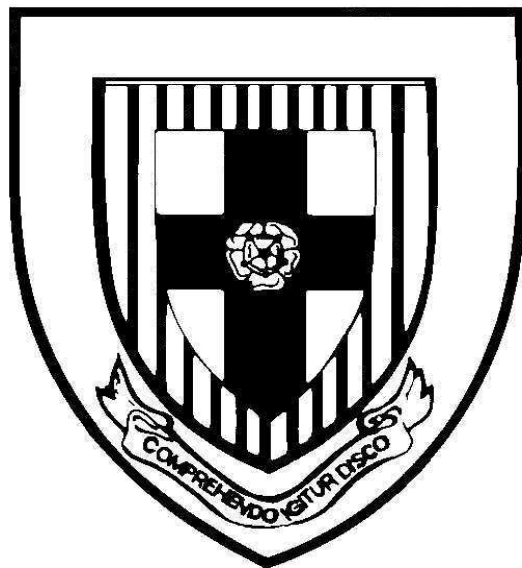


Oak Cottage Primary School



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

November 2022

Introduction

Date of policy: Autumn 2022

Member of staff responsible: Jane Newman (PSHE Coordinator)

Review Date: Autumn 2024

Definition:

Confidentiality information means information which is not trivial, and not in the public domain. It is information, which is 'said or given in confidence, is private and is entrusted to you to deal with discretely in an appropriate manner.'

At Oak Cottage we strive to seek a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of pupils and staff, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where pupils and staff can ask for help when they need it. However, staff should make it clear that there are limits to confidentiality. These limits relate to ensuring children's safety and well-being. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken and involved in the information sharing. Therefore, in practice, there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered within Oak Cottage.

Aims:

When teachers are working with children on personal, social and health education programmes, or in the teaching of any sensitive or controversial issue, it is possible that some children will want to discuss information that is of a personal nature, or may sometimes make disclosures about unsafe or illegal behaviour. This policy aims to set out guidelines for responding to such situations.

Objectives:

- To ensure that staff, parents and pupils understand what will happen if these situations occur
- To define 'confidentiality'
- To explain the implications of this for practice within the school
- To ensure that staff, pupils and parents understand what is meant by 'confidentiality' at Oak Cottage Primary School
- To ensure that staff consider the issue of confidentiality when discussing the children in their care and incidents that may have happened in school

MORAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

The confidentiality Policy at Oak Cottage reflects the school ethos and demonstrates the following values:

- Respect for oneself
- Respect for others
- Responsibility for their own actions
- Appreciation of the diversity of the family unit

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

This school operates in a way that respects every individual and family's right to privacy. All our staff and visitors are therefore expected to work within the guidelines of this policy, which conform to recent legislation and government guidelines and protect confidentiality. Our policy aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths, gender, race and family backgrounds.

Guidelines:

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff. Staff use encrypted memory sticks and laptops in order to ensure data is secure. Any personal information stored on paper is shredded once it is no longer needed.
3. The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are 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 in talking to their parents.
4. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
5. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE session dealing with sensitive issues such as relationships and sex and drugs.
6. All children, parents, staff members and governors should expect privacy from gossip. All matters are dealt with according to the school's procedures and out of the eye of the wider community. It is important that:-
 - Staff do not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings to any person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned

- Staff do not enter into detailed discussion about a child's behaviour with other children or their parents
- Governors do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person outside of the meeting
- Parents in school, working as volunteers do not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents in the school. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy
- Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be held in a secure place
- Matters of Child Protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis
- It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned
- When volunteers, such as parents and friends are working within the school or helping on trips they understand that they must not discuss educational matters of children they have been working with outside of the school
- Should a member of staff have a genuine concern about breeches of confidentiality, they should raise them initially with their line manager. For further details please see the procedures outlined in the "Dignity at Work (School based employees)" or "Whistle-blowing" policies
- Students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school
- Parents and visitors to the school are required to read the confidentiality poster visible in the entrance hall

Personal disclosures:

Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate time or place. If this happens, the member of staff should talk individually to the pupil before the end of the school day. The member of staff may be able to discuss the issue with an appropriate colleague, usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to decide on a suitable action, without giving the name of a pupil.

In these cases the following points should be taken into consideration:

- Pupils should know that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality

- Pupils should be reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed and supported appropriately
- Pupils should be informed of sources of confidential help
- If a member of staff receives information that leads them to believe that there is a child protection issue, they should refer the case directly and immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSL or, in the event of both being unavailable, a senior teacher who may contact Children's Services (MASH). The member of staff may also take responsibility for contacting Children's Services if they feel that is appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
2. The PSHE scheme of work, the Relationships and Sex and Drug Policies will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.
3. The Head teacher and PSHE co-ordinator have responsibility for monitoring this policy. Following any curriculum monitoring an annual evaluation is written which contributes to the School Development Plan.

Conclusion

Oak Cottage Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. It also needs to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

Related Policies:

Code of employee Conduct
 Dignity at work
 Whistle-blowing
 Child Protection
 Data Protection
 Inclusion

Please refer to appendix attached for further clarification.