



‘Within a caring Christian community we enable every child to flourish and inspire a love of learning in all members of our community’

Confidentiality Policy

Aim

To protect the child at all times and to 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, volunteers and staff.

Rationale

Coombe Bissett Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers, volunteers 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.

The school seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality.

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/carers and staff.
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 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 a 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 should only be shared with 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.
 3. The school actively promotes a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
 - a) The school has appointed a senior lead teacher for child protection.
 - b) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents.
 - c) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
 - d) Staff are aware that effective sex and relationship education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
 - e) Staff are aware of the need to handle issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
 - f) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools discipline policy.
 - g) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
 4. Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality. The school has a duty to report child protection issues.
 5. 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 to talk to their parents.
 6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances 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 data.
 8. The school has appointed a member of the SLT as Child Protection Officer. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for named staff and cascaded through staff meetings.
 9. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and PSHE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. The school needs to be proactive so children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in public. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known it should not be assumed by those involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.
 10. Health professionals have their own code of practice for 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.
 11. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. Children's photographs should not be used in a medical room identifying their medical need without the parents consent. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events as permission is sought at the start of each academic year.
 12. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. However parents should be 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 should be 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 will be circulated in envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing.

Logs of administration of medication to children will be kept in the appropriate folder in the staff room.

In all other notes, briefing sheets etc a child should not be able to be identified.

Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

13. Governors need to be mindful that when issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children this is confidential. All such papers should be marked as confidential and later destroyed. Governors 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.

14. Performance Management is confidential to the reviewer and the reviewee.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
2. The PSHE 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 Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy.

Other relevant policies: Child Protection; PSHE; SRE; Marking; Governor Visits.

Ratified by FGB: Summer 2010

Reviewed: Autumn 2015

Next Review Date: Autumn 2018