



Our Lady of Victories Catholic Primary School

Confidentiality Policy

Ratified by Governors at Curriculum level: Oct 2009

Shared with staff: Oct 2009

Date of implementation: Nov 2009

Last reviewed : July 2021

Date of next review: July 2023

Aims of this Policy

1. To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles.
2. To ensure good practice throughout the school and that this is understood by pupils, parents and staff.

Rationale

At Our Lady of Victories Primary School we seek to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment for every child. This policy seeks to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address any issues which may arise about confidentiality.

We are committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard any information received.

We believe that 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 pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
5. To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
6. To ensure that pupils and parents / carers 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.
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 different code of conduct*.
11. 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.

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and will only be 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 *actively promotes a positive ethos and respect for the individual* by ensuring that:
 - *The Head-teacher is responsible for child protection and receives regular training.
 - *There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff receive regular training on child protection issues.
 - *There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
 - *Staff are aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

*Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.

*Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and is dealt with following the schools discipline and behaviour policy.

*Information collected for one purpose is not used for another.

4. Parents/carers and children are made aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.

5. The school maintains good communication with parents 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 about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents. The school will share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities.

6. Parents and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances would confidentiality will be broken.

7. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. Individual children should not be able to be identified in unsecured data.

8. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules are set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSCE session when dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. 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. The school supports children and ensures that information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena.

9. *Health professionals have their own code of practice when dealing with confidentiality.*

However when working in our school they are made aware of the schools own policies and that when any disclosure is made which relates to a child-protection issue they have a duty of care to inform the Head-teacher.

10. Staff are aware of the children with medical needs and the necessary information is made accessible to staff who need that information but is not on general view to other parents and children.

11. Photographs of children are not used without parent's permission especially in the press and internet. At no time is the child's name used with a photograph in a public arena so that they can be identified.

12. Information about children is shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks or progress at any time especially at parents evening. However parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.

13. All personal information about children including social services records is regarded as confidential. The Head-teacher makes decisions about who should have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information.

14. 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 circulated in envelopes and once these have been agreed copies given only to those people who need to have them. An expectation is placed upon them that these will be kept in a secure place.

15. Logs of administration of any medication to children or reports of accidents are kept secure. The Head-teacher keeps a copy of accident reports.

16. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children are not passed on by the school except in exceptional circumstances.

17. 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. Governors are aware that they 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 are aware of the need to exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.

18. Staff emails or contact details are not given to parents unless with the consent of the member of staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
2. The PHSCE scheme of work, Sex and Relationship policy and Drug Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.
3. The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy.

Conclusion

Our Lady of Victories Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents 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 each individual child is the key issue behind this document.