Online Search Policy for Supply Staff

Company name:	Vision for Education / Smart Teachers
Document	Online Search Policy for Supply Staff
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Policy Statement

The Edwin Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. As an education recruitment agency, we recognise our responsibility to ensure robust safer recruitment processes in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance.

As part of our vetting procedures, we may conduct online searches of our candidates to identify publicly available information which may be relevant to safeguarding and professional suitability. This is to ensure that we can prevent unsuitable applicants from joining our organisation, and to ensure transparency with our client schools so that they can make any necessary determinations about the suitability of a candidate for their setting and role.

Scope

This policy applies to all work seekers who apply to join our register. It may also be applied to current candidates who have already passed vetting checks at any time in the past.

Regulatory Framework

This policy aligns with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- The Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010

Purpose of the online search

Due to the nature of supply work, including day-to-day placements and work across multiple schools, online searches support:

- Safeguarding due diligence before clearance for work.
- Identification of conduct that may present risk to pupils.
- Verification of professional presentation and employment history where appropriate.
- Meeting client school expectations for safer recruitment compliance.

Online searches are not a substitute for DBS, barred list, prohibition, reference, or identity checks. They are an enhancement to our vetting procedures.

How searches are conducted

Searches may include:

- Search engines (e.g., Google)
- Professional platforms (e.g., LinkedIn)
- Public social media content
- Public regulatory findings (e.g., Teaching Regulation Agency decisions)
- News articles
- Further checks may be conducted via a third-party screening tool should specific criteria be met.

Relevance

If concerns are identified:

- The candidate will be informed.
- An opportunity to provide explanation will be given.
- A documented risk-based assessment will be completed, and an outcome will be given.

Information regarding online presence may be shared with schools. Each client will make their own decision regarding placement in line with any contextual considerations for their students and setting.

Data Protection

Online searches constitute processing of personal data. The agency ensures:

- A lawful basis (legitimate interests and safeguarding obligations).
- Minimal data recording.
- Secure storage.
- Retention in line with safeguarding and compliance requirements.
- Respect for subject access rights.

Where no concerns arise, only confirmation that the search was completed will normally be retained.