

Wray with Botton Endowed Primary School Confidentiality Policy

Aim:

To protect children and young people at all times and to give the school workforce clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles in relation to sharing information and confidentiality, ensuring good practice throughout the school which is understood by the whole school community including families.

Rationale:

- The policy seeks to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address the issues which may arise about sharing information and confidentiality.
- The school is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child supports the view that children and young people should be entitled to confidential support alongside safeguarding them from harm.
- The Healthy Schools Programme recognises the importance of children and young people having access to confidential services, including health services to support their physical and emotional needs.
- 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 information sharing and confidentiality.
- Families, children, young people and other adults should all expect that information they identify as confidential will not be shared with any other party unless it is a safeguarding issue in which case the appropriate member of the school workforce will be consulted or permission has been given as part of the CAF process.
- In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality can be offered in a school. The school aims to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of children, young people and the school workforce, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where any member of the school community can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information, good practice is followed and, when appropriate, safeguarding procedures.

Objectives:

- To foster an ethos of trust within the school and reassure children that their best interests will be maintained.
- To provide consistent messages in school about handling and sharing information about children once it has been received.

- To ensure that the school workforce, families, children are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and information sharing procedures and that families, children know that adults cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- The school workforce will encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
- To ensure that parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons group agreements/ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To ensure that if there is a safeguarding issue then the correct procedure is followed.

CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

The following Aide Memoire assists staff in making safer, consistent judgements around what can be complex and contentious scenarios. Staff will make a judgement around 5 key questions:

1. What is in this child's best interest?
2. Who needs to know?
3. What/How much do they need to know?
4. Why do they need to know?
5. When do they need to know?

For further information about consent and confidentiality refer to the LCC Confidentiality and Information Sharing Guidance, page 19.

GUIDELINES:

- We expect that all staff, volunteers and personnel working in the school to adhere to professional standards with regard to confidentiality.
- Conversations of a confidential nature should only take place in a private and secure location. An awareness of who is around should be taken into consideration and the door should be closed. Staff should be aware that the office area is open plan and conversations of a confidential nature should not take place in this area. Child Protection issues should be discussed with the Headteacher, or Deputy in the Headteacher's office. In our pastoral meetings discussions of a confidential nature take place, where only staff who are fully inducted can attend.
- Staff should be aware that social media is not private and secure (refer to E-Safety Policy).
- We provide clear information to families about information sharing and confidentiality within our school setting, through the school brochure and this policy is available on the school website. The school works closely with parents and encourages the sharing of information in the best interest of the child. The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk

to their parents. Information is generally shared with parents unless it is of a safeguarding nature, where the child's welfare overrides this. Parents are also assured that we only discuss matters relating to their child with them, and not with other parents.

- When dealing with third party disclosures, procedures are followed and facts are checked. Any relevant information is sought. If any member of staff is uncertain whether they have breached confidentiality, they should discuss it immediately with the Headteacher.

Safeguarding and Child Protection:

The school has a Child Protection Policy in place, which is available to all staff. Please refer to this Policy. If a member of staff is unsure whether a matter is Child Protection, the member of staff must have a conversation with the DSL. The DSL at Wray with Botton Endowed School is the Headteacher, and the Deputy Headteacher in her absence.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff have clear roles and responsibilities. Staff and volunteers are inducted in safeguarding and confidentiality during the induction meeting with the Headteacher.

The school has a visitor's protocol, which covers confidentiality.

The school works closely with agencies for example: the school nurse, Social Services. We understand that these professionals will work to their own Code of Practice with regard to confidentiality.

Staff's personal information is kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet in the general office. It is recognised that staff may have information that they wish to be kept confidential between the staff member and the Headteacher.

Reporting and Record Keeping

There are clear pathways for pupils, parents/carers and staff to report confidential information. Pupils, parents and staff may choose to speak to any employed member of staff with regards to a personal disclosure or to a confidential matter; this pathway leads to the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher in her absence.

Staff keep a variety of records within school:

- Pastoral records. Individual pupil's pastoral records are kept on a chronology. These may include information such as: medical, changes in behaviour, coming to school without a coat, or without breakfast. These records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Head teacher's room.
- Child Protection and CAF. Individual pupil files are kept securely in the Head teacher's office. These files will include chronologies as well as for example: a CAF, Child in Need assessments.
- S.E.N. records. Teachers hold a copy of I.E.P.s in their class rooms. Pupils with significant special educational needs, who have undergone assessments have individual pupil files which include for example: assessment reports, annual reviews, medical reports. Each pupil has a file kept securely in the Headteacher's office.

- Personal Data information about pupils and families are kept on the Lancashire County Council SIMS data-base, this is covered by The Data Protection Act 1998.
- Pupil records. Each pupil has an individual pupil record which contains annual reports and assessment information. These are kept securely in a locked filing cabinet in the headteacher's office.

All the above records are shared with the receiving school when a child transfers.

CURRICULUM:

Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSCE sessions dealing with sensitive issues. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures.

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Photographs of children are not to be used without parents/carers permission in the press and internet. Only a child's first name is used alongside a photograph in the school newsletter, otherwise names are not used with photographs. In the case of pupils with medical needs/allergies, a photograph may be used on the medical information sheet with parent/carer consent. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

GOVERNORS:

Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such papers should be marked as confidential and should be copied onto different coloured paper. Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Governors agree to a code of conduct which includes confidentiality. Governors should be very clear about the confidentiality policy and procedures and not discuss any confidential matters outside of Governing Body meetings.