

ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY DOCUMENT

Philosophy

St. Mary's CE(A) First School seeks to place the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure environment. It is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the legal responsibility of the safeguarding policy. Inappropriate and unnecessary sharing of information is an erosion of trust and the school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and that there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality. The confidentiality policy also applies to other professionals, support agencies, students and volunteers who come into contact with information in school.

Aims

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles.

To ensure good practice throughout the school that is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

To ensure that parents understand that they can only access information (academic, social and pastoral) about their own child.

To develop creative and positive ways for the child or adult's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.

The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils are the paramount considerations in all decisions staff make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' well-being and safety.

Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable discussing personal issues and concerns.

The school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality

Objectives

- * To provide consistent messages in school on the handling of information about children once it has been received.
- * To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- * To ensure that staff, parents / carers, pupils, volunteers and students are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures and that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality having a legal obligation to report child protection issues.
- * To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
- * To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
- * To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
- * To understand that health professionals are bound by their own professional code of conduct.

Guidelines

- * All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff who have a need to know.
- * All Social Services, medical and personal information should be held in a safe and secure place which can only be accessed by school staff. Reports and minutes should be circulated through a secure channel, and filed in the agreed secure file. Information that is sent or received must be password protected, with the password sent separately, and the subject line must include ***confidential***.
- * All staff must follow related procedures and policy guidelines (Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs, Inclusion).
- * Confidentiality needs to be a whole school issue and clear ground rules must be set and followed for any classroom work including circle time, PSHE, SMSC and RHE. Staff and children should be aware of strategies for dealing with sensitive information that falls outside child protection procedures, e.g. family issues, personal concerns. The member of staff should sensitively suggest that this topic is private and

that the child could talk to the class teacher or other chosen member of staff privately or be referred to an assistant head or head teacher who may then ask for a referral to school nurse with parental permission.

- * Staff should be very conscious that they do not share any information about a child with anyone other than the legal guardians. At parent consultations, levels of attainment and rates of progress of other children in the class cannot be shared, discussions can only take place that are pertinent to their child.
- * Addresses and phone numbers will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
- * Staff and volunteers must not disclose any information about St Mary's CE (A) First School which comes to their attention as a result of their position in the school. This agreement must be made during the induction process and relates to school business, school data, staff and pupils.

Monitoring

All staff have the responsibility to report to the Head Teacher any incident that contravenes this policy. Senior Management and Governor's Personnel Committee will monitor and evaluate implementation of the policy.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Agreed December 2023

Review December 2025