



Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored by the Governing Body and reviewed annually or in light of changes to legislation.

Created: March 2013

Revised: October 2023

Ratified by the Governing Body: October 2013

Date of Last Review: October 2025

Date of Next Review: Autumn 2026

Change History	Date	Change(s) Made	Change Author	EDI ¹
V2.3	Oct 2025	Policy reviewed - updated sections 5.1 and 5.2	RBO	Yes
V2.2	Oct 2024	Policy reviewed - minor amendment to section 5.2.1	RBO	Yes
V2.1	Oct 2023	Policy updated to make it clearer we will carry out online searches of shortlisted candidates.	RBO	Yes
V2.0	Oct 2022	Policy updated using a version of The Key's model Safer Recruitment policy including changes to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022' and online safety checks being carried out. Added appendix 1 the online search proforma.	RBO	Yes
V1.6	Oct 2021	Minor changes to the wording of the policy and updated the reference to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021'	RBO	
V1.5		Updated the reference to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020'	RBO	
V1.4		Updated the reference to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019' and removed the section in 4.1 about the post being exempt from the 'Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974'	RBO	
V1.3		Updated the statement included in the adverts, the documents provided to applicants and the induction process. Section 8 has also been updated to include the most recent information regarding recruiting from overseas.	RBO	
V1.2		Included references to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2016 and clarified that CVs are not accepted without a completed application form.	RBO	
V1.1		Added section 8 Recruiting Staff from Overseas	RBO	
V1.0		Policy created	NSI	

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the minimum requirements of the recruitment process for appointments to The Reach Free School. The recruitment process supports The Reach Free School's aims to:

- attract the best possible applicants to vacancies
- deter prospective applicants who are unsuitable for work with children or young people
- identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable for work with children and young people

¹ Any changes or revisions to the policy have considered equality, diversity and inclusion.

3. Statutory Requirements

3.1 There are some statutory requirements for the appointment of some staff in schools – notably the Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers. These requirements are subject to change and must be met. The recruitment steps outlined below are based on Part 3 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

4. Recruitment and Selection Process

4.1 To make sure we recruit suitable people, we will ensure that those involved in the recruitment and employment of staff to work with children have received appropriate safer recruitment training.

4.2 We have put the following steps in place during our recruitment and selection process to ensure we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

5. Advertising

5.1 When advertising roles, we will make clear:

- Our school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- That safeguarding checks will be undertaken
- The safeguarding requirements and responsibilities of the role, such as the extent to which the role will involve contact with children and provide a link to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whether or not the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975, 2013 and 2020. If the role is exempt, certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', so they do not need to be disclosed, and if they are disclosed, we cannot take them into account
- That in-depth online checks will be carried out

We will do this by including these statements:

5.1.1 Safer Recruitment

The Reach Free School is dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff to share this commitment. To ensure we fulfil this responsibility, all candidates will undergo a thorough selection process designed to deter and identify unsuitable applicants. Details of this process are outlined below. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

5.1.2 Disclosure

This role involves significant access to children, and any appointment will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for previous criminal convictions. Candidates must disclose any convictions, cautions, or bind-overs, including 'spent convictions' as defined under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020), prior to appointment. Failure to disclose relevant information may result in termination of employment. However, a criminal background will not automatically exclude individuals from employment; each case will be considered based on the nature and timing of the offence(s).

5.1.3 Online searches

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) asks schools to carry out online searches on shortlisted candidates as part of the process of assessing suitability. The school will also carry out a prohibition from teaching check. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of your employment.

5.2 Application forms

5.2.1 Our application forms will:

- Include a statement saying that it is an offence to apply for the role if an applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children (where the role involves this type of regulated activity)

5.3 Shortlisting

5.3.1 Our shortlisting process will involve at least two people and will:

- Consider any inconsistencies and look for gaps in employment and the reasons given for them
- Explore all potential concerns

5.3.2 Once we have shortlisted candidates, we will ask the shortlisted candidates to:

- Complete a self-declaration of their criminal record or any information that would make them unsuitable to work with children, so that they have the opportunity to share relevant information and discuss it at the interview stage. The information we will ask for includes:
 - If they have a criminal history
 - Whether they are included on the barred list
 - Whether they are prohibited from teaching
 - Information about any criminal offences committed in any country, in line with the law as applicable in England and Wales
 - Any relevant overseas information
- Sign a declaration confirming that the information they have provided is true

5.3.3 We will also carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.

5.4 Seeking references and checking employment history

5.4.1 We will obtain references before the interview. Any concerns raised will be explored further with referees and taken up with the candidate at interview.

5.4.2 When seeking references, we will:

- Not accept open references
- Liaise directly with referees and verify any information contained within references with the referees
- Ensure any references are from the candidate's current employer and completed by a senior person. Where the referee is school-based, we will ask for the reference to be confirmed by the headteacher/principal as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations
- Obtain verification of the candidate's most recent relevant period of employment if they are not currently employed
- Secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the candidate worked with children, if they are not currently working with children
- Compare the information on the application form with that in the reference and take up any inconsistencies with the candidate
- Resolve any concerns before any appointment is confirmed

5.5 Interview and selection

5.5.1 When interviewing candidates, we will:

- Probe any gaps in employment, or where the candidate has changed employment or location frequently, and ask candidates to explain this
- Explore any potential areas of concern to determine the candidate's suitability to work with children
- Record all information considered and decisions made

5.6 Pre-appointment vetting checks

5.6.1 We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

5.7 New staff

5.7.1 All offers of appointment will be conditional until satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks. When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced DBS certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below). We will obtain the certificate before, or as soon as practicable after appointment, including when using the DBS update service. We will not keep a copy of the certificate for longer than 6 months, but when the copy is destroyed, we may still keep a record of the fact that vetting took place, the result of the check and the recruitment decision taken
- Obtain a separate barred list check to see if they will start work in a regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed as a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK. These could include, where available:
 - For all staff, including teaching positions: [criminal records checks for overseas applicants](#)
 - For teaching positions: obtaining a letter from the professional regulating authority in the country where the applicant has worked, confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions on that person, and/or are aware of any reason why that person may be unsuitable to teach
- Check that candidates taking up a management position² are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the Secretary of State

5.8 Existing staff

5.8.1 In certain circumstances, we will carry out all the relevant checks on existing staff as if the individual was a new member of staff. These circumstances are when:

- There are concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children; or
- An individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is; or
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more

² Management positions are most likely to include, but are not limited to, the Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers, Assistant Headteachers and Admin and Finance Manager.

5.8.2 We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult where:

- We believe the individual has engaged in [relevant conduct](#); or
- We believe the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence, under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 \(Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions\) Regulations 2009](#); or
- We believe the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e. they may harm a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm); and
- The individual has been removed from working in a regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

5.9 Agency and third-party staff

5.9.1 We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

5.10 Contractors

5.10.1 We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check (this includes contractors who are provided through a PFI or similar contract). This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in a regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

We will not keep copies of such checks for longer than 6 months.

Contractors who have not undergone any checks will not be permitted to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activities under any circumstances.

We will verify the identities of all contractors and their staff upon arrival at the school.

5.11 Trainee/student teachers

5.11.1 Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

5.11.2 Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

5.12 Volunteers

5.12.1 We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in a regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new

- to working in a regulated activity
- Conduct a risk assessment when deciding whether to request an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for any volunteers not involved in regulated activity. We will retain a record of this risk assessment

5.13 Governors and Members

5.13.1 All Governors (Trustees) and members will have an enhanced DBS check without barred list information.

5.13.2 The chair of the board will have their DBS check countersigned by the Secretary of State.

5.13.3 All Trustees and Members will also have the following checks:

- A section 128 check (to check prohibition on participation in management under [section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008](#)).
- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks are deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

5.14 Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

5.14.1 When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm. This may not be directly carried out by the school, but rather by a partner we work with.

5.14.2 We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is a regulated activity.

5.15 Pupils staying with host families

5.15.1 Where the school makes arrangements for pupils to be provided with care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related (for example, during a foreign exchange visit), we will request enhanced DBS checks with barred list information on those people.

5.15.2 Where the school is organising such hosting arrangements overseas and host families cannot be checked in the same way, we will work with our partner schools abroad to ensure that similar assurances are undertaken prior to the visit.

6. Employment Checks

6.1 All successful applicants are informed that their appointment is conditional upon them having:

- provided proof of identity
- completed a DBS application and received satisfactory clearance
- provided actual certificates of qualifications
- completed a confidential recruitment monitoring form
- provided proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK

7. Recruiting Staff from Overseas

7.1 All prospective staff who are recruited from overseas will be subject to the same checks as

those recruited from the UK. In addition to this, it is also necessary to:

- check the candidate has a valid work permit or right to work in the UK
- carry out further additional checks relevant to their country of origin/previous country of employment, following Home Office and/or other government guidelines on the processes for foreign national criminality information

8. Induction

8.1 All staff who are new to The Reach Free School will receive induction training that will include coverage of the School's child protection and safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices, and are required to sign to say they have read and understood their responsibilities in relation to this.

8.2 Regular meetings will be held during the first three months of employment between the new employee(s) and the appropriate manager(s) to review the new employee(s)'s understanding and application of the School's safeguarding policies and guidance on safe working practices.

9. Links to other policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Disclosure and Barring Service Policy

Appendix 1 - Online Search Record

This record is used when online searches are conducted as part of the recruitment process for new employees. This process must be applied fairly and consistently.

Position applied for:	
Candidate name:	
Searcher name:	
Date and time of online search:	
Agreed search terms:	'Candidate name' 'Candidate name' + 'job title' 'Candidate name' + 'current school' 'Candidate name' + 'previous school(s)' 'Candidate name' + 'educational institution'
Agreed platforms	Google LinkedIn Their most recent school's website
Agreed limitations	Search to be carried out using the agreed terms, looking at the first page of results only.
Findings to note: We are specifically looking for things that would make someone unsuitable to work with children and/ or could bring the school into disrepute, for example, evidence of offensive or inappropriate behaviour. Do not include irrelevant personal information.	