



Confidentiality Policy

2020 - 2022

Agreed by:	Governing Body	
Review date:	November 2022	

Adderley Primary School

Policy Statement on Observing Confidentiality

At Adderley Primary School we are keen to embrace the principles of pupil voice in seeking creative and positive ways for the views and opinions of children in school to be heard, whilst recognising the need to hold and safeguard information shared and received. We also want to promote an atmosphere in which all stakeholders feel confident to express their views and opinions albeit in a professional manner.

This policy has links with our GDPR Policy and our Privacy Notice.

The rationale for this policy is:

- For children and adults in school to enjoy privacy from gossip.
- To enable all stakeholders to be treated fairly.
- For children and adults to have personal and disciplinary matters dealt with according to an agreed policy and not exposed to the wider school community.
- For everyone in school to realise that they are placed in a position of trust and that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality.

Aims of the Policy:

- To protect the child at all times and give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff;
- To put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure environment;
- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children and staff once it has been received;
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school;
- To reassure pupils and staff that their best interests will be maintained;
- To encourage children to talk to their parents/carers and staff in school;
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all.

Confidentiality Guidelines for Pupils:

1. Any information regarding pupils' medical information such as food allergies, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy etc will be shared with all staff via the school nurse and on the school shared desktop for SEND. It is vitally important for health and safety information that this information is shared widely. Catering staff and lunchtime supervisors would also be made aware of such issues in order that they can deal appropriately with any situations that might arise during the lunch time period. Parents of these pupils will be made aware of our policy.
2. We may have pupils in school with HIV or AIDS. If children have been formally diagnosed they will most probably have a Social Worker. The parents are under no legal obligation to inform the school and indeed may have been advised by health professionals and social workers not to share the information. If the Head Teacher is aware of individual pupils she will not share this information with staff. This is in accordance with the policy of the Local Authority.
3. Issues of a child protection nature will only be shared on a need to know basis with appropriate members of staff. Any disclosures made to members of staff by children should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Staff must not share the information with other colleagues unless given specific permission by the DSL.
4. When sharing information concerning children's home circumstances staff should exercise discretion. For example, if pupils are living in homes with matrimonial discord, staff members may well become aware. Such information should only be shared on a need to know basis. Such matters must not become the subject of staff gossip.
5. Children with behaviour concerns are the responsibility of all staff in school, and as such their individual issues may be legitimately discussed between staff members. Consult with the SLT member for the appropriate phase before sharing information with students on placement.
6. Information about individual children must not be shared with parents of other pupils at the school. In the case of Parent Governors, they must be made aware that information about individual children is not to be shared outside of Governors' meetings.
7. Staff members should not share information concerning children in school with outsiders – either colleagues from other schools, friends or family members.
8. Members of staff or students on placement who wish to record details of individual pupils in written form must firstly anonymise the individuals in order that their identity is protected. Such records should be approved by a member of the Leadership Team.
9. Children must be made aware at the point of any disclosure to a member of staff that full confidentiality cannot be promised.

10. All written reports relating to child protection are on a paperless recording system for – Ed Aware.

Confidentiality Guidelines for Staff:

1. Any personal information about staff such as address, telephone numbers etc is kept on the school computer management system but is password protected and is not shared beyond the HT and Office Manager.
2. Staff telephone numbers may not be passed on to anyone without their express prior approval.
3. The staffroom is a place for all staff to use and is to be free of gossip.
4. Any disciplinary matters are to be kept confidential between the individual concerned and the line manager dealing with the issue e.g HT, DHT, AHT.
5. Learning walk feedback is to be shared with the individual teacher, and it is up to that teacher to share the findings more widely if they choose to do so.
6. The SLT may discuss the strengths and areas to develop of individual members of staff in Leadership meetings, but members of the Leadership group will observe confidentiality beyond the confines of the meeting.
7. If a member of staff is absent, the reason for their absence should not become the subject of gossip. Written staff sickness absence records are maintained securely by the Office Manager, and shared only with the SLT.
8. Reference requests for staff seeking new employment are not to be shared by the referee except for the person the reference has been requested for. References kept on computer file should be password protected.
9. Post marked Private and Confidential is to be opened by the addressee only. All other post for the HT may be opened by Admin staff. Post personally addressed for other members of staff will given to them in person.
10. Social networking sites are a feature of modern life and staff members may use them for their own purposes out of school hours. Staff will be made aware of the need to self-regulate the content of their own profiles on such sites. It is viewed as unacceptable for staff to communicate with pupils or parents and carers through social networking sites. Please see **Social Media Policy**.

Confidentiality Guidelines for Governors:

1. All governing body discussion is confidential in order to ensure everyone is comfortable about airing their views

2. Minutes will reflect the tenor of discussion and decisions made, but not who contributed what, unless this is specifically requested by a member of the Governing Body and authorised by the Chair.
3. No verbal reports from governing body meetings should be relayed unless agreed by the governing body – and absolute clarity of what may be reported is vital
4. The governing body advocates the 'four wall' principle i.e. discussion stops once participants leave the four walls within which the meeting has taken place. Even conversation between governors should not continue outside the room as this could be overheard / misconstrued / deemed divisive
5. On no occasion should governors divulge the detail of governing body discussion – particularly if they disagree with a decision taken
6. Once a decision has been democratically made, all governors must support that decision – inability to do so compromises the team effectiveness of the governing body
7. Governing body minutes become public documents only after they have been agreed by the governing body
8. The drawing up and dissemination of such documents should be done in an atmosphere of confidentiality
9. The Governing Body may adopt a code of conduct to which all governors, current and new, subscribe
10. Although open discussion should remain confidential, the governing body should consider ways of keeping the school community informed of its work and of the key decisions it makes. This could include newsletters, authorised briefings, a governing body noticeboard or even retaining the practice of holding an annual meeting for parents.