Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy

Audience:	REAch2 staff Local Governing Bodies Cluster Boards Trustees Local Authorities
Ratified:	REAch2 Trust Board July 2023
Other related policies:	Safeguarding and Child Protection Code of Conduct Data Protection Disciplinary Visitors Volunteers and students Whistleblowing
Policy owner:	Helen Beattie, Head of Safeguarding
Review:	Annually

At REAch2, our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our Touchstones.



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Policy Overview

REAch2 Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care, and the safe recruitment of staff is the first step to achieving this. Our academy expects all staff and other adults working with us to share this commitment. The aims of the safer recruitment and selection policy are to establish a robust and effective culture of safeguarding, attract the most suitable, high calibre candidates, and to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them.

By having a robust recruitment and selection procedure that is followed every time we make a decision to recruit a new employee, and by applying the procedures consistently and fairly in line with our Touchstones, we will be able to demonstrate we value the diversity and potential of all our employees, which will help to make our academy and REAch2 Academy Trust an employer of choice.

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, statutory requirements and guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2016, Childcare Disqualification Regulations 2006, updated August 2018, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, and The Police Act 1997, any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Equality Act (2010), and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)
- to ensure that our academies and the Trust meet its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by establishing a safe culture and carrying out all necessary checks related to pre-employment and continued suitability
- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently, and no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds

We have a principle of open competition in our approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process will ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit, as measured against the job description and person specification. We aim to operate these procedures consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies.

Policy In Detail

Roles and Responsibilities

As an Academy Trust, REAch2 is the employer and is responsible overall for appointments within the Trust and its academies. Under local management, the Headteacher and the Local Governing Body is responsible for determining the staffing complement of our academy and appointing staff to work here.

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to ensure that we have effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all adults working with children, in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements, and to monitor our compliance with them. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, Senior Leaders and other designated staff involved in recruitment to ensure that we operate safe recruitment procedures, and make sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all recruited staff, to monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document, and to promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

The Governing Body has delegated responsibility to the Headteacher and other senior staff to lead in all appointments; Governors may be involved in staff appointments, but the final decision will rest with the Headteacher or senior staff member. All recruitment activity is supported by the Trust's HR Business Partner, Recruitment and Resource Manager, and Safeguarding team, providing guidance as appropriate.

Training, Guidance and Support

All staff responsible for safer recruitment must undertake and/or renew training using the REAch2 safer recruitment training programme. This is expected to be updated and refreshed on a 3 yearly basis, or more frequently if changes to statutory requirements require.

Please see the REAch2 intranet for a wide range of resources and pro forma to support all aspects of safer recruitment.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Diversity and discrimination

The importance of diversity will be taken into account at each stage of the recruitment process. All processes and procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure any unconscious bias is removed and to ensure talent is not being prevented from entering the organisation. REAch2 safer recruitment training offers opportunities for leaders to reflect on the potential for bias and discrimination in the recruitment process, and how to identify and address these issues. Everyone taking part in recruitment activities such as shortlisting and interviewing will be aware of relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, and the importance of eliminating discrimination.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults

When recruiting, we are aware of the risks of modern slavery, which encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Through robust adherence to statutory requirements for recruitment, as outlined in this policy, we will minimise the risk of inadvertent

participation in modern slavery. We will seek support and guidance from the National Referral Mechanism for Modern Slavery for any identified victims.

Advertising, job descriptions and person specifications

To ensure equality of opportunity, we will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicants as possible. Any advertisement will make clear our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the prevailing Data Protection Legislation applicable to the UK.

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and will be published alongside the job advert. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role. All job descriptions will be written in line with terms and conditions within the Burgundy book and the School Teachers Pay and Conditions document (for teachers) and the Green book (for support staff)

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the qualification, skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to safeguarding and the suitability to work with children. It will also be published alongside the advert and job description.

Application forms

We will use a standard application process, with all applicants required to complete an application form containing questions about their education, full employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted, and CVs submitted without a completed application form will also not be accepted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. It is unlawful for us to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, summary dismissal (if the applicant has already been selected), and referral to the police and/or the DBS.

Scrutinising and shortlisting

After the closing date, all returned application forms will be scrutinised by the shortlisting panel. The panel will consist of at least two people, at least one of whom must have been trained in safer recruitment, and one of whom should also be a member of any subsequent interview panel. All candidates will be assessed equally without exception against the same criteria, drawn from the person specification. It is recommended to use a standard scoring matrix for each candidate in order to record scores and evidence how they have been reached. Each member of the shortlisting panel will record their own scores for each applicant, and then come together to share and compare scores, and agree a shortlist of successful candidates for interview.

Applications will be closely scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, the information provided is consistent, does not contain any discrepancies, and any gaps in employment are identified. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps identified by the scrutiny will be noted so that they can be explored and clarified with the candidate prior to, or during, interview.

Online search

We will carry out an online search of shortlisted candidates in order to identify any publicly available information that may indicate an issue or concern that needs to be followed up during interview.

Shortlisted candidates will be requested to share the details of social media platforms that they use, and their names / handles to support this process. Please see Annex 1 for further information.

References

Subsequent to shortlisting, we will seek references prior to interviewing shortlisted candidates, which allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview. Any offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory, none of which can be from a relative. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer, or the most recent employer where the applicant was working with children, and references should cover a minimum of the last 3 years. If an individual is new to employment, or there has been a significant break in employment, references can be accepted from a professional who knows the individual. References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.

The purpose of a reference is to gain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. We use a standard reference template with all short-listed candidates. All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether the referee has any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. Open references will not be accepted if they are addressed 'To whom it may concern', neither will references with no date or no obvious organisation authorisation; these may not be genuine, or may have valuable information missing if they are out of date or not specifically responding to questions in the reference pro forma. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up directly with the referee, and direct contact by phone may be undertaken with referees to verify the reference. If received electronically, the email to which the completed reference was attached will be retained, in order to evidence the identity of the sender and the date on which it was received.

Invitation to interview

All candidates and interviewing panel members will be given a reasonable amount of notice for the time and date of the interview. Candidates will receive full information of all selection and interview activities that will take place and will be instructed to bring with them documentary evidence of their identity, for example a driving licence or a document such as a utility bill that shows their current name and address.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and self-disclosure

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with, or having access to, pupils; therefore, we require candidates to provide a self-disclosure related to criminal convictions. The amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Shortlisted candidates will be either required to complete a self-disclosure form and bring this to their interview in a sealed envelope, or to complete and return the self-disclosure form immediately after being informed of their success at interview. The self-disclosure form will ask for detail of any unspent cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and/or any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions not considered protected, as stipulated in the legislation.

Following the completion of interviews and upon agreement of final appointment, the self-disclosure form of the successful candidate will be reviewed and checked for any pertinent information. Any forms submitted by non-successful candidates will be securely destroyed. Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily bar a person from working with children and will not be unreasonably used to discount applications. Any disclosures from successful candidates will be considered on a

case-by-case basis, in line with relevant legislation and regulation, including Teachers' Standards and teachers' misconduct guidance where applicable, and a risk assessment will be completed to decide if an offer of employment can be made (see below for further information)

Selection tools

There will always be a face-to-face interview (which may include the use of video calling) with each candidate, alongside a range of other activities and tasks designed to assess the applicant's ability to meet the requirements detailed in the job description and the person specification. A minimum of two staff will see each applicant; these should include those involved in short listing and should remain consistent for each candidate where possible. At least one member of the selection panel must have been trained in safer recruitment.

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview and other selection tools will also explore the candidate's attitude towards children and young people, and their ability to support the academy's responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

If documents submitted via the application process were submitted electronically, the candidate will be asked to sign their application form and any other verified documents to confirm their accuracy.

Upon completion of each stage of the selection process, each member of the panel will make their own notes throughout the interview process, and independently score each question or activity on a standard scoring matrix. Panel members will then come together, share and compare scores, and discuss their feedback in order to agree the final appointment. It is usual for a candidate who scores the highest in their interview to be selected for appointment; **however, the candidate who scores the highest in the various selection tools may not always be the ideal candidate for the job. C**are will be taken to consider and take account of all the available information about the candidates when making an appointment and, where appropriate, take account of whether the candidate has demonstrated the necessary skills and experience, whether their salary expectations are aligned to that of the post, and whether they will fit with the organisational culture. Final decisions will always be recorded in writing and will be made objectively and without prejudice.

All copies of notes relating to the short-listing and interview decisions for successful and unsuccessful applicants/candidates will be retained in line with the Information and Record Retention policy.

Offer of employment and pre-employment checks

In accordance with the recommendations set out in KCSIE and the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, we carry out a number of pre-employment checks in respect of all prospective employees. If it is decided, following interview, to make an offer of employment, any such offer will be conditional on the following:

- the agreement of a mutually acceptable start date and the signing of a contract incorporating standard terms and conditions of employment
- verification of the applicant's identity and address, including the birth certificate, where available, one form of photographic ID, and any documentary evidence to support a change of name
- the receipt of two written references (one of which must be from the applicant's most recent employer) which are considered to be satisfactory
- the receipt of an enhanced disclosure from the DBS
- where the position amounts to regulated activity as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (as amended), confirmation that the applicant is not named on the Children's Barred List
- verification of the applicant's mental and physical fitness for the role

- applicant's right to work in the UK
- receipt of overseas checks for any country where the applicant has spent 6+ consecutive months abroad in the last 10 years
- proof of professional qualifications which are deemed a requirement for the post, or which the applicant otherwise cites in support of their application. N.B. this may include a certificate of professional competence for those staff who have gained qualifications overseas

Where the position being appointed to amounts to 'teaching work', any offer of employment will also be conditional on the following:

- being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency, or any predecessor or successor body
- being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country which prevents the applicant working, or which, in our opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work with us
- being satisfied that the applicant is not, and has never been, the subject of any proceedings before a professional conduct panel or equivalent body in the UK or any other country for any reason which prevents the applicant working, or which, in our opinion, renders the applicant unsuitable to work with us

Where the position being appointed to amounts to a management position in the academy, any offer of employment will also be conditional on the following:

- confirmation that the applicant is not subject to a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts them from being involved in the management of an independent school (this will include all members of the Senior Leadership Team, and departmental heads)

Where the position being appointed to involves direct work with, or management of provision for, either children from birth up to 1st September following their 5th birthday (including children in Nursery or Reception classes), or childcare provided outside of school hours to children up to the age of 8, any offer of employment will also be conditional on the following:

- confirmation that the applicant is not disqualified under the Childcare Regulations 2006, updated August 2018

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks

REAch2 policy is to request a new enhanced DBS check for any new employee to the Trust, including a Children's Barred List check where the role amounts to regulated activity. N.B. all roles working directly in schools are assessed to be in regulated activity.

The DBS does not issue DBS Certificates to employers, therefore appointed candidates will be required to bring their certificate for the academy to view within seven days of issue, and in all circumstances before they commence work. The academy does not have to retain a copy of an individual's DSB; if a copy is taken for any reason, it will be destroyed within six months.

Dealing with convictions or information of concern

We operate a formal procedure if a self-disclosure form and/or DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions or information of concern related to the person's suitability to work with children. Full consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, DBS filtering rules and guidance, and to the individual circumstances related to the disclosure(s) This will include reference to:

- the nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence related to English law
- how long ago the offence occurred

- a one-off offence or a history of offences
- changes in circumstances
- decriminalisation

A formal meeting will take place face-to-face to establish the facts with the Headteacher or another designated senior person. A decision will be made regarding continuation of the person's offer of employment following this meeting, informed by an evaluation of the risk factors as listed above, and taking into consideration relevant legislation and regulation, including Teachers' Standards and teachers' misconduct guidance where applicable. This will be documented in writing via a formal risk assessment.

Retention of records

We are legally required to undertake the above pre-employment checks. Therefore, we will retain on personnel files all relevant information provided as part of the application and employment process, including copies of documents gathered to meet safer recruitment requirements. Where documents are received electronically, the email to which the document was attached will also be retained, in order to evidence both the date of receipt and its authenticity. Medical information may be used to help discharge obligations as an employer e.g. consideration of reasonable adjustments if an employee suffers from a disability.

Recruitment documentation will be retained for the duration of the successful applicant's employment. For unsuccessful candidates, documentation will be retained in line with the Information and Record Retention policy. All documents and files are kept centrally in the academy office in a secure cabinet or, if digitally stored, in secure folders.

Transfers between academies in our Trust

All members of staff are employees of the Trust, and may transfer to another academy within the Trust as a result of redeployment, secondment or due to personal choice.

In the case of redeployment or secondment, we will request a letter of confirmation from the previous academy stating the date and outcome of all safer recruitment checks, and confirmation of any concerns relating to the employee's conduct and behaviour. The individual remains the employee of the Trust, so a new enhanced DBS is not required. In the event that the employee moves from a role not in regulated activity to a role that is in regulated activity, a Children's Barred List check will be sought.

In the case of an employee moving to a new role following successful appointment via a recruitment process, we will request a letter of confirmation from the previous academy stating the date and outcome of all safer recruitment checks, and confirmation of any concerns relating to the employee's conduct and behaviour. In addition, new references specific to the new role will be completed, alongside any other checks required by the new role that were not previously required, i.e. a Section 128 check for a teacher moving to a leadership position. As above, the individual remains the employee of the Trust, so a new enhanced DBS is not required. In the event that the employee moves from a role not in regulated activity to a role that is in regulated activity, a Children's Barred List check will be sought.

In the event of any concerns being shared at any point throughout the transfer process, we may choose to apply for additional checks to those stated above in order to verify information that has been shared, and to seek assurances about the employee's continued suitability to work with children.

Recruitment of staff from supply agencies

Where an agency member of staff is being recruited to an employed role at our academy or Trust (often referred to as 'temp to perm') we will treat them as a new employee and seek all relevant pre-employment checks for the role they are going to be employed for, as per the details in the section above entitled '*Offer of employment and pre-employment checks'*. As previously stated, our policy is to request a new enhanced DBS check for any new employee to the Trust, including a Children's Barred List check, which will also apply in this situation.

Single Central Record

We maintain a Single Central Record of recruitment and vetting checks, in accordance with statutory requirements and those stated by the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The Single Central Record will, as a minimum, contain details of the following:

- For all employees who are employed to work at the academy, including teacher trainees on salaried routes:
    - date of identity check
    - date of enhanced DBS check/certificate
    - date of Children's Barred List check
    - date of check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom
    - dates of receipt of satisfactory references
    - date and outcome of prohibition from teaching check (if required)
    - date and outcome of section 128 check (if required)
    - date(s) of further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK, including recording checks for teacher sanctions and restrictions from other countries
    - date of receipt of professional qualifications (if required)
- For all individuals who are employed as supply staff through an agency:
    - date of receipt of written confirmation that all relevant checks have been carried out and are satisfactory, including receipt of Enhanced DBS with Children's Barred List (where the role amounts to regulated activity)
    - date when the individual's DBS certificate was seen in academy
    - whether the DBS certificate contained any disclosures
- For all individuals serving as members or Trustees for REAch2 Academy Trust
    - date of identity check
    - date of enhanced DBS check/certificate
    - date and outcome of section 128 check (if required)

In addition, we maintain on our Single Central Record details of safer recruitment checks for all employees related to online searches, mental and physical health check and Childcare Disqualification, as required. We also records details of checks undertaken with respect to volunteers, members of the Local Governing Body, contractors, and REAch2 central team employees.

For further information on maintaining and managing the Single Central Record, please see the SCR resource book on the REAch2 intranet.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring compliance of their Single Central Record. The Safeguarding Governor and/or Chair of Governors are responsible for monitoring the Headteacher's oversight of the Single Central Record, and for regularly reporting the outcome of such monitoring to the Governing Body. This activity will be supported by the Trust HR and safeguarding teams. In the case of those sections of the Single Central Record managed centrally, i.e. REAch2 central team, Trustees, the responsibility for ensuring compliance is delegated to the Director of HR and the Head of Safeguarding.

Approval for commencement of employment

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing all safer recruitment processes and checks, confirming that all required information has been received and is satisfactory, prior to the commencement of employment. In the event of a new Headteacher being recruited, this responsibility sits with the Deputy Director of Education. This activity will be supported by the Trust HR and safeguarding teams.

Continued suitability

We recognise that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but is a part of our academy's culture of keeping children safe, which includes a larger framework of expectations and policies for all staff. Using the tools detailed below, we will remain vigilant to any signs beyond the recruitment process that a person's suitability to work with children has been impacted.

Induction and ongoing training

All new employees will follow an induction programme upon start of employment, as outlined in our induction/probation policy, which will share and clearly identify our policies and procedures, including those related to safeguarding, Health and Safety, staff conduct and pupil behaviour, as well as relevant extracts of KCSIE, dependent on their role. During induction, we will make clear our expectations with regards to how staff will carry out their roles and responsibilities. Key messages will be regularly reinforced and revisited throughout the probation period, and successful completion of probation will only be agreed if the employee has been assessed to be suitable to continue to work with children.

Following induction, we will continue to deliver regular training and updates related to safeguarding. This will take place a minimum of yearly, in line with statutory requirements. Training will support us in establishing and maintaining a robust and effective culture of safeguarding in our academy, so that staff are encouraged and empowered to discuss any issues that may affect the safeguarding of children.

Renewal of checks

All employees are expected to immediately disclose anything that could affect their continued suitability to work with children. In line with this expectation, staff will be required to complete an annual self-declaration or childcare disqualification form (dependent on role) to support us in making an assessment of each individual's continued suitability.

There is no requirement to renew other employment checks, including DBS, unless an individual has moved into working in regulated activity from work that was not in regulated activity, if there is a break of service of 12 or more weeks, or there are concerns about their suitability to work with children.

Review and appraisal

Performance review and employee appraisal are important tools in establishing and confirming continued suitability, supporting the regular reiteration and reinforcement of academy culture and expectations, policies, and the identification of any potential issues or concerns. All staff will participate in performance review and/or appraisal as per our academy's policy.

Duty to refer

In line with statutory requirements, we are under a legal obligation to refer to the DBS any individual who has been removed from a role amounting to regulated activity (or they would have been removed if they had not left employment) where they have satisfied the harm test related to children and/or been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence. In addition, in the event where we dismiss or cease to use the services of a teacher because of serious misconduct, or might have dismissed them or

ceased to use their services had they not left first, we will consider whether to refer the case to the Secretary of State, as required by sections 141D and 141E of the Education Act 2002.

Other adults working in our academies/with our pupils

Volunteers, including Governors and Trustees

Volunteers, including members of the Local Governing Body, Cluster Boards and Trust Board, are valuable resources and sources of support to our academy and Trust. Whilst their role may differ from those of our staff, it is equally important that their recruitment follows all safer recruitment principles and guidelines. Please see separate volunteers' and Governors' policies for further details about safer recruitment for these positions. There will be no circumstances in which a volunteer for whom no checks have been obtained will be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Contractors, agency and 3rd party staff

All contractors, agencies and 3rd party organisations providing services to the academy must provide evidence in writing that they have carried out all of the relevant checks that we would have done if they were our own staff (such as DBS disclosure, identity check, Right To Work, etc.) This must be received prior to work commencing at the academy. The types of checks required will be specific to the role that the individual will have and take into consideration the nature and amount of contact they will have with children, in line with statutory requirements.

For locally procured contractors, agency and 3rd party staff, including fee-funded trainee teachers managed by an initial teacher training provider, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Governors to ensure that the necessary checks have been carried out, and to satisfy themselves that they are in place prior to the work beginning. Evidence of this will typically be in the form of the organisation's own safer recruitment policy, or a signed document that details the completed checks that have been undertaken. If an individual contracted to work at the academy is self-employed, we will complete all checks, including obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account. In the event that the individual has subscribed to the DBS online update service, this will be checked, with their permission.

For Trust-procured contractors completing statutory compliance checks, safer recruitment information will be received centrally, and then scrutinised and signed off by the Head of Safeguarding. This will be evidenced for each company via completion of a contractors' checklist, which will be shared on the REAch2 intranet. Prior to an employee from any of these contractors attending our site, we will check and review the relevant checklist, and act in accordance with its guidance.

In all cases, the academy will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by contractors or an agency when they come to the academy. In addition, in the case of supply staff, we will request sight of the individual's DBS certificate, in line with Independent School Standards.

Supervision of contractor, agency and 3rd party staff will be determined based on the nature of their work and amount of contact they will have with children. There will be no circumstances in which an adult contracted to work on our site for whom no checks have been obtained will be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Visitors

There are many reasons why visitors may come into our academy, including parents or members of the local community. All visitors to our site, regardless of their reason for visiting, will be escorted by

a fully vetted member of staff. As per legislation, we are not entitled to request a DBS check and/or Children's Barred List for individuals who do not meet the criteria to do so, i.e. regulated activity.

In the event of a visitor attending our academy to speak to children, i.e. in an assembly, we will also obtain such formal or informal background information about them as is reasonable and necessary in order to decide whether to permit them to attend the academy. In doing so, we will always have regard to statutory safeguarding guidance, and will not discriminate on any grounds.

Alternative provision

In the event of any of our pupils attending alternative provision, we will seek, as a minimum, written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on all individuals they employ, including any checks that we perform on our staff working in similar roles.

Approval for commencement of other adults working in our academies / with our pupils

The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing all safer recruitment processes and checks, confirming that all required information has been received and is satisfactory, prior to the commencement of any other adult working in our academy or with our pupils. In the event that a Headteacher is being recruited, via an agency, this responsibility sits with the Deputy Director of Education.

Policy Review

The Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy will be reviewed by the Head of Safeguarding and REAch2 Trustees **annually** as per statutory requirements, or sooner, i.e. in the case of a mid-year update to statutory guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Annex 1 – Online Searches for Shortlisted Candidates

In September 2022, statutory guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education) regarding safer recruitment of staff in schools and colleges was amended to state the following:

As part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview.

REAch2 Academy Trust will conduct online searches for all new staff, volunteers, Governors and Trustees. We will ask shortlisted candidates to share with us all social media platforms that they use and their usernames / handles, as well as the names of any websites that they own, post on, or contribute to. A Google search will also be conducted, checking the first page of results for the following search terms:

1. candidate name
2. name + current employment
3. name + previous employment
4. name + school/college/university
5. name + job title

If a shortlisted candidate refuses to share this information, we reserve the right to remove the invite to interview and terminate the recruitment process.

Searches will be conducted using the risk assessment structure outlined below, covering a minimum of five years prior to the search date. Information will be viewed and gathered by a school/Trust employee, separate to the recruitment panel. When social media platforms are searched, accounts in the name of the recruiting academy or the Trust will be used. Any information of concern will be shared with the panel for their consideration, who will review and decide how to proceed. If there is sufficient concern that there is an immediate unsuitability to work with children and/or as part of our organisation, the recruitment process will be terminated. If the recruitment panel wish to make further enquiries with the candidate to explore their suitability, they will do so at interview. Documents for successful and unsuccessful candidates will be retained in line with our Record Retention policy.

Risk assessment

Expectations for staff, volunteer, Governor and Trustee behaviour, including their activity online, is detailed in our safeguarding policy, code of conduct, online safety policy and/or acceptable use agreement. The categories outlined in the table below will be used by the person conducting the search to identify any areas of concern that require further consideration by the recruitment panel.

Category of concern	Things to consider
Risk to children	Is there any information that is not consistent with our legal obligation and statutory guidance regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children? Is there any information that indicates a risk of harm to children under Part 4 of KCSIE, AKA the harm threshold? (behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children)

Illegal activities	Is there any information that indicates illegal activity? ** N.B. due regard must be paid to filtering rules for DBS checks. Is there any information that indicates support or promotion of illegal activity?
Extremist and / or discriminatory views	Is there any information that is not consistent with our legal obligation under the Equalities Act towards protected characteristics? (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) Is there any information that is not consistent with our statutory obligation to promote British Values? (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs)

Annex 2 – Online Searches for Shortlisted Candidates Form – page 1

Name of candidate		Role applied for		Date search completed		Name of person completing search	

Platform	Account / handle	Any info of concern? (Y or N)	Category/ies of concern	Comments of recruitment panel
Social media – name				
Social media – name				
Social media – name				
Google				
Website – name				

***Add further rows as required*

As a result of the information disclosed above:	Yes	No
Is there evidence that the candidate is not fit to work with children, and/or that their online activity may immediately bring the school/Trust into disrepute, and therefore the recruitment process should be immediately terminated? *		
Is there information of concern that requires the recruitment panel to ask any further or supplementary questions to explore the candidate's suitability to work with children and/or to work in our organisation? **		

** If yes, please consider if any further action is needed to safeguard children, i.e. Police, Social Care, LADO*

*** If yes, the questions asked, and answers given, must be documented and retained in the candidate's interview notes, and you must complete pg 2 of this form*

Online Searches for Shortlisted Candidates Form – page 2

Following further or supplementary questions by the recruitment panel:	Yes	No
Do any concerns remain that indicate the candidate is not suitable to work with children and/or that their online activity may bring the school/Trust into disrepute?		
Please give a summary of your reasoning, referencing the risk assessment that has been conducted to support this decision:		
Things to consider: *age/maturity* *one off or recurring pattern of behaviour* *recency* *change to behaviour* *openness and honesty* *reflection / remorse*		
Has the candidate been successful, and have they been offered the position?		

Signed		Print name		Position	