

CHILD SAFETY – RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

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.

Selection criteria

Using DET approved criteria 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.

Our 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.

Advertising

Advertisement placement provides a good opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children and deter would-be offenders.

Positions vacant are advertised on the DET Recruitment Online portfolio to ensure suitable candidates apply.

The school summary in the advertisement includes a statement which shows our commitment to promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability or are of Indigenous background.

Westall Secondary College promotes the safety and wellbeing of all children including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and/or with a disability, and encourages applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background and/or with a disability.'

Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for our school and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children.

Sufficient time to plan and prepare for the interview process, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the interview is required. Where possible / necessary, consideration of including Aboriginal peoples, people from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background and people with a disability on the interview panel.

We use open-ended style behavioural-based questions, which give us insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability ie.

'Tell us about why you want to work at Westall Secondary College?'

'Describe a time when you had to manage a student whose behaviour you found challenging?'

'Tell us about a time when you had to comfort a distressed child?'

Consideration of panel members' thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant are important. We ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in his or her responses.

We need to take note in –

- *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

Applicants are screened (including for paid and volunteer positions) as per DET Guidelines and VIT expectations.

Checks take the form of -

- Police checks
- Working with Children Check
- Referee checks

When speaking with the referees, we 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.

Ask behaviour-based questions like:

- '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?'
- 'What did the applicant do when...[for example, they had to comfort a distressed child]?'
- 'Would you employ this person again?'

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 we have any concerns about the person working with children, we would seriously consider whether we want them to remain in the job and our organisation.

The probation period of 6 months is in line with DET regulations.

Consideration will be given as to 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.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle, or as required due to changes in relevant Acts, Laws or should situations arise that require earlier consideration.

This document was ratified by School Council in September 2016