

Safer Recruitment Policy (R.E.A.L. Independent Schools)

Amended on: 01/09/2015

Review Date: 01/09/2016

Revision history:

01/09/2015: - No amendments to policy.

01/09/2014: - Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check has been replaced by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

'Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education' - December 2006 has been superseded by 'Keeping children safe in education' - April 2014.

01/09/2013: - No amendments to policy. Policy duplicated for R.E.A.L. Independent Schools.

01/09/2012: - No amendments to policy.

01/09/2011: - Policy written for R.E.A.L. Education Ltd.

Principles

This policy is produced with due regard to the DfE Safer Recruitment Guidance and the Independent School Standards Regulations. R.E.A.L. Independent Schools is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in our care. As an employer, the school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. In order to ensure this, our Safer Recruitment policy is in accordance with national guidance, outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' - April 2014 . It has been ratified by the Directors and Governing Body and has due regard to the School's Mission Statement.

The process of safe recruitment is detailed below and this policy includes a checklist to ensure rigour is applied to the process. The policy also reinforces the school's whistle blowing policy, with which all staff and volunteers are expected to be familiar. All successful candidates for paid or volunteer employment will be made aware of these documents. This policy is an essential element in creating and maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all pupils, staff and others within the school community and aims to ensure both safe and fair recruitment and selection of all staff and volunteers by:

- Attracting the best possible candidates/volunteers to vacancies,
- Deterring prospective candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable from applying, identifying and rejecting those candidates/volunteers who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.

R.E.A.L. Independent Schools is committed to using disciplinary procedures that deal effectively with those adults who fail to comply with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures and practices. As an employer, we are under a duty to refer to the ISA any member of staff who, following disciplinary proceedings, is dismissed because of misconduct towards a pupil and we may refer any concerns we have before the completion of this process. Cases of abuse must also be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Directors and Members of the school will:

- Ensure the school has effective policies and procedures in place for the safe and fair recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in accordance with Department for Education guidance and legal requirements
- Monitor the school's compliance with them

- Ensure that appropriate staff and governors have completed safer recruitment training

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that the school operates safe and fair recruitment and selection procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensure that all appropriate checks have been carried out on staff and volunteers in the school.
- Monitor any contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document.
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at every stage of this process.

Inviting applications

All advertisements for paid or unpaid posts will include the following statement: "R.E.A.L. Independent Schools is committed to safeguarding children and young people. All post holders are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS)".

All applicants will receive a pack containing the following when applying for a post:

- A statement of the school's commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the pupils.
- The job description and the person specification, which will include suitability to work with children.
- The school's Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice.
- The school's Safer Recruitment Policy.
- The selection procedure for the post.
- An application form.

Prospective applicants must complete, in full, and return a signed application form which will be used to enable all potential applicants to provide a common set of core data as follows:

- Current and former names, date of birth, current address.
- National insurance number and evidence of eligibility to work in the UK.
- Qualifications relevant to the position applied for, including awarding body and date of award.
- Medical information.
- Teachers will need to provide evidence of their qualification.
- Full history (CV) in chronological order showing: employment, study, voluntary work, with explanations for any periods not covered and reasons for leaving employment.

- Details of at least two referees – one of whom must be the current or most recent employer. (For an employee not currently working with children, but who has done so in the past, it is important to also contact the past employer).
- A statement from the applicant of their personal qualities and experience.

Incomplete application forms will be returned to the applicant where the deadline for completed forms has not passed.

Candidates submitting an application form completed online will be asked to sign the form if called for interview. A curriculum vitae will not be accepted in place of a completed application form.

No member of staff may commence work with R.E.A.L. Independent Schools until a satisfactory DBS check is in place.

Recruitment panel

At least one member of the School's selection and recruitment panel will have completed training in safer recruitment.

Short listing and references

Candidates will be shortlisted against the person specification for the post. Two references, one of which must be from the candidates current/most recent employer, will be taken up before the selection stage and checked by the Headteacher, so that any discrepancies may be probed during this stage of the procedure.

References will be sought directly from the referee who, where necessary, will be contacted to clarify any anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges. Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

Referees will be asked specific questions about the following:

- The candidate's suitability to work with children and young people.
- Any disciplinary warnings, including time-expired warnings, relating to the safeguarding of children and young people.
- The candidate's suitability for the post in terms of competency.

Reference requests will include the following:

- Applicants current post and salary.

- Sickness record.
- Attendance record.
- Disciplinary record.

All appointments are subject to satisfactory references, vetting procedures and DBS clearance.

Invitation to interview

Candidates called to interview will receive:

- A letter confirming the interview and details of any other selection techniques.
- Details of the interview day, including details of the panel members.
- A copy of the person specification.
- Details of any tasks to be undertaken as part of the interview process.
- The opportunity to discuss the process prior to the interview.

The selection process

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature of the duties of the post but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates. Interviews will, wherever possible, be conducted in a face-to-face setting. Candidates will be required to:

- Explain any gaps in employment.
- Explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the panel.
- Declare any information that is likely to appear on the DBS disclosure.
- Demonstrate their ability to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

Employment checks

An offer of appointment will be conditional and all successful candidates will be required to:

- Provide proof of identity.
- Complete a DBS check and receive satisfactory clearance.
- Provide proof of professional status.
- Provide actual certificates of qualifications and verification of successful completion of statutory probationary or induction period.
- Complete a confidential health questionnaire.
- Provide proof of eligibility to live and work in the UK, (a national insurance number does not automatically give this right).

All checks will be:

- Confirmed in writing.
- Documented and retained on the personnel file.
- Recorded on the School's Single Central Record.
- Followed up if they are unsatisfactory or if there are any discrepancies in the information received.

Employment will commence subject to all checks and procedures being satisfactorily completed.

Contract

A contract will be written by the HR team and two original copies will be signed by the Headteacher and the employee.

Induction

All staff and volunteers who are new to the school will receive information on the school's policies and procedures and will be made aware of the following:

- Safeguarding and child protection.
- Anti-bullying.
- Equal opportunities.
- Management of behaviour.
- Disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Health and safety.

During induction, new staff will be signposted to the R.E.A.L. Independent Schools staff handbook which will include other general policies and procedures pertinent to staff employment. All candidates will undergo a statutory probationary period of six months, during which time they will meet with their line manager on a regular basis to ensure an appropriate induction is completed.

Staff concerns (whistleblowing)

All staff and volunteers are encouraged to be confident about raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practices throughout the organisation. R.E.A.L. Independent Schools is committed to providing appropriate avenues for staff to raise concerns, for these to be treated confidentially, seriously and sensitively and for a response to be given and feedback on any action taken.

R.E.A.L. Independent Schools also assures staff and volunteers that there will be support to protect them from possible reprisals. Our discipline and grievance procedures cover many areas for concerns but some aspects may fall out of their scope. These include:

- Possible fraud and corruption.
- Unauthorised use of funds/failure to comply with financial regulations.
- Failure to comply with codes of practice/conduct.
- A criminal offence being committed.
- Disclosures.
- Health and safety risks.
- Damage to the environment.
- Sexual or physical abuse.
- Other unethical conduct.

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing to the Headteacher. The matter will then be dealt with appropriately and objectively and staff/volunteers will be kept advised. The Headteacher may seek advice from members of the school's governing board or from external experts on the way to proceed.

On-going employment

R.E.A.L. Independent Schools recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment, but should be a part of a larger policy framework for all staff. We will therefore provide on-going training and support for all staff, as identified through performance management.

We will also provide a range of opportunities where concerns can be raised, in order that staff feel that the school culture embraces safeguarding and communicates a clear framework to employees, parents and pupils. We will monitor issues as they arise, and through the use of a range of strategies, will seek to continually improve the school environment for the benefit of both staff and pupils.

Supply staff

From time to time, R.E.A.L. Independent Schools will use supply staff to cover long-term illness and maternity leave. Specialist supply staff may also be used to broaden the curriculum offer in order to meet the individual needs of particular pupils. These staff will be drawn from a list of preferred supply partners and will be qualified and experienced in their field. This information and a profile of all staff referred to R.E.A.L. Independent Schools will be made available before they are engaged.



R.E.A.L. Independent Schools will carry out identity checks when the individual arrives at school, which will include verification of their enhanced DBS status.

Any peripatetic staff will also be subject to the necessary checks and procedures in respect of DBS and suitability.