PINEWOOD

Est. 1875

Online Searching of shortlisted candidates

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026) states that:

"...as part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider carrying out a search (via an online search engine) as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview. Schools and colleges should inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks."

Pinewood School therefore conducts searches (via online search engines) of shortlisted candidates in order to identify candidates who may not be suitable to work alongside children. These searches are only used to check the suitability of shortlisted candidates for working with children and are not used to investigate other areas of a person's life.

Some of the information we look for during these searches include evidence of offensive or inappropriate behaviour, jokes or language, discriminatory comments, inappropriate photos, drug or alcohol misuse and anything that suggests a candidate may not be suitable to work with children.

Searches are conducted in line with set parameters to ensure there is consistency in the range of what is searched for with each candidate. These searches include:

- A basic Google (or another search engine) search;
- The main social media and video platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube;
- A search of professional sites such as Linked In.

The online review is completed by the HR Assistant who does not sit on the selection panel for recruitment and who only feeds in information to the recruiting process any information found in the online review which impacts safeguarding or reputation. The HR Assistant ensures that no information which can be deemed as irrelevant to the recruiting process such as age, gender or race is passed to the selection panel.

Any information deemed to be relevant which is uncovered during the online search process is reviewed and if appropriate then raised with the candidate to allow them to address any concerns the School may have.

All data and information is held and treated in line with the School's Data Protection Policy and all relevant government legislation relating to use of personal data.

If a candidate has any concerns or questions regarding the online search process they are asked to please contact the Director of HR.

Reviewed October 2026
Reviewed by Jo Ranstead, Assistant Bursar & Director of HR
Next Review Date: By October 2027