

Lockington CE VC Primary School



Confidentiality Policy

Date Policy Formally Agreed By Governors	7.12.17
Date Policy Becomes Effective	December 2017
Review Date	December 2019
Person Responsible for Implementation and Monitoring	Headteacher

Legal Requirements

Human Rights Act 1988

Gives everyone the right to “respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence”, unless this is overridden: by the pupil interest, for reasons of child protection, for the protection of public safety, pupil order, health or morals or for the rights and freedom of others.

Data Protection Act 1998

Applies to personal data of living, identified viable individuals not anonymised data, manual and electronic records. Schools need to be clear, when collecting personal data, what purpose it will be used for and schools should have policies to clarify this to staff, pupils and parents.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Amends the Data Protection Act. Gives everyone the right to request any records a public body, including schools, holds about them. A school may withhold information it has if it is considered the information may damage the recipient, if disclosed. School data or record keeping policy should also cover the requirements of this act.

Children’s Act 2004

The Children’s Act 2004, sets out the following objectives under the every child matters agenda:

- Children and Young People are mentally and emotionally healthy
- Children and Young People are sexually healthy
- Children and Young People choose not to take illegal drugs
- Children and Young People are safe from maltreatment, neglect violence and sexual exploitation
- Children and Young People have security, stability and be cared for

Lockington CE VC Primary School

“The little school that makes a big difference”

Our school is committed to working together to develop lively, enquiring minds and promoting outstanding standards of achievement for all in a happy, safe and caring environment, based upon Christian values which encourage all to show respect.

Morals and Values Framework

The moral and values framework within which confidentiality is addressed should be consistent with the overarching aims and ethos of the school and should be easily translated into practice in terms of:

- The curriculum content
- The teaching methods
- The relationships within the school

Aims

- To protect the child at all times
- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children
- To give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles.
- To ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents and staff.
- 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 foster an ethos of trust within the school

Rationale

Lockington CE VC Primary School seeks to provide a safe and secure learning environment, implementing the principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality. 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.

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know. This specifically excludes public discussion, whether verbal, written or in a ‘virtual’ environment such as a social networking site (e.g. Facebook, MySpace etc.).
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a child will be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.

3. Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidence and the school in exceptional circumstances has a duty to report child protection issues.
4. 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.
5. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
6. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other SEAL sessions. School needs to be proactive so children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known, it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.
7. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be accessible to staff who need that information, but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
8. On the school website, photographs of children will only be identified by their Christian/first names.
9. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time.
10. Parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEND reports, SEND minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing, or kept in secure space on the school server. Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their individual log. In all other notes, briefing sheets, etc., a child should not be able to be identified.
11. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
12. Any personal information should be regarded as confidential and not passed on indiscriminately (for example in the staff room).
13. Governors should be aware that any information they become aware of regarding members of staff or pupils at the school is confidential. 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 should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arise outside the governing body.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle, or in the event of any local or national issues that arise.

Further guidance

For all children, staff members and governors to enjoy privacy from gossip, for the school to be fair to all its community, and for children and adults to have disciplinary matters dealt with according to the school's own procedures and out of the eye of the wider school community, it is important that:

- Staff do not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings to an person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.
- No member of staff to discuss an individual child's behaviour in the presence of another child in school.
- Staff do not enter into detailed discussions about a child's behaviour with other children or their parents.
- Governors, in particular those sitting on Discipline Committees, do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person outside of the meeting.
- Parents have access to the records of their own children, but do not have access to information about other children.
- Personal information about other children, families and staff is kept securely, whilst remaining as accessible as necessary.
- Parents in school, working as volunteers, or as part of the Friends', 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 (see Volunteer Guide).
- Parents' permission with regards to taking photographs of their children is sought on entry to the school and staff are kept informed.
- Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, names lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the Head teachers' office and electronic records are only available to senior leadership team.
- Matters of Child Protection are made know to staff on a need to know basis.
- It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters 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 of the school are working in classes, they do not discuss educational matters outside the classroom For example the specific use of teaching assistant time for particular pupils or groups of pupils, teaching assistants have different roles within a class, including the support of children with special educational needs, the provision and work with these children is for the teacher to discuss with the relevant parents or carers (see Volunteers Guide).

Health Professionals

Health Professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality when working in a one to one situation. When working in a classroom, they

