



ATTEND – ENGAGE - PROGRESS

‘Reality Strikes Academy provides alternative education that combines academic learning with football coaching to help young people reengage with education, through a trauma informed, nurturing environment. The vision is to foster holistic personal and emotional growth to create positive pathways into the future for young people.’

REALITY STRIKES ACADEMY

Safer Recruitment Policy

2025-26

Date Reviewed: September 2025
Next Review Date: September 2026

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Important Contacts

Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Sam Woodhall	Sam.woodhall@relaitystrikes.co.uk 07359079827
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Reuben Bowen	Reuben.bowen@realitystrikes.co.uk 07446802436
Chair of Governors	Richard Woods	Richard.woods@truelearning.org.uk 07969394852
Governor for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Jade Gilchrist	Jade.gilchrist@compass-schools.org 07971371200

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles and procedures that underpin safe and fair recruitment practices at Reality Strikes Academy.

Our aim is to ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with children are suitable, qualified, and committed to the welfare and development of every pupil.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all individuals engaged by the Academy, including:

- Permanent and temporary employees
- Agency and supply staff
- Volunteers, contractors, and third-party providers
- Trainees, student teachers, and work placement participants
- The Proprietor

1.3 Commitment to Safeguarding

Reality Strikes Academy is a trauma-informed, nurture-based alternative provision that prioritises the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and young people.

We recognise that robust recruitment is the foundation of effective safeguarding.

We are committed to:

- Creating a safe and transparent recruitment culture;
- Preventing unsuitable people from working with children;
- Promoting equality, inclusion, and fairness; and
- Maintaining compliance with KCSIE 2025 and the Independent School Standards (2014).

2. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy complies with and is informed by:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2025)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *Independent School Standards Regulations (2014, as amended)*
- *Education (Prohibition from Teaching or Working with Children) Regulations (2003)*

- *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)*
 - *Equality Act (2010)*
 - *Data Protection Act (2018) and UK GDPR*
 - *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)*
 - *Disqualification under the Childcare Act (2006)*
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3. Aims

At Reality Strikes Academy, we recognise that safer recruitment is the foundation of effective safeguarding practice. To ensure that every individual working with or around our pupils is safe, suitable, and aligned with our values, we require that all staff involved in recruitment undertake accredited Safer Recruitment Training.

By following this policy, we ensure that everyone engaged by the Academy — whether employed directly, contracted, or volunteering — is thoroughly vetted and appropriately selected to minimise the risk of harm or potential harm to children and young people.

Our approach to recruitment goes beyond compliance. We aim to select and retain individuals who not only meet professional and safeguarding standards, but who also demonstrate the compassion, consistency, and high expectations that enable our pupils to thrive within a trauma-informed, nurture-based environment.

This policy is informed by Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (**KCSIE, 2025**) and underpinned by the five key principles of Safer Recruitment in Education as identified by the NSPCC:

- 1. Planning and Pre-Recruitment – Preparing clear, safeguarding-focused role descriptions.**
- 2. Selecting the Right People – Assessing character, values, and suitability alongside competence.**
- 3. Choosing Wisely – Making objective, evidence-based recruitment decisions.**
- 4. Checking Thoroughly – Ensuring all statutory and regulatory checks are completed and verified.**
- 5. Induction and Vigilance – Embedding safeguarding expectations from day one and maintaining ongoing awareness across all staff.**

Through this process, Reality Strikes Academy upholds its commitment to creating a safe, transparent, and professionally curious culture, where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Proprietor (Sam Woodhall)	Has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that safer recruitment processes are implemented, monitored, and reviewed.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Oversees safeguarding elements of recruitment, including DBS checks, risk assessments, and staff induction.
Recruitment Panel Members	Must complete Safer Recruitment Training and ensure that safeguarding considerations are central to all decisions.
Administrative/HR Lead	Manages pre-employment checks, record keeping, and maintenance of the Single Central Record (SCR).
All Staff and Volunteers	Must understand this policy, complete mandatory safeguarding induction, and uphold safeguarding culture in daily practice.

5. Safer Recruitment Procedures

5.1 Planning and Advertising

All recruitment begins with a clear, justified vacancy request and role definition. Job adverts and recruitment materials will include the statement:

“Reality Strikes Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All roles are subject to enhanced DBS checks and thorough vetting procedures.”

5.2 Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Every post will include safeguarding responsibilities appropriate to the role. Person specifications will define the qualifications, skills, and attributes required for safe and effective practice.

5.3 Applications

- All applicants must complete a full application form; CVs alone are not accepted.
- Gaps in employment or inconsistencies must be explored during shortlisting or interview.
- Applicants must declare all convictions, cautions, or disciplinary findings, whether spent or unspent, that may be relevant to working with children.

5.4 Shortlisting

- At least two trained panel members will shortlist applicants.
- All application forms are scrutinised for accuracy, completeness, and safeguarding indicators.
- Discrepancies or unexplained gaps are noted for discussion at interview.

5.5 References

- A minimum of two professional references will be obtained prior to appointment, including the most recent employer.
- References will be verified for authenticity and cross-checked against the candidate’s employment history.
- Open or “to whom it may concern” references will not be accepted.

5.6 Interviews

- At least one member of every interview panel must hold Safer Recruitment Training certification.
- All interviews include safeguarding-focused questions to assess the candidate’s attitude, understanding, and professional boundaries.
- Identity documents will be verified during the interview process.

5.7 Conditional Offers

All offers of employment are conditional upon satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks.

6. Pre-Employment Vetting and Verification

The following checks are mandatory for all staff and volunteers prior to starting work:

Check	Requirement / Source
Identity Verification	Confirmed using original documentation and photo ID.
Right to Work in the UK	Verified in line with Home Office guidance.
Enhanced DBS with Barred List Check	Required for all roles involving regulated activity.
Overseas Criminal Record Check	For candidates who have lived or worked abroad within the past 5 years.



Check	Requirement / Source
Prohibition from Teaching / Management Check	Where applicable, checked via the DfE Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).
Qualification Verification	Checked against certificates and professional bodies.
Employment History and Gaps	Verified and explained prior to offer confirmation.
Medical Fitness to Work	Confirmed via a health declaration.
Disqualification Under the Childcare Act (2006)	Self-declaration obtained where applicable.

7. Single Central Record (SCR)

7.1 Purpose

The SCR is maintained to ensure compliance with *KCSIE 2025* and *Independent School Standards*. It records vetting details for all staff, volunteers, and contractors.

7.2 Contents

The SCR will include:

- Full name, role, and start date
- DBS check details and date
- Barred list status
- Identity and right to work verification
- References and qualifications verified
- Date and initials of verifier

7.3 Oversight

The Proprietor and DSL review and sign the SCR termly to ensure completeness and compliance.

8. Recruitment of Specific Groups

8.1 Volunteers

- Must complete a volunteer application form and provide references.

- Supervised volunteers may not require barred list checks but will always be risk assessed.

8.2 Agency and Supply Staff

- The agency must provide written assurance that all required checks have been completed.
- The AP will verify the individual's identity on arrival and record the agency's confirmation on the SCR.

8.3 Contractors and Visitors

- Contractors with unsupervised access to pupils require enhanced DBS checks.
- Supervised contractors must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

8.4 Students and Trainees

- Placement providers must confirm DBS clearance.
 - Students will receive safeguarding induction before commencing.
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9. Induction, Training and Supervision

- All new staff receive a comprehensive induction, including safeguarding, first aid, whistleblowing, and code of conduct training.
 - The DSL provides a safeguarding briefing on Day 1.
 - All staff complete annual refresher training and regular supervision focused on safe practice.
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10. Record Keeping and Data Protection

- All recruitment records, including interview notes and references, will be stored securely for a minimum of 6 months following appointment or rejection.
 - Data is held in compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act (2018).
 - Access is restricted to authorised personnel only.
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11. Allegations and Low-Level Concerns

- Allegations or low-level concerns about staff or volunteers will be managed in accordance with the Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy.

- Any safeguarding concern will be reported immediately to the DSL (Sam Woodhall) or directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if appropriate.
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12. Monitoring and Review

- The Proprietor reviews recruitment and vetting processes annually to ensure compliance and effectiveness.
 - The DSL monitors safeguarding-related recruitment matters termly.
 - This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or DfE guidance changes.
 - Next review due: September 2026.
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13. Appendices

Appendix A: Pre-Employment Checks Summary Table

Approval

Approved by:

Sam Woodhall – Proprietor & Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date Approved: [Insert Date]

Next Review: [Insert Date]

Contact:

 *Reality Strikes Academy (Alternative Provision)*

Stourbridge Rugby Club, Stourton, Stourbridge, DY7 6QZ

 info@realitystrikes.co.uk

Appendix 1

Appendix A – Pre-Employment Checks Summary Table

Reality Strikes Academy (Alternative Provision)

Check	Who is it required for	Purpose	Verification Method / Evidence	Who is Responsible	Recorded on SCR
Identity Verification	All staff, volunteers, contractors, agency workers	Confirms individual's identity	Original photographic ID (passport, driving licence), proof of address	Proprietor	✓
Right to Work in the UK	All staff	Ensures legal eligibility to work in the UK	Passport, visa, or Home Office online check	Proprietor	✓
Enhanced DBS Check (with Barred List)	All staff, volunteers, and contractors in regulated activity	Confirms suitability to work with children	Enhanced DBS certificate and update service check	DSL	✓
Barred List Check	All in regulated activity	Ensures individual is not barred from working with children	Through DBS or DfE portal	DSL	✓
Overseas Criminal Record Check	Staff who have lived or worked abroad in the last 5 years	Identifies offences committed overseas	Police certificate or equivalent from overseas authority	Proprietor	✓
Prohibition from Teaching Check	Qualified teachers	Confirms if barred from teaching by DfE	TRA Teacher Services portal	DSL	✓
Section 128 Management Check	Senior leaders, management, and governors/proprietor	Ensures not barred from management of	TRA Teacher Services portal	Proprietor / DSL	✓

Check	Who is it required for	Purpose	Verification Method / Evidence	Who is Responsible	Recorded on SCR
		independent schools			
Qualifications Verification	All teaching, leadership, or specialist roles	Confirms professional competence and credentials	Original qualification certificates	Proprietor	✓
Employment History Verification	All staff	Ensures accuracy and explores employment gaps	Scrutiny of application form and references	Proprietor	✓
References (minimum of two)	All staff and volunteers	Verifies professional conduct and suitability	Written and verified references from previous employers	Proprietor	✓
Medical Fitness to Work	All employees	Ensures candidate is physically and mentally fit to fulfil role	Health declaration form or GP confirmation (if required)	Proprietor	✓
Disqualification Under the Childcare Act (2006)	Relevant staff working with under-8s	Confirms no disqualification from early or childcare provision	Self-declaration form	DSL	✓
Social Media/Online Screening (where applicable)	All staff in public-facing roles	Identifies online conduct that may pose safeguarding risks	Review of publicly available online content	DSL / Admin Lead	✓

Check	Who is it required for	Purpose	Verification Method / Evidence	Who is Responsible	Recorded on SCR
Safeguarding and Induction Training	All staff and volunteers	Embeds safer practice from first day of employment	Training attendance record	DSL	✓
Probationary Review	All new staff	Confirms continued suitability post-induction	Probation review meeting records	Proprietor / Line Manager	✓

Note: All pre-employment checks must be completed and verified before the individual starts work or, if exceptional circumstances apply, before unsupervised contact with pupils.

The **Proprietor (Sam Woodhall)** retains oversight and signs off all safer recruitment documentation.

Appendix 2 – Reference request form

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Reference



Referee Name:

Organisation & Role:

Relationship to Candidate: [e.g. Line Manager, Mentor]

How long have you known the candidate? [e.g., 2 years]

Please rate or comment on the following areas:

Professional conduct & reliability: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs Development]

Comments: _____

Teaching/coaching ability: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs Development]

Comments: _____

Safeguarding knowledge & practice: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs

Development] Comments: _____

Behaviour management & de-escalation: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs

Development] Comments: _____

Relationships with children & families: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs

Development] Comments: _____

Teamwork & communication: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs Development]

Comments: _____

Punctuality & attendance: [Excellent / Good / Satisfactory / Needs Development]

Comments: _____

Overall suitability for working with children and young people: [Excellent / Good /

Satisfactory / Needs Development] Comments: _____

Safer Recruitment Declarations:

- Are you aware of any current disciplinary proceedings or concerns? [Yes/No] If yes, please provide details.

