Social Media Checks for Safer Recruitment Policy

Policy Statement

This policy outlines the school's approach to conducting social media checks as part of its safer recruitment procedures. It aligns with:

- **KCSIE 2025** statutory guidance
- **BSO Standards** for British schools overseas
- **ISI Framework** for independent schools

The school is committed to safeguarding children and ensuring that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. Social media checks are a proactive measure to identify potential safeguarding risks and uphold the school's values.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All shortlisted candidates for employment
- Volunteers, contractors and supply staff
- Any adult working regularly with children

Legal and Regulatory Framework

- **KCSIE 2025 (Para 226)**: Schools *should consider* conducting online searches on shortlisted candidates to identify publicly available safeguarding concerns.
- **BSO Standards**: Emphasise robust recruitment practices, including digital vetting, to ensure child safety and institutional integrity.

Best Practice Requirements

A. Transparency and Consent

- Inform candidates at the shortlisting stage that social media checks are part of the recruitment process.
- Obtain written consent where required, especially if using third-party screening services.

B. Scope of Checks

- Limit checks to **publicly available content** on platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter) and TikTok.
- Avoid accessing private or restricted content without explicit consent.

C. Criteria for Review

Focus on identifying:

- Hate speech, harassment, or discriminatory behaviour
- Extremist views or affiliations
- Inappropriate or illegal content
- Misrepresentation of qualifications or employment history

D. Data Protection and Fairness

- Comply with Slovene/EU **GDPR** and **Human Rights legislation**
- Avoid bias by redacting protected characteristics (e.g., race, religion, sexual orientation)
- Ensure consistency by using structured, job-relevant criteria

E. Documentation

- Record:
    - Platforms checked
    - Nature of flagged content
    - Actions taken (e.g., discussed at interview)

- Store findings securely and in line with data retention policies

Implementation Procedures

Step-by-Step Process

1. **Shortlisting**: Notify candidates of social media checks.
2. **Screening**: Conduct checks using internal staff or professional services.
3. **Review**: Assess findings against safeguarding and job suitability criteria.
4. **Interview**: Address any concerns transparently with the candidate.
5. **Decision**: Document outcomes and rationale.
6. **Record**: Update the Single Central Record (SCR) with confirmation of checks.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **HR Manager**: Oversees implementation and compliance.
- **DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)**: Reviews flagged content for safeguarding relevance.
- **Principal**: Overall responsibility for the application of the policy.
- **Regional Head/ Governance**: Confirming with the Principal that the policy is being robustly implemented.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to updates in statutory guidance.
- Audit trails will be maintained for safeguarding, safer recruitment and accreditation and inspection readiness (e.g., CIS, ISI).

Supporting Documents

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy
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  References

[1] www.gov.uk

[2] socialmediaforschools.co.uk

[3] www.isi.net

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This policy should be reviewed annually after the publication of updated KCSIE regulations.