

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

Policy Statement

Read School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, including volunteers, to share this commitment.

This policy applies to all recruitment and engagement within the school: employees, governors, volunteers, peripatetic teachers, supply staff, agency and third-party workers, contractors, any paid visiting speakers and others who may come into contact with pupils.

This policy is implemented in line with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- ISI Framework 2023, noting the ISI Commentary on the Regulatory Requirements (March 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Education Act 2002 (s.157/175)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Police Act 1997 (Part V) and DBS Code of Practice
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order (as amended)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework
- National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Boarding
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- UK Visas & Immigration (Right to Work) requirements

These standards ensure that Read School promotes equality of opportunity and that practices are transparent, objective, thorough, and consistent.

The selection process will take account of issues relating to safeguarding children at every stage and will not rely solely on DBS checks. We aim to provide our pupils with the safest possible environment and to select those who in their work for the school will put the care and needs of our pupils first and foremost; and our selection process is structured with these factors in mind.

1. Advertising of Posts

All adverts and candidate information packs will contain a statement confirming the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All applicants will be informed that the posts in this school are subject to **enhanced DBS and Barred List checks** and any other checks required for the post in question by the statutory guidance in KCSIE.

Online searches will be carried out on all shortlisted candidates before interview wherever possible and recorded proportionately. Post advertisements will note that *'an indication of any online issues which you may wish to draw to our attention on your application form would be most helpful'*.

2. Application for Posts

The Read School application form is used for the recruitment of all staff; we are unable to accept CVs as a replacement for our application form.

The application form will be designed to obtain, as a minimum, the following information from all candidates prior to shortlisting:

- Full identifying details, which are usually confirmed with suitable photo ID such as a passport or driving licence and a birth certificate.

Should the application be successful, additional documentation relating to proof of address and utility bills will be required for the purposes of seeking the required enhanced DBS check.

READ SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT

- Our completed application form which provides us with *inter alia* details of education together with the applicant's chronological employment history since leaving education, giving explanations for any gaps in employment.
- Details of any academic, professional, or other relevant qualifications.
- For teaching staff and anyone carrying out a teaching or coaching role, where available their DfE number and evidence of QTS status, so that we may check the register of those prohibited from teaching.
- Contact details for two referees, one being their current or most recent employer; where a school is the most recent employer this reference must be from the headteacher of that school.
- For any person who has worked or lived overseas an overseas police check (where available) and also the contact details for a third referee preferably from the most recent overseas employer.
- For any person who has worked as a teacher overseas a letter of professional standing from the relevant countries (where available) and also the contact details for a third referee preferably from the most recent overseas teaching employment.
- A declaration of any family or close relationships to existing employees or governors so that we may exclude them from the recruitment process in the interests of fairness to all candidates.
- A declaration which is required of any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings that are not "protected" as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (amended).
- An indication of any online issues in the public domain which you may wish to draw to our attention on your application form.

3. Shortlisting, interviews, and decisions

Safeguarding is central to every stage of recruitment, selection, induction, and employment. Shortlisting and interviews will always be conducted by at least two people with at least three for senior leadership roles, and always at least one panel member trained in safer recruitment.

Applications will be scrutinized for completeness and consistency. Incomplete applications and CVs in *lieu* of a fully completed application form will not be accepted.

As part of the shortlisting process, the School will carry out an online search of all shortlisted candidates, including social media. This is to identify any publicly available incidents or issues that may be explored during the interview.

Online searches will be conducted by a nominated senior member of staff using publicly available information only. Searches will be limited to identifying information relevant to the individual's suitability to work with children. Any information relating to protected characteristics will be disregarded. Findings will be recorded factually and explored with the candidate as appropriate in the course of the interview process.

References will be obtained before interview wherever possible, with at least one reference from the most recent employer.

Where references are unavailable prior to an interview, a second interview may be conducted to resolve any issues or concerns noted in the references.

The interview process may vary according to the post but should always include a formal panel interview and generally an interview with the Head. At least one of the interviewers will have completed safer recruitment training.

The interview will explore not only the candidate's suitability for the specific role under consideration but also their awareness of safeguarding issues and their suitability for working with children.

4. Safeguarding questions at interview

Managers must ensure safeguarding is explicitly explored during every interview. A range of safer recruitment questions, approved by a member of the designated safeguarding team, should be used to test the candidate's suitability to work with children and their understanding of safeguarding responsibilities.

Some safeguarding questions will be predetermined, drawn from the candidate's application form and covering letter. Interviewers will retain flexibility to explore emerging themes in responses to test attitudes and professional judgement.

Questions relating to confidential issues declared before or during interview (such as medical disclosures, convictions, or safeguarding concerns) will not be explored by the full panel but addressed privately with the Head and Bursar as appropriate.

5. Pre-Appointment Checks

No individual will begin their work in the school until all required pre-employment checks are complete, save for exceptional cases of DBS delay where all other required checks have been made and a risk assessment, renewed where required, and an appropriate level of supervision are in place.

All relevant data will be contained within confidential staff files and summarised on the single central register (SCR) of appointments as required by KCSIE. The SCR must remain accurate, current, auditable, and supported by a clear oversight log.

All offers are conditional until the full set of satisfactory pre-appointment checks is complete. No individual may start regulated activity until checks are entered on the SCR, except where DBS checks are delayed and a formal risk assessment with an appropriate level of supervision is in place.

The required checks are:

- Identity verification using, whenever possible, a passport and birth certificate, the latter or another document is used to determine whether or not the candidate's name has changed since birth.
- Enhanced DBS together with a barred list check.
- Right to work in the UK for all paid roles.
- Professional qualifications (where relevant).
- Prohibition from teaching check for any person either in a teaching role of any kind or who may previously have been in such a role.
- Prohibition from management checks (Section 128) for teaching staff taking up a leadership or management role and for other staff taking up a post which may involve senior leadership.
- Two references, ideally obtained before interview, one from the most recent employer. We ask all referees to state that they know of no reason why the person should not be employed to work with children, and that there should be no material mis-statement or omission relevant to the suitability of the applicant.
- A health declaration (fitness to work), completed post-offer only and assessed solely in relation to the requirements of the role.
- Overseas checks:
 - Police checks: for those who have worked or lived for three or more months overseas in last 10 years; where such a check is unavailable or unobtainable a third reference will be sought preferably from an employer in the most recent relevant country.
 - Professional standing: a letter or document of assurance of good professional standing from the relevant countries for those who have taught overseas at any time or worked or lived for three or more months overseas in last 10 years; where such a check is unavailable or unobtainable a third reference will be sought preferably from the school or institution at which the teaching took place in the most recent relevant country.
- Online search done prior to interview.
- A declaration regarding no disqualification from childcare for those who will/may work with EYFS children in any capacity at any time or with under 8s before/after school.

6. Post-appointment Procedures

New staff are subject to a **probationary period** and a comprehensive induction that covers the school's safeguarding policies.

All relevant recruitment documentation for the appointed candidate will be securely kept.

7. Induction

Induction will include KCSIE, Safeguarding Policy, a safeguarding briefing by a member of the designated safeguarding team, Staff Code of Conduct, Low-level concerns, Acceptable Use of IT, pupil behaviour policy, guidance on data protection, and organisational values.

Date of Policy: January 2026

Review: January 2027