



Menzies Creek Primary School

Child Safety Standard Four

Rationale

Robust recruitment processes help ensure the best applicants are employed. From advertising through to conducting interviews and checking the background of applicants, it is important that each step is done consistently and thoroughly.

1. Selection criteria

Developing appropriate selection criteria for the 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.

Examples of appropriate selection criteria may include:

'Must have experience working with children.'

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

Does your selection criteria clearly state the experience, qualifications, qualities and attributes expected from the successful applicant?

Does your selection criteria outline the supervision and accountability processes in place which support child safety

Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of the needs of children with a disability?

Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of Aboriginal cultural safety and awareness?

Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds?

Advertising

Menzies Creek Primary School and School Council promotes the safety, well being and inclusion of all children. We are committed to child safety, have a Code of Conduct and apply rigorous reference and background checking.

Does your advertisement include a message about your organisation's commitment to child safety?

Does your advertisement include reference to your code of conduct and child safe policy?

Does your advertisement inform applicants that appropriate rigorous reference and background checking will be undertaken, including a Working with Children Check and police record and identity check?

Menzies Creek Primary School 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.'

Has your job advertisement included a statement about your organisation's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability?

Menzies Creek Primary School promotes the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children, and encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples.

Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with Aboriginal children and/or communities.'

Has your job advertisement included a statement about your organisation's commitment to cultural safety, inclusion and empowerment of Aboriginal children, their families and communities?



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Menzies Creek Primary School promotes the safety and wellbeing of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and encourages applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.

Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.'

Has your job advertisement included a statement about your organisation's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds?

Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children. Menzies Creek Primary School will form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the interview, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires.

We will use some open-ended style of behavioural-based questioning to 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?'

Have you prepared a list of open-ended questions which will determine how the interviewee will behave in certain situations?

We always take notice of your own thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant and ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in his or her responses.

Did you notice any warning signs such as:

- Unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history
- The applicant says they do not value or 'need' supervision
- The applicant is evasive or inconsistent in his or her answers

Pre-employment screening

Screening applicants (including for paid and volunteer positions) is a tool we will use for helping to prevent people who may abuse children from entering our school.

Police checks

Have we included a question about whether the applicant has any criminal convictions, cautions, other legal or pending cases, including formal disciplinary action, which may affect their suitability to work with children?

If addressed during a face-to-face interview, did you take notice of how the applicant responds to questions with regard to his or her words and body language?

Have you undertaken a police record check (which includes identity check)?



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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. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers. Full details of the [Working with Children Check process](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) can be found on the Working with Children website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

Does the applicant hold a valid Working with Children Check, if required? Have you checked the validity of their Working with Children Check<online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj>?.

OR

If the applicant does not hold a valid Working with Children Check, and it is required, has the applicant provided evidence that they have applied for a Working with Children Check, and does your organisation have processes to follow up pending applications?

Has the applicant provided you with evidence of their Working with Children Check, or evidence of their application for a Working with Children Check?

Referee checks

We always talk to at least two referees as this can provide insight into the applicant's character and skills. Line managers, particularly the most recent, are likely to provide you with the most accurate reference. Where possible, referees that can provide insights into the applicant's experience working with children should be contacted.

Do the referees provided by the applicant include line managers who can be objective, rather than colleagues or friends?

Has the applicant provided their most recent line manager as a referee? If not, have they provided you with a satisfactory reason?

Have you spoken to at least two of the referees by telephone? Did you confirm with them their name and position provided to you by the applicant?

When speaking with the referees, you should 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, and whether they have any concerns about the applicant working with children.

You should ask referees directly about any concerns they may have about the applicant working with children.

Take note of any pauses or gaps in the referee's responses.

Ask behaviour-based questions like:

- What did the applicant do when...[for example, they had to comfort a distressed child]?
- Do you have any concerns about the applicant's attitude towards Aboriginal peoples / people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds / people with a disability?
- Do you have any concerns about the applicant working with children?
- Would you employ this person again?



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Additional checks

Additional checks will confirm the identity of the applicant and that their responses have been truthful.

Have you checked the identity of the applicant (for example, that their driver's licence/passport has the same name they have provided you)?

Did you see a certified copy of the applicant's qualifications (if required)?

Probation periods

Probation periods can help you assess a new staff member's performance and suitability for the job before confirming their permanent employment. If there are any concerns about the person working with children we would not consider employing them.

The length of probation periods can vary and are usually between three and six months.

We will consider whether the person should receive closer supervision and additional training throughout the probation period. A probation period can offer an opportunity to set goals with new staff members and identify training, supervision and other support needs.

Principal: Tanya Cooke

School Council President: Nicole Cashmore

Date ratified at School Council: July 2016

Three Year Cyclic Date for Review: July 2019