

West Nottinghamshire College

Shortlisted candidates online search guidance and procedure

In line with our statutory duties under Keeping Children Safe in Education. This procedure and guidance outlines the procedure the college will undertake when conducting online searches for shortlisted candidates.

1. Aim:

The Government's statutory document, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022, states that *'education settings should consider conducting online searches as part of their due diligence during the recruitment process.'*

In addition, 'as part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges should consider carrying out an online search 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'.

2. Statement:

West Nottinghamshire College will undertake reasonable online searches as part of the due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. Where we identify any incidents or issues that have happened and are publicly available online, these will be discussed with the candidate at interview.

See appendix 1 for safer recruitment online searches for shortlisted candidates

Following completion of the check, the college will follow the Social Media Criteria Flowchart, Appendix 2, to inform of any information of concern.

Appendix 3 will need to be completed for all shortlisted candidates. If the recruitment panel wish to make further enquiries with the candidate to explore their suitability, they will do so at interview. Documents for successful and unsuccessful candidates will be retained in line with our Record Retention policy.

3. Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Procedure

The effectiveness of this procedure will be reviewed annually in line with KCSIE updates, and any recommendations for improvement will be made as required.

Appendix 1:

Safer recruitment – online searches for shortlisted candidates

West Nottinghamshire College will conduct online searches for all new staff, volunteers, Governors and Trustees. A Google search be conducted, checking the first page of results for the following search terms:

1. Candidate name
2. Name + current employment
3. Name + previous employment
4. Name + school/college/university
5. Name + job title

If a shortlisted candidate refuses to share this information, we reserve the right to remove the invite to interview and terminate the recruitment process.

Searches will be conducted using the risk assessment structure outlined below, covering a minimum of five years prior to the search date. Information will be viewed and gathered by a member of the colleges HR team and will use a pre-defined process to view the information produced on a report and bring to the interview panel any content deemed worth discussion, separate to the recruitment panel. Any information of concern will be shared with the panel for their consideration, who will review and decide how to proceed. If there is sufficient concern that there is an immediate unsuitability to work with children and/or as part of our organization, the recruitment process will be terminated. If the recruitment panel wish to make further enquiries with the candidate to explore their suitability, they will do so at interview. Documents for successful and unsuccessful candidates will be retained in line with our Record Retention policy.

Risk assessment

Expectation for staff, volunteer, Governor and Trustee behavior, including their activity online, is detailed in our safeguarding policy / code of conduct / online safety policy. The categories outlined in the table below will be used by the person conducting the search to identify any areas of concern that require further consideration by the recruitment panel.

Category of concern	Things to consider
Risk to children	• Is there any information that is not consistent with our legal obligation and statutory guidance regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children? • Is there any information that indicates a risk of harm to children under Part 4 of KCSIE, AKA the harm threshold? (behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children)
Illegal activities	• Is there any information that indicates illegal activity? ** N.B. due regard must be paid to filtering rules for DBS checks.

	• Is there any information that indicates support or promotion of illegal activity?
Extremist and / or discriminatory views	• Is there any information that is not consistent with our legal obligation under the Equalities Act towards protected characteristics? (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) • Is there any information that is not consistent with our statutory obligation to promote British Values? (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs)

Appendix 3:

Online Search form for all shortlisted candidates

Details			
Candidate name		Date search completed	
Post applied for		Person completing	

Section a:

Results of online search				
Any concerns identified?				
YES		NO		
If NO – No further action required, proceed to interview				
If yes – provide details				
Record of discussion with HR (where concerns identified)				
As a result of the information disclosed above:			YES	NO
Is there information of concern that requires the recruitment panel to ask any further or supplementary questions to explore the candidate's suitability to work with children and/or to work in our organisation?				
Is there evidence that the candidate is not fit to work with children?				
Is there evidence that their online activity may immediately bring the college into disrepute, and therefore the recruitment process should be immediately terminated?				

If yes; please confirm who advised to and the date advised

Who advised	
Date advised	

Following further or supplementary questions by the recruitment panel:	Yes	No
Do any concerns remain that indicate the candidate is not suitable to work with children and/or that their online activity may bring the college into disrepute?		
Please give a summary of your reasoning, referencing the risk assessment that has been conducted to support this decision:		
Things to consider: • Age/maturity • One off or recurring pattern of behaviour • Recency • Change to behavior • Openness and honesty • Reflection / remorse		
Has the candidate been successful, and have they been offered the position?		

Signed		Print name	
Position			