



Recruitment & Selection Policy and Procedure

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1. Introduction

- 1.1** Reach South Academy Trust (the Trust) is committed to fairness and equity and values diversity in all aspects of its work as a provider of education and as an employer of people. We constantly strive to build a workforce that is representative of the community it serves.
- 1.2** The Trust is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation in the provision of our services and in recruitment and employment. This enables an environment that is characterised by dignity and respect which is free from harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- 1.3** The Trust recognises that attracting, recruiting, developing and retaining skilled and experienced employees is central to the achievement of its business goals and objectives, and the provision of a high quality service. The Trust is committed to signing up to Charters that align with the Trust's values; these include Disability Confident, Safer Jobs, Time to Change, Mindful Employer and Race at Work.
- 1.4** The Trust is also fully committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The Trust recognises that the effectiveness of its recruitment policy and procedures make a major contribution to child protection and safeguarding by helping to deter, reject or identify people who might be unsuitable to work with children.
- 1.5** The Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures are based on and conform to statutory and non-statutory guidance contained in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)'. This policy also has due regard for Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (July 2015 supplemented by the non- statutory advice and a briefing note 'The Prevent duty: Departmental Advice for Trusts and Childminders and The Use of Social Media for On-line Radicalisation' (July 2015)) and the Disqualification under Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018). The Trust aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.6** This Policy applies to all employees of Reach South Academy Trust who have a contract of employment, a casual worker agreement or workers who have an Agency Agreement and others who may be involved in the recruitment and selection process. It also applies to volunteers. The Policy defines advertising protocols and recruitment procedures as well as the Trust's approach to Keeping Children Safe in Education (Safer Recruitment). This will involve:
- Including the Trust's Child Protection policy statement in all job advertisements.
 - Requesting applicants to complete a detailed application form, including any relevant or required qualifications, a declaration of existing contacts in the Trust, details of referees and a declaration of criminal convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020 and any unspent conditional cautions or convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
 - Providing a Job Description and Person Specification which contains the

Trust's Child Protection policy statement.

- Ensuring all recruitment documents also clearly state that “applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service”.
- Asking candidates appropriate questions at interview relating both to their skills and their reasons for wanting to work with children.

1.7 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time in consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.

2. Who is covered by the policy?

2.1 This policy covers all employees working at all levels and grades. It also applies to consultants, contractors, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

3. Personnel responsible for implementing the policy

3.1 The Board has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Director of Human Resources.

3.2 Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks also lies with the CEO and the Director of Human Resources. All managers have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understand the contents.

3.3 All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it.

3.4 All staff who participate in recruitment and selection activities within the Trust must ensure they have read and fully understand their obligations under this policy.

4. Principles

4.1 The policy is designed to ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are planned, consistent and fair.

4.2 All recruiting managers involved with recruitment processes are expected to refresh themselves with their knowledge of the policy and procedure before beginning the recruitment, interview and selection process. All those involved in recruitment will be appropriately trained in Safer Recruitment, however it is appreciated that this may not always be the case, therefore a minimum of one interview panel member must be appropriately trained and will be the Chair of the interview panel. This training must be refreshed every three years.

4.3 We recognise that unsuitable individuals sometimes seek out employment or volunteering opportunities for the purpose of having access to children in order to harm them. Reach South Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All our appointments are subject to a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and children's barred list checks for those in regulated activity

5. Planning

- 5.1** When an individual decides to leave the Trust or, in the event of a promotion, the Headteacher in the first instance will consider whether recruitment into “a like for like” position is necessary, or whether alternative arrangements could be considered. Any role with a leadership salary scale will need to be authorised by the Director of Human Resources; this is to ensure parity of leadership salaries across the Trust.
- 5.2** Fixed term contracts will only be authorised where there is evidence that the role is either:-
- (i) for maternity, paternity and adoption cover;
 - (ii) a sabbatical or career break;
 - (ii) long term absence cover or
 - (iv) agreed fixed term funding (i.e. to work with a pupil on a 1:1 basis for a period of time).
- 5.3** Those responsible for recruiting will consider carefully the skills, knowledge and experience the successful candidate will need to demonstrate, and whether there are any particular matters that need to be included in the advertisement for the post in order to attract suitable applicants.
- 5.4** The person responsible for the recruitment will need to review and revise the job profile/description as appropriate. The person specification will need careful thought to include clear selection criteria for both essential and desirable. The Job profile/description will, where applicable, make reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the person specification will include specific reference to suitability to work with children.
- 5.5** All recruitment materials will be reviewed regularly by the Trust’s Shared Service Centre recruitment team to ensure that it is up-to-date. The information sent to applicants will set out clearly the extent of the relationships/contact with children, and the degree of responsibility for children that the appointed person will have.

6. Advertising of posts

- 6.1** All positions for paid staff, volunteers and contract workers will be advertised in a way that ensures that we attract high quality applicants from diverse backgrounds. Jobs advertised externally in relevant publications and as a minimum on the Trust/Schools website, Job Centre and the DfE service (where applicable). In exceptional circumstances, some jobs will be advertised internally as a minimum requirement. Advertising internally only will only be approved following a discussion with one of the Trust’s HR Business Partners.
- 6.2** Advertisements will state the Trust’s commitment to Safeguarding children and young people. This will also be included on all information sent to candidates.
- 6.3** The Trust is committed to developing existing staff and also recognises that it is important for new staff to bring fresh ideas.
- 6.4** The Trust will ask all applicants to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process, as detailed in Section 1.6. A statement to

this effect will be included on the Application Form. The Trust will request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to the Recruitment Team (in the first instance) and will guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

7. Application form

7.1 All applicants will be required to complete an Application Form. The Application Form will ask for the following:

- Full, identifying details of the applicant, including current and former names, current address and National Insurance Number.
- A full, chronological career history over the past 10 years. The applicant will be asked to clarify any gaps.
- Any academic and/or vocational qualifications that are relevant to the position for which they are applying.
- Supporting statement, where the applicant will outline how they meet the criteria detailed in the personal specification.
- A declaration of any existing contacts/relationships in the Trust.
- Details of referees; within the last three years and one of which must be their present, or last, employer.
- A declaration of any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings, except for those to which the DBS filtering rules apply. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-filtering-guidance/dbs-filtering-guide> for further information.

7.2 Only fully completed forms will be accepted; a Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted in place of the completed application form.

7.3 All appointed candidates will sign a copy of their Application Form to declare the contents are a true record.

8. Job profiles/descriptions and person specifications

8.1 The purpose of the job profile/description is to inform the applicant and the recruiter of what is expected within the role. The person specification identifies the skills, competencies or attributes the post holder should have to carry out the role effectively.

8.2 Job profiles will be used for all support staff posts and these can be obtained from the Trusts Recruitment Team.

8.3 The job profile/description must be sent through to HR prior to the post being advertised.

9. References

9.1 References should be scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily, before the appointment is confirmed, including for any internal candidate.

9.2 A standard proforma will be used; however, where referees prefer to write a letter this will be acceptable if the details given in the letter provide the information requested in the proforma. Approaches will be made to previous employers for information to verify the details the applicant has made about particular qualities and experience.

- 9.3** For all applicants, their referees will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns, and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. They will also be asked whether they have, or may have, behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children.
- 9.4** Referees will be asked whether any formal capability procedures took place during their employment.
- 9.5** Details of allegations that have not been substantiated, are unfounded or malicious will not be sought.
- 9.6** Where neither the applicant's current or previous employment has involved working with children, their referees will still be asked about their suitability to work with children. This will include being asked whether they have, or may have, behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children. In this instance though, they may, where appropriate, answer 'not applicable' if the candidate's duties had not brought them into contact with children or young people.

10. Shortlisting and interviews

- 10.1** All applications for posts will be shortlisted anonymously against an objective shortlisting criteria identified in advance, which will be taken from the job profile/description and person specification. A minimum of two people will undertake the shortlisting process. One of these will be the recruiting manager responsible for the safer recruitment process (who will also sit on the interview panel).
- 10.2** The Trust will conduct face to face interviews with a minimum of two people on the interview panel. This will include the recruiting manager responsible for the safer recruitment process and another member of staff and, if appropriate, another from an external agency (for example, another school). In order to attract a wide range of applicants, the Trust will consider virtual interviews; these will be held with a minimum of two people on the interview panel.
- 10.3** The Trust will always aim to have students involved during the interview process for any role that will or may have contact with our students. In some cases it may be appropriate to have parent representation.
- 10.4** Interviews will include pre-planned and clear questions in relation to the post and to the candidate's previous work experience, knowledge, qualifications and skills (together with aptitude and ability) specifically in relation to safeguarding. All answers can then be cross referenced to the application form by the recruiting manager for accuracy of information.
- 10.5** Any gaps (of three months or more) in employment history will be explored during the interview process by the Recruiting Manager. Explanations for gaps will be recorded within the interview notes. If an explanation causes concern, the Recruiting Manager should advise the applicant that they will need to explore this further after the interview and then seek guidance from HR about how to proceed.

10.6 Feedback will be offered to those who are invited along for interview. This will be given by the recruiting manager. Reach South Academy Trust does not pay applicant's travel expenses to and from interviews. All unsuccessful applicants will be notified of the outcome in writing.

11. Pre-employment check procedure for new staff

11.1 A number of pre-employment checks are required when appointing a new person. These checks are in accordance with UK Employment legislation and Safer Recruitment practices. The following checks are normally completed prior to the first day at work:

11.2 Career history

11.2.1 Candidates are asked to provide a full, chronological career history over the past 10 years. They will be asked to provide reasons for any gaps in the Career History.

11.3 References

11.3.1 The Trust will request at least two references for each candidate, which will usually be a combination of the candidate's current or most recent employer and their most recent instance of working with children.

11.3.2 References must cover the last three years of employment as a minimum

11.4 Identity check

11.4.1 This is carried out in line with DBS requirements. All candidates at interview stage will be asked to provide the following:

- Three forms of valid, current and original identification, at least one of which should be photographic (e.g. a current passport; photo card driving licence (with counterpart); UK ID card-non EEA foreign nationals; EU national identity card – EU only) and at least one should confirm the applicants current address (e.g. utility bill or bank/building society statement dated within the last three months).

All documents must be in the applicant's current name. Where this is not the case evidence will be required from one of the following:

- marriage/civil partnership certificate
- decree absolute/civil partnership dissolution certificate
- Deed Poll certificate

Further details on identity checks can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines>

11.4.2 If the candidate cannot provide any of the above, guidance issued from the DBS will be followed.

11.4.3 Copies will be taken, verified, signed and dated by the person who has seen them and kept on the candidate's file. The copies of ID for will be kept for a limited time in accordance with employment and data protection legislation.

11.4.4 Where interviews are held remotely via Zoom/Teams, ID will be photographed by a member of the interview panel or Shared service Centre Recruitment Team. The originals will then be seen by the school and verified in accordance with 11.4.3

11.5 Right to work in the UK

11.5.1 All applicants invited to attend an interview at the school will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS identity checking guidelines.

11.5.2 Candidates will declare whether they have worked overseas for three months or more over the past five years, as part of the Trust’s pre-employment check procedure. Those candidates who declare they have a right to work visa must produce this as evidence during the pre-employment check procedure. Renewing all applicable visas will be the responsibility of staff; failing to do so may result in their contract of employment being terminated.

11.6 DBS check

11.6.1 It is anticipated that all regular positions will fall within the definition of ‘Regulated Activity’, (with the exception of certain volunteer roles) and will therefore require an Enhanced DBS check.

11.6.2 Where a post is eligible (in regulated activity as defined in Keeping children Safe in Education), a check against the barred list will be undertaken, either within the enhanced DBS disclosure or separately.

11.6.3 Until the Trust has had sight of the original Disclosure Certificate, the candidate will be treated as unchecked.

11.6.4 The Disclosure may be obtained either by asking the individual to complete an application for a new DBS Certificate, or by the individual producing a DBS Certificate which has been registered on the DBS Update Service (only applicable to DBS Certificates which have been issued since 17 June 2013).

11.6.5 Candidates who have registered with the DBS Update Service must produce the original of their DBS Certificate, along with the required proofs of ID. In accordance with DBS guidance, the Trust will ask the candidate to sign a statement to say that they give Reach South Academy Trust permission to access their record on the DBS Update Service. A printout of the result will be produced and held on the candidate’s file.

11.6.6 If the DBS is delayed, for valid reasons beyond the control of the Trust and/or the employee’, the Trust may allow the member of staff to start work, on the following conditions:

- The appointment is not confirmed;
- All other relevant checks have been completed satisfactorily;
- The DBS application has been made in advance;
- A Risk Assessment is written and kept on file and approved by the Director of Human Resources
- The Risk Assessment is reviewed every week until the Disclosure Certificate arrives

- Appropriate safeguards are taken (e.g. supervision)
- The member of staff is informed as to what these safeguards are and is happy to commence work under these conditions. This must be documented and kept on the new member of staff's file

11.7 DBS code of practice

11.7.1 The DBS Code of Practice requires that the school makes available a copy of its Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders to all job applicants. The DBS Code of Practice is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

11.7.2 In accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice this policy is made available to all job applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

11.7.3 As an organisation which uses the Disclosure and Barring service, the Trust Board complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

11.7.4 We meet the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020. A DBS check will therefore be carried out before appointment to any job at the school is confirmed. This will include details of convictions cautions and reprimands, as well as 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions. A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.

11.7.5 We are committed to the fair treatment of applicants on all protected grounds and in relation to all history of offending.

11.7.6 We promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their competencies, qualifications and knowledge.

11.7.7 At interview, or in a separate conversation, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the job sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

11.7.8 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the job before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

11.7.9 Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from working in the Trust. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences. A risk assessment will be undertaken by the Trust in all situations and a copy kept on file.

11.8 Prohibited teacher check

11.8.1 Prior to beginning work at the Trust, the Trust will undertake a Prohibited Teacher Check using the DfE Teaching Regulation Agency website.

11.9 Prohibition from management of independent trusts check (“section 128 direction”)

11.9.1 The Trust will check whether staff appointed to certain management positions are subject to a section 128 direction.

The posts which would fall under this definition are:

- Headteacher
- School Leadership Team staff (including non-teaching staff)
- Executive Business Managers
- Governors/Trustees
- Executives
- Staff working within Finance

This check will also be carried out for internal promotions to roles which fit the above definition.

11.10 European Economic Area (EEA) prohibition check

11.10.1 The Trust will check for any sanction or restriction that an EEA professional regulating body has imposed, using the DfE Teaching Regulation Agency website.

11.11 Childcare disqualification declaration

11.11.1 Under the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 individuals are disqualified from childcare provision if they have committed certain specified offences. This applies to any member of staff employed in early years childcare (up to the age of 5) or later years childcare (up to the age of 8) in nursery, primary or secondary school settings or the management of such settings. The Trust will ask members of staff and contractors to complete a Childcare Disqualification Declaration Form, both prior to the start of employment and on an annual basis thereafter. Failure to complete this form may result in the withdrawal of the job offer or disciplinary action.

11.12 Overseas candidates

11.12.1 If a candidate has lived overseas for three months or more at any point in the past five years, the candidate will be asked to present an overseas Police Check/Certificate of Good Conduct from the relevant country.

11.12.2 Where the candidate has worked in a Trust in the UK since moving from overseas, without going back overseas, the Trust will not repeat the overseas check.

11.13 Medical fitness declaration

11.13.1 Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration confirming that they know of no reasons, on grounds of mental or physical health, why they should not be able to discharge the responsibilities required by the post in question. When a candidate declares they have a pre-existing medical condition, the Trust will refer the candidate for an Occupational Health pre-employment health assessment.

11.13.2 A referral for a pre-employment health assessment will only be made following the candidate accepting a conditional offer of employment.

11.13.3 Where an Occupational Health assessment is undertaken, the report will be sent to the Shared Service Centre – HR Team. The school’s HR Business Partner will discuss with the candidate’s line manager the contents of the report and any

support/reasonable adjustments needed.

11.14 Qualifications check

11.14.1 All candidates will be asked to provide original proof of any professional qualifications they hold which are either required for, or relevant to, the position. Copies will be taken, verified, signed and kept on file.

11.14.2 If no original is to be found, the Trust will ask the candidate to order replacement certificates, or will request confirmation of the qualification in writing from the organisation or institution concerned. The confirmation will be kept on file.

11.15 Outcomes of the application and recruitment process

11.5.1 During the pre-employment process where the following apply, the Trust will report the facts to the Police and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service:

- the candidate is found to be on the Barred List, or the DBS Disclosure shows the applicant has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or
- the candidate is found to have been prohibited from the teaching profession
- a candidate has provided false information in, or in support of, their application; or
- there are serious concerns about a candidate’s suitability to work with children

11.16 Pre-employment on-boarding

11.16.1 All new staff will take part in an on boarding programme designed to help familiarise them with the Trust’s policies and procedures.

11.17 Mandatory training before employment starts

11.17.1 All new staff must complete pre-employment training prior to their start date with the Trust. This will include online training in safeguarding, PREVENT, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) awareness, equality and diversity, first aid and, where applicable, safer recruitment. Further role/school specific training will be discussed, as part of the post-employment on-boarding programme

11.18 Retention of documents

11.18.1 Recruitment and associated documents will be held securely in line with the UK Limitation Act 1980. This Act contains a 6-year time limit for starting many legal proceedings.

**12. Appointment and safer recruitment procedures for others
Self employed professionals (such as Sports Coaches, Therapists)**

12.1 If the individual is self-employed, the same checks will apply as those for staff.

12.2 Staff from other organisations (including supply agencies)

12.2.1 The Trust will ensure that their contract with any company, which provides staff who will have access to areas where unsupervised contact with children is possible, provides for the required checks on staff to be completed by the company itself. This Letter of Assurance will be placed on their file.

12.2.2 Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, supervising the Trust’s pupils either on or off Trust site, the Trust will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection and there are arrangements to liaise with the Trust

on these matters where appropriate.

12.3 Visiting speakers

12.3.1 In line with Prevent statutory guidance, the Trust will ensure that any visiting speakers who might fall within the scope of the Prevent duty, whether invited by staff or pupils, are appropriately supervised. The Trust will, in line with regulation, also take action to ensure that each speaker is suitable.

12.4 Volunteers

12.4.1 New regular volunteers will be subject to the following checks:

- Production of photo ID on arrival
- An Enhanced DBS Certificate (including barred list check where appropriate) if the post is classed as in regulated activity
- If the post is not classed as in regulated activity, a risk assessment will be carried out and kept on file;
- Identity checks and right to work checks
- other checks may be carried out if deemed necessary
- Overseas checks (where appropriate)
- An informal meeting and a Safeguarding introduction will be arranged where required
- Confirmation that no concerns have been raised by others in the Trust community

12.5 Trust Governors/Trustees

12.5.1 The Trust will carry out the following checks on all new Governors/Trustees:

- Enhanced DBS Certificate
- Children's Barred List Check (If the Governor/Trustee is in regulated activity)
- ID Checks (in line with DBS requirements)
- Overseas Checks (where appropriate)
- Right to work in the UK
- Prohibition from management check ("section 128 direction")
- Childcare Disqualification Declaration (if the Governor/Trustee is in regulated activity)

12.6 Vetting Check Exemptions

12.6.1 In line with the DfE Regulatory Requirements, the Trust will not conduct vetting checks on the following:

- Visitors to the Head/other staff (must be supervised at all times)
- Those who have only brief contact with children in the presence of a teacher (must be supervised at all times)
- Pupils aged under 16 on work experience or similar
- Those on the Trust site when pupils are not present
- Visitors carrying out repairs or servicing equipment (where there is no possible access to children without supervision)

12.6.2 The Trust does not re-check staff returning from maternity leave, sabbaticals or similar instances.

12.7 The Single Central Register of Appointments

12.7.1 In accordance with current legislation, each school within the Trust keeps a Single

Central Register of Appointments. It is the responsibility of each individual school to maintain the Single Central Register, indicating whether or not the following checks have been completed on all current members of staff and governing body (where appropriate) at the Trust:

- Identity checks
- Qualification checks for any qualifications legally required for the position
- Enhanced Disclosure (or DBS Status Check)
- Barred List check
- Right to work in the UK
- Overseas checks, where applicable
- Prohibition from Teaching Check (where appropriate)
- Prohibition from management check (where appropriate)
- European Prohibition Check
- References
- Childcare Disqualification Declaration (where applicable)

13. Review of the policy

13.1 This policy is reviewed as required by Reach South Academy Trust in consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.

13.2 We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

POLICY HISTORY

Policy Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date
September 2020	Trade Union consultation	All Recognised Trade Unions	N/A	N/A
October 2020	New policy implemented - HR 22	HR	October 2020	September 2023
December 2020	Amendments made in line with legislation Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2020	HR	December 2020	November 2023