



# Management & Vetting of Contractors Policy

**Approved by:** Finance, Audit & Risk Committee **Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023

**Last reviewed on:** October 2023

**Next review due by:** October 2025

# Management and Vetting of Contractors Policy

## Aims

This policy outlines the steps the Trust will take to ensure compliance with applicable laws regarding the use of contractors on Trust property for the benefit of all students and staff. It also aims to promote best practises by extending the arrangements to as many people as is possible who may be impacted by our activities.

We must ensure that contractors who carry out work on Trust premises do so in a way that does not create risks for pupils, staff, visitors or contractors. Reactive and emergency maintenance and repairs cannot be pre-planned but every effort will be taken to ensure they are carried out safely.

At the time of writing, the relevant legislation is:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989;
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992;
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992;
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998;
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998;
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999;
- Work at Height Regulations 2005;
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006;
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2016;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

## Definition of Contractor

A contractor is any person not employed or managed by the Trust and who has the freedom to plan how they will carry out the work they are contracted to do. This includes the full range of contractors, sub-contractors and consultants.

## Introduction

Works undertaken by contractors can be risky because they have to be carried out on site and in situations which are unfamiliar to those contractors. Accidents and incidents can occur if contractors do not know about the hazards on site and the employees on that site do not know the demarcation lines between what the contractors are doing and they themselves should be doing. These problems can be avoided if the work is properly assessed and managed. Unforeseeable circumstances may make it necessary to change detailed arrangements when the work is underway. This will always be done in consultation with the School Business Manager or Estates Manager and the health and safety implications of any changes must be taken into account.

## Selecting Contractors

For major works and where possible for maintenance and minor works, the Trust will use reputable contractors recommended or previously used before.

All premises projects exceeding £5K will be managed by the Trust Estates and Contracts Manager.

Where necessary the Trust will assess their suitability using the New Contractor Checklist – see Appendix 1.

## **Management & Responsibilities**

Frequent communication between the contractor and the Trust is the key to a low-risk and efficient project.

The School Business Manager/ Estates Manager is responsible for ensuring that:

- A Risk Assessment is carried out;
- Pupils, staff and visitors are safe and do not interfere with the contractor's legitimate activities during work in occupied premises;
- Pupils and staff are clearly informed of areas that they may not enter;
- Contractors are safe and operate in a safe method, using suitable risk assessed safe systems of work. This is a legal obligation;
- The School Business Manager or Estates Manager completes and reviews the Contractors on-site checklist with the Contractor. See Appendix 2 – Contractor's Induction Pack;
- All people are protected from harm caused by work activities. Therefore, the School Business Manager will advise the Contractor through the appropriate channels, about any hazard which arises as a result of the contractor's operations.

## **Safeguarding of Children**

Children should not be allowed in areas where contractors are working, not least for health and safety reasons, so these workers should have no contact with children. However, it may be impossible to control this and there may be occasions when contractors do come into contact with children (such as when entering or leaving the site).

The school will ensure that contractors are accompanied on site.

These contractors should sign in and sign out when visiting the premises.

Contractors may need to take photographs of a particular area. This should be discussed with the SBM or Premises Manager. Photographs should not contain images of any children.

## **Minor work and short-term maintenance**

In the case of minor building or maintenance work, it is often not possible to completely separate the contractor's activities from those of the School. The initial site meetings and continuing liaison arrangements are therefore most important in ensuring that safe working practices are established and maintained.

Before agreeing the specification for such work, the contractor will visit the premises, explain the scope, nature and implications of the proposed work to the School Business Manager and/or Estates Manager and agree on any necessary safety precautions to be included in the contract. A standard clause in such contracts requires the contractor to contact the building's occupiers and make all necessary arrangements to execute the work at such times and in such a manner as is convenient to the occupiers. The maximum practicable notice of the start of works and any temporary interruption of services should be provided.

Every contractor who enters occupied premises to carry out works must report to school reception who will inform the School Business Manager and/or Estates Manager as required. This is when the scope, nature and estimated duration of the works will be confirmed. At this time, the

implications of carrying them out for both the building occupiers and the contractor's workforce will be assessed and any necessary safety precautions agreed and implemented. In any case where this is not carried out, the School Business Manager or Estates Manager will instruct the contractor to cease operations until compliance is met. Sometimes, for minor repair and maintenance work, no written contract exists until after the event, but common law still requires the works to be executed in a safe and timely manner.

## **Major development work**

Major development work includes new buildings, extensions and significant refurbishment. In this instance, the entire site/building, or part of it, defined by a temporary screen or fence, is handed over to the contractor for the duration of the contract (see requirement for vehicle access below).

The defined work area becomes the responsibility of the contractor and is generally out of bounds to all but the contractor's workforce. School staff may only enter the area, for instance, to view the progress of work, with the permission of and by prior arrangement with the contractor. Such visits are normally arranged by the project architect/surveyor and staff must observe all the relevant regulations eg. reporting to the site office on arrival, wearing a hard hat and any other protective clothing deemed necessary by the contractor who is responsible for the health and safety of all personnel on site.

Under no circumstances must school staff pay unofficial, unsupervised visits to (areas of) buildings which have been handed over to contractors. For the period of the contract, the buildings are the responsibility of the contractor and the member of staff may not be covered against accidents or for public liability.

The School Business Manager and/or Estates Manager are to ensure that any necessary safety precautions e.g. to protect inquisitive children, are built into the works contract. Additionally and before the work starts, the Architect will arrange a pre-contract meeting, and subsequent site meetings between all interested parties will be held to agree and monitor the practical arrangements to be followed whilst the work is in progress, with health and safety issues being paramount. Arrangements for first aid, welfare facilities, action in case of fire and car parking etc. all need to be agreed at the outset. In any event, the maximum practicable notice of the start of work and any temporary interruption of services should be provided.

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment should be carried out on all proposed work and a health and safety plan prepared by the planning co-ordinator and/or architect and implemented by the contractor where required under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and in other cases where it is considered appropriate given the nature and degree of risk.

Contractors should produce method statements or other safe systems of work that match the significant risks in their risk assessments. This may require the amendment of local risk assessments for the duration of the work to reflect any of our activities that are affected by the work. However, any existing safety arrangements that have been made eg. fire precautions and evacuation plans, must not be allowed to be compromised by this process.

If any hazard which cannot easily be eliminated becomes apparent, or there are other imminent or obvious dangers, the School Business Manager or Estates Manager should evacuate the affected area until the hazard is removed or made safe. The School staff should not act outside of their area of responsibility to deal with any hazard, but should draw the matter to the contractor's attention.

Where the School considers that work is being carried out in an unsafe manner or is putting the health and safety of pupils, staff, or others at risk, we will instruct the contractor to stop work. The

architect/project co-ordinator must be immediately informed of any such incident and the matter should be recorded.

### **Contractors' vehicle access**

Contractors' vehicles may enter and leave the car parks during the working day except:

Between 8.00 am and 9.00 am and between 2.30 pm and 3.30 pm during term time.

Vehicular access to other areas of the school is normally only allowed outside term time. If, exceptionally, access is required during the school day, then the School Business Manager is to give specific approval and the Estates Manager is to accompany the vehicle on foot and is to:

1. Act as "banksman" if the vehicle has to reverse.
2. Ensure any children are carefully supervised in a safe area well away from the vehicle and its intended path.

In the case of major development work, the contractor's defined work area (see above) is to include a vehicle access route from the car park to the actual work area. Movement restrictions as above will apply.

## Appendix 1 - Approving New Contractors

What experience do you have of working in schools?	
Do you have a Health and Safety policy?	
Do you have adequate Public Liability, Employer Liability or Third Party Insurance?	
Can you supply authentic references from previous, similar projects? These should be on headed paper so that we can check validity of the referee	
Has the HSE ever taken action against your activities?	
What are your health and Safety procedures?	
Will you provide RAMS for this project?	
Are your staff DBS Enhanced checked?	
Do you have membership of or accreditation by a Trade Body.	

## Appendix 2 - Contractor's Induction Pack

### Introduction

This pack has been drawn up with the intention of familiarising you, the contractor, with the layout of our schools and the names of important contacts who can assist you while you are working on our site. In addition, it details some key health and safety arrangements which you should be aware of, regardless of the type of work that you are about to undertake. If you're working as a contractor for Greensand Multi Academy Trust, there are a number of obligations that we the trust have to you the contractor, you as a contractor equally have obligations to us as a Trust and to all other site users.

### Contractor's Log

Contractor's name:		
Company name, address and telephone number.		
Emergency contact details if different from above:		
Name of site contact:		
Area and nature of work:		
Check Public Liability Cover		
Date:	Time:	Duration of Works:
Review risk assessment and method statement		
Review vehicle movements		
Agree delivery arrangements for materials		
Asbestos survey read and contractor signed to confirm		
Check certification and permits if licensing required for activity		
DBS & ID checks sighted/copied		
School personnel advised and precautions in place		
Signing in procedures agreed – check onsite supervision and communication lines.		

All contractors must:

- report to the school Reception, who will inform School Business Manager or Estates Manager of your arrival at the school;
- sign the visitors' book upon arrival and collect a visitors' pass;
- abide by the school's Health and Safety Policy\*, and Fire Safety Policies\*;
- abide by the agreed vehicle movement arrangement with the Estates Manager and drive with care on site;
- Complete the Contractor's Log (above) with the School Business Manager or Estates Manager before any work commences;
- ensure that all workers, including any sub-contractors, are informed of the contents of this document;
- abide by the School's Code of Conduct\* and Safeguarding Policy\*, including no smoking on site, no inappropriate language, no inappropriate use of phones or cameras, no contact with children on site unless they are accompanied by a member of the teaching staff. Under no circumstances can photographs of any children on the site be taken and under no circumstances should a Contractor's Business on site be referred to on any social media unless authorised by the Headteacher;
- request a Hot Works permit before as required;
- consult the Asbestos Register prior to starting any activity (available from the Facilities Manager);
- record any work on the water or heating system in the Legionella log book (available from the Estates Manager);
- be mindful of their obligations to Health and Safety and safeguarding at all times.

## **Access and Security**

- All contractors must gain access to the school via the main entrance only, where a designated member of staff will greet them;
- Ideally no works should commence without consultation with the Estates Manager;
- All contractors must sign the visitors' book, wear a visitor's badge provided while in school, and show the badge if challenged. Contractors must sign out and return the badges on leaving the site.

## **Health and Safety**

- The Contractor may be requested to provide a Method Statement of the work to be undertaken, together with all relevant Risk Assessments, before any work commences;
- All contract workers are to fully comply with the conditions and procedures as defined by the Method Statement;
- Contractors shall provide their workers with adequate P.P.E. as defined by the Health and Safety P.P.E. Regulations 1992;
- All contract workers shall use/wear relevant P.P.E. as necessary;
- Contractors shall provide suitable and safe work equipment as defined by the Provisions and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1999;
- All contractors shall report to the Estates Manager any condition that may directly or indirectly affect Health and Safety while at work;
- Contract workers shall remain in the area of work undertaken and shall not enter any other area without the express permission of the School Business Manager or the Estates Manager;

- All contract workers shall be familiar with all fire evacuation procedures;
- Contractors shall NOT store ANY Hazardous substances on the school premises without the express permission of the School Business Manager or Estates Manager;
- Contractors are to review the asbestos register when first on site;
- The Trust will NOT accept any liability for any damage or loss, of the contractors' tools, equipment or vehicles;
- Welfare facilities are as directed by the Estates Manager.

## **Safeguarding Standards**

- Schools should ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school or college, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity relating to children will require an enhanced DBS check (including children's barred list information);
- Under no circumstances should a contractor on whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised;
- Schools should always check the identity of contractors on arrival at the school;
- Greensand Multi Academy Trust expects that contractors share their commitment to safeguarding children. In addition to complying with all statutory requirements, the Trust also expects contractors to undertake all reasonable steps (including carrying out all necessary checks and obtaining appropriate character references) to ensure that it supplies suitable staff, especially where the staff may come into contact with children (however infrequent);
- The Estates Manager must maintain robust records of the named contractor employees and sub-contractors working on their contract, along with written confirmation from the contractor that satisfactory DBS checks have been undertaken, where these checks are required. This information must be available for review by the School Business Manager throughout the contract period.

## **Accidents and First Aid**

All accidents must be reported to the Estates Manager and an accident form must be completed. If an accident is serious causing hospitalisation or absence from work for more than five days, the employer must report this through RIDDOR.

## **Fire and Evacuation**

### Alarm

Anyone (staff, pupils, visitors or contractors) discovering an outbreak of fire should, without hesitation, sound the nearest fire alarm or raise the alarm. The alarm sounds like a continuous ringing bell.

### Evacuation

On hearing the alarm, leave the building by the nearest exit and make your way to the Assembly point designated. A roll call will then be taken. Do not re-enter the building until the Senior Person in charge so authorises.

### Notice

Each fire alarm point is clearly indicated by FIRE ALARM followed by the appropriate operating instructions.

## **Asbestos**

You must be aware of the contents of the Asbestos register before you begin any work on the school site. The School Business Manager or the Estates Manager can provide a copy of this.

Should you have ANY reason to suspect that you have disturbed previously identified asbestos or encountered asbestos that is not identified within the asbestos report you MUST:

- Stop work immediately;
- Evacuate the immediate area;
- Close all doors behind you;
- Prevent further admittance;
- Report your suspicions to the Facilities Manager.

The School Business Manager or the Estates Manager will immediately coordinate an appropriate response.