ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL WEM

'Underpinned by our Christian values, we create a happy, caring environment. This empowers each and every unique person to dream, believe, achieve and flourish.'

'In the same way, you should be a light for other people.
Live so that they will see the good things you do'

Matthew 5:16 (ICB)

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY SUMMER 2024

Reviewed by: S Kynaston, Summer 2024

Date of next review: Summer 2026

AIM

To protect children at all times and to give all school staff clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by children, parents/carers and staff.

Rationale

St Peter's CE Primary & Nursery School puts children at the heart of the learning process and provides a safe and secure learning environment. It 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 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

1. To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
3. To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures.
4. To reassure children that their best interest will be maintained.
5. To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
6. To ensure that children/parents know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
8. To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed as outlined in the school's Child Protection policy.
9. To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
10. To understand that health professionals are bound by a different code of conduct.
11. To ensure that parents have a right of access to all records held on their own child(ren), except those relating to child protection issues.

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and only shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a child is held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
   a) There is a clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection issues.
   b) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
   c) Staff are aware that effective RSE which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
   d) Staff are aware of the need to handle family issues (e.g. same sex parents) in a sensitive manner.
   e) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race culture or sexuality is unacceptable and is sanctioned in line with St Peter's behaviour policy.
   f) Information collected for one purpose is not used for another.
4. Parents/carers and children are aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
5. St Peter's 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. We encourage children

to discuss issues with their parents/carers that are causing them concern and may, in some cases, support the child in doing so. Where appropriate child protection disclosures are shared with parents/carers as well as the correct authorities.

6. Parents/carers and children are reassured that only in exceptional circumstances is confidentiality broken.
7. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A lot of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children are not identified.
8. St Peter's has appointed five senior members of staff as Designated Safeguarding Leads. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken at least every three years for all staff.
9. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules are set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationships and drugs. St Peter's is proactive so that children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known it is not discussed or shared further.
10. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff are aware of children with medical needs and a class information sheet is accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
11. Photographs of children are not used without parents/carers permission.
12. Information about individual children is only shared with their parents/carers. Parents/carers do not have access to any other child's books or information about their progress at any time.
13. Parents are aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. All personal information about children, including social services records, is regarded as confidential. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports are forwarded to the appropriate professionals in sealed envelopes and securely filed. Logs of administration of medication to children are kept secure and each child has their own individual log. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children are not passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
14. St Peter's Governors are mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such papers are marked as confidential and destroyed after the meeting. Governors observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the Governing Body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parents. Although decisions reached at Governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based are regarded as confidential. Governors exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the Governing Body.

Conclusion

St Peter's Primary & Nursery School has a duty of care and responsibility towards children, 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.