements for posts, whether in newspapers, journals or on-line, will include the statement:

“We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Successful candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. “

Prospective applicants will be supplied with the following:

• Job description and Person Specification.

• Our Safer Recruitment Policy (this document).

• An application form.

All applicants for employment will be required to complete the application form. Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form under any circumstances. Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

**2.2. Short-listing and References**

The Chief Executive and at least one other senior staff member will be involved in scrutinising application forms. Committee members or parents may also be involved in this process. Short-listing of applicants will be against the person specification for the post. Information concerning age, medical history, disability or criminal records disclosure will not be used to short-list candidates.

Whenever possible, references will be taken up on short-listed candidates prior to interview. All offers of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employment does/did not involve work with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend.

All referees will be sent a copy of the job description and person specification for the role for which the applicant has applied. They will also be asked to confirm the following:

• How the applicant is known to the referee, and for how long.

• The applicant's suitability for the post in general.

• The applicant's suitability for working with children.

• Whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures, including warnings, involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children (including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired).

• Whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or behaviour towards children.

We will only accept references obtained directly from the referee on our official reference form with all sections completed. We will not accept references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials.

We will compare all references with any information given on the application form. Any discrepancies or inconsistencies in the information will be taken up with the applicant before any appointment is confirmed.

Where necessary, referees will be contacted by telephone or e-mail in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies; a detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named will be contacted in order to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies; a detailed written note will be kept of such exchanges.

Successful applicants (candidates) will be invited to an interview.

**2.3. Interviewing Candidates**

The Chief Executive and at least one other senior staff member will be involved in the interview process and at least one of these will have successfully completed the Safer Recruitment Training. Committee members or parents may also be involved in this process.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to attend a formal, face-to-face initial interview, at which their relevant skills and experience will be discussed in more detail. Candidates will always be required to:

• Explain any gaps in their employment history satisfactorily.

• Explain any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the recruiters.

• Declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure.

• Demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

• Answer questions aimed at obtaining evidence of how the candidate meets the criteria listed on the person specification; the same areas of questioning will be covered for each candidate.

• Demonstrate their competency to carry out the roles and responsibilities as detailed in the job description for the post.

• Answer questions aimed at obtaining evidence of how the candidate would aim to fulfil the roles and responsibilities as detailed in the job description for the post.

• Answer questions aimed at obtaining evidence of the candidate’s motives, attitudes and behaviour in relation to the role.

In addition to the formal interview candidates may be asked to take part in a practical session with children in order for their key skills to be assessed.

All candidates who are invited to an interview will be required to bring the following evidence of identity, address and qualifications:

• Current photograph driving licence and full birth certificate OR current passport (where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism, e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration, he/she will be required to provide documentary evidence of the change.

• Original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form. If there is any doubt of authenticity, the relevant awarding body will be contacted.

• Proof of eligibility to work in the United Kingdom (see appendix notes for full list).

Unsuccessful candidates will be informed in writing and offered a telephone debrief up to a week after the date of the letter. The initiative is with the unsuccessful candidate.

The notes taken and documentation used in the interview process will form part of the formal record of why candidates were, or were not, selected. For unsuccessful candidates these records will be retained for six months by the Family Information Group and then destroyed, unless the candidate specifically requests that we keep their details on file.

Successful candidate’s notes will be kept on file for the duration of their employment and for a minimum of six years afterwards.

**2.4. Conditional Offer of Employment**

If it is decided to make an offer of employment following the interviews, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

• The agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating the Family Information Group’s standard terms and conditions of employment.

• The receipt of two satisfactory references as detailed above (if not already received).

• Verification of medical fitness.

In addition to these checks a new enhanced criminal record disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in respect of ALL prospective staff members and volunteers.

• An Enhanced DBS Disclosure will contain details of all convictions on record including current and spent convictions (including those which are defined as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) together with details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings held on the Police National Computer. It may also contain non-conviction information from local police records which a chief police officer thinks may be relevant in connection with the matter in question.

• As the individual is applying for a position working with children or young adults, it will also reveal whether he/she is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults by virtue of his/her inclusion on the lists of those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults maintained by the DfES and the Department of Health.

Applicants with recent periods of overseas residence, and those with little or no previous UK residence will also be asked to apply for the equivalent of a disclosure, where one is available in the relevant jurisdiction(s).

If the above conditions are satisfied and the offer is accepted then the applicant will be issued with a contract of employment as confirmation of employment.

We keep all records relating to employment of staff and volunteers, in particular those demonstrating that checks have been done, including the date and number of the enhanced DBS check.

If a candidate is found to be on the DCSF List 99 or the protection of Children Act List, or if the enhanced DBS disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a court, or if s/he is found to have provided false information in his/her application, or if s/he is the subject of serious expression of concern as to his/her suitability to work with children, these facts will be reported to the Police and the Havering Local Children’s Safeguarding Board.

Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

We abide by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concerns.

**Appendix**

**Asylum and Immigration Act 1996**

In accordance with this act, members of staff are required to provide documentary evidence that they are legally entitled to live and work in the United Kingdom. See below:

• A document from a previous employer, the Inland Revenue, the Benefits Agency, the Contributions Agency or the Employment Service (or their Northern Ireland equivalents), showing your name and National Insurance number. This could be a P45, a pay slip, a P60, a National Insurance card or a letter issued by one of the Government bodies concerned.

• A passport describing you as a British citizen or as having the right of abode in or an entitlement to readmission to the United Kingdom.

• A passport containing a Certificate of Entitlement issued by or on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom certifying that you have the right of abode in the United Kingdom.

• A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen.

• A birth certificate issued in the United Kingdom or in the Republic of Ireland.

• A passport or national identity card issued by a State which is a party to the European Economic Area Agreement and which describes you as a national of that State.

• A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you are exempt from immigration control, have indefinite leave to enter, or remain in, the United Kingdom or have no time limit on your stay; or a letter issued by the Home Office confirming that you have such status.

• A passport or other travel document endorsed to show you have current leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom and are not precluded from taking the employment in question; or a letter issued by the Home Office confirming this is the case.

• A United Kingdom residence permit issued to you as a national of a State which is a party to the European Economic Area Agreement.

• A passport or other travel document endorsed to show that you have a current right of residence in the United Kingdom as the family member or a named national of a State which is a party to the European Economic Area Agreement and who is resident in the United Kingdom.

• A letter issued by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate of the Home Office indicating that you are a British citizen or have permission to take employment.

• A work permit or other approval to take employment issued by Work Permits (UK) or in Northern Ireland, by the Training and Employment Agency.

• A passport describing you as a British Dependent Territories citizen and which indicates that the status derives from a connection with Gibraltar.