



## **Child Safe Recruitment Policy and Procedure**

### **Purpose**

This Policy has been developed to ensure Daylesford Dharma School (DDS) attracts the best available staff and volunteers for all vacant positions. The school recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce that includes people from diverse backgrounds. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Strong human resource practices promote a child safe school and community and reduce the risk of child abuse. As a registered School with a commitment to the safety and wellbeing of our children and community, we have a responsibility for keeping children safe (clause 10 of Ministerial Order No. 870). The recruitment and selection of staff play an important role in this process.

### **Procedure**

Selection Criteria Examples of appropriate selection criteria will include:

- 'Must have experience working with children.'
- 'Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children.'

Applicants should have the opportunity to indicate their understanding of, or any experience they have in, working with children with diverse needs and/or backgrounds.

### **Advertising**

All positions will be advertised. The school normally uses Seek.com for this purpose. All applicants will receive a job description upon request and any other relevant information required. The advertisement will include:

- A message about our school's commitment to child safety, including reference to the code of conduct and child safety policy.
- That appropriate reference and background checking will be undertaken, including a Working with Children Check and/or police record and identity check
- The school's promotion of the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability, e.g. 'This organisation promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, including those with a disability. Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children with a disability.'
- A statement about the school being culturally safe for Aboriginal children, and encouraging participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, e.g. 'This organisation promotes the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children.'
- A statement that the school promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, e.g. 'Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.'



- A statement that the school is committed to gender equality and respectful relationships.

### **Position Description**

Position descriptions will specify clearly the tasks involved in the role and the qualifications, skills and experience essential and/or desirable for the role. Position descriptions will be reviewed regularly by the Principal

### **The Recruitment Process**

Completed applications are to be treated confidentially and held by the Principal and shared with the Learning Manager. Applications received after the closing date shall be considered at the discretion of the Principal.

### **Statement of Conflict of Interest**

If any staff member has more than a professional relationship with the candidate, they are to declare this as soon as possible to the Principal and/or Board of Governance.

### **Shortlisting**

Candidates shall be shortlisted on the basis of their applications and how the application illustrates their ability to carry out the role and meet the essential criteria. All candidates who meet the essential criteria are interviewed with the exception that in the event that there are too many to interview, in which case further selection will be undertaken using specified criteria.

Short-listing will be the responsibility of the Interview Panel.

Short-listed applicants will be contacted to arrange an interview time and will be given reasonable notice.

### **Interviews**

Prior to interviews, the Interview Panel will meet to plan the interview process and work out an agreed set of questions to be asked. Interviews will take place in a private area in the school without interruptions. The panel will decide who is responsible for the introduction and conclusion of each interview, including introducing the Panel members, the background to the position, the interview and selection process, the notification process, etc. The Principal will be responsible for contacting and documenting the applicant's referees.

Interview questions will be designed to elicit information as to how the applicant meets the position criteria. An open-ended style of behavioural-based questioning will give an insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability. Some useful questions may include:

- '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 when you had to comfort a distressed child.'

All applicants are to be asked the same core questions to ensure fairness.



All the interviewers will have a list of the questions to be asked and assessed against the prepared rubric. On the conclusion of each interview, panel members individually assess the applicant against the essential and desirable criteria on the basis of the information gained from the interview using the rubric. Time will be allowed for discussion of each applicant at the end of each interview. Finally, a comparison of candidates will be done by the panel on completion of all interviews. Before making a final decision as to the preferred candidates, at least two referees will be contacted and their responses recorded and summarised to the interview panel.

### **Pre-employment Screening**

Screening applicants (including for paid and volunteer positions) is the first step and an important tool for helping to prevent people who may abuse children from entering the school.

- **Police Checks**

This is a requirement for all teachers and is completed as a part of the provisional registration and full registration process for teachers via the Victorian Institute of Teaching

- **Working with Children Checks**

All other staff and volunteers are required to hold a current Working with Children Check clearance. If they do not hold a valid WWCC, they need to provide evidence that they have applied for one. It is the school's policy and procedure that evidence of WWCC clearance is provided to the Office prior to any engagement with students or attendance on the school site, and will be kept on record at the school via a digitised copy of the WWCC card, and recorded on either the Parent and Volunteer Registration and Qualifications Register or the Staff Registration and Qualifications Register by the Office Manager and oversighted by the Principal.

If no evidence is provided, a person cannot be on the site unless directly supervised by the Principal or their delegate.

Every person on the site wears a lanyard provided by the Office Manager or their delegate, that identifies their WWCC status and the required supervision.

- **Referee Checks**

At least two referees should be contacted by the delegated Interview Panel Member and asked to provide insight into the applicant's character and skills, and should include:

- A recent line manager who can be objective, (rather than colleagues or friends). When speaking with referees, seek to establish the referee's relationship with the applicant, including:
  - How long the applicant and referee worked together.
  - The specifics of the position.
  - The applicant's perceived strengths and weaknesses.
  - Whether the referee would hire the person again, particularly in a role working with children.
  - If the referee believes the applicant is suitable to work with children.

### **Notification**

Once ratified, the successful candidate is made a formal position offer. This can be done by phone, but will always be done in writing as well.



All applications and interview records are to be stored by the Principal for three months in case of appeal. They shall remain confidential and be destroyed after 3 months by the Office Manager.

Once the successful applicant has accepted the position, the Principal is to ensure that all unsuccessful applicants are notified. Letters will be sent to applicants who were not shortlisted once short listing has taken place.

### **Employment Contract**

When a formal offer of employment has been made to the successful candidate and they have accepted, the Principal or their delegate will request from the successful candidate copies of:

- all formal qualifications,
- VIT number and/or WWCC clearance,
- full drivers licence (to establish identity),
- licence history check (to establish suitability to drive the School van).

These documents provide the evidence of suitability to work with children and form the basis of establishing the conditions of the employment contract.

The employment contract is drawn up and issued (that establishes their pay grade determined from their qualifications, skills, and/or experience). The employment contract contains: Employment entitlements, Position details, Position description, Remuneration, General employment requirements, WorkCover Employee Declaration Form, Confirmation of right to work in Australia, Child Safety Code of Conduct for signing, Statutory Declaration (Child Safe Standards) for witness and signing along with the employment acceptance.

The employment contract once verified is offered to the successful candidate for signing and when returned, forms the basis of their HR file with the support documentation that determined their suitability for employment. The new employee is then inducted by the Principal into the School's policies, procedures, community agreements and Child Safe systems and culture. The Learning Manager inducts the new employee into the Australian Dharma Curriculum educational approach to teaching and learning.

Employee HR files are stored confidentially by the Principal, Board Treasurer or their delegate, and the Office Manager in the designated filing cabinet and the designated electronic server.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality regarding applicants, interviews, decision etc. is to be maintained until the successful applicant has formally accepted the position



Other Staff members and the Board of Governance will be informed of the successful applicant as soon as practicable, along with the families of the School.

### **Casual Employment**

The Daylesford Dharma School utilises casual employment where work is to be performed on an ad hoc basis over an undefined and normally short period of time. These individuals are sought from a pool of Casual Relief Staff with full police checks. Casual staff members are paid by the hour, receive a loading and can be engaged on a full-time or part-time basis. Casual employees are contracted using the same steps and checks and balances as all employees which includes qualifications, the Child Safety Code of Conduct and evidence of suitability to work with children.

### **Probation Periods**

Probation periods can help when assessing a new staff member's performance and suitability for the job before confirming their permanent employment. The length of probation periods can vary and are usually between three and six months.

The Principal or their delegate, will conduct an induction for all new staff members into policies, procedures, codes of practice and child safety. These are also available on the password protected website. The school will continue to monitor and assess staff members in relation to child safety on an ongoing basis.

### **Relevant Legislation**

Ministerial Order No. 870

Ministerial Order 1359

The Working with Children Check (WWCC) Act, 2005

### **Related Policies**

DDS Child Safety Code of Conduct

DDS-POL-005 Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

DDS Child Safe Recruitment Procedure Checklist

### **Basis of Discretion**

This policy relates to the recruitment of all staff and volunteers other than the Chairperson of the Board of Governance. The Chairperson is regardless, required to have a WWCC clearance and abide by the Child Safe policies, procedures and conduct requirements, and undertake the mandatory reporting training.