

Kell Bank C of E Primary School

Confidentiality Policy



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1.0 Aim

As a fundamental Christian duty to the children in our care we 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 and staff.

2.0 Rationale

We seek to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. We seek to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address the 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 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.

3.0 Objectives:

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality, policy and procedures.
- To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
- To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
- To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.

- To ensure that if there are child protection and safeguarding issues that the correct procedure is followed.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To understand that health professionals are bound by different code of conduct.
- 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. (See the Fair Processing Notice)

4.0 Guidelines

4.1 All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know. Prior to any staff or volunteer helpers working with the children they will be asked to read and understand the Confidentiality Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

4.2 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.

4.3 The school continues actively promoting a positive ethos and respect for the individual.

- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection and safeguarding incidents, and all staff have regular training on child protection and safeguarding 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 brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection and safeguarding 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 should follow the schools discipline policy.
- Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.

4.4 Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection and safeguarding issues.

4.5 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. 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. The school would share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities, unless to do so would endanger the child.

4.6 Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken. (See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).

4.7 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 should not be able to be identified.

4.8 The Headteacher is the Child Protection Officer. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for all staff.

4.9 Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSCE session 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 and safeguarding procedures. School needs to be proactive so children feel supported that information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena.

4.10 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.

4.11 Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. When working in a classroom, they are bound by relevant school policies. In line with best practice guidance, like other school staff, they will seek to protect privacy and prevent inappropriate personal disclosures in a classroom setting, by negotiating ground rules and using distancing techniques. 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.

4.12 Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. This is often a cultural issue of which the school needs to be aware. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

4.13 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. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information. 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. 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.

4.14 Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such papers should be marked as confidential and should be copied onto different coloured paper. These confidential papers should be 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. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arising outside the governing body.

5.0 Document History

Document Type	Statutory Policy
Document amendment summary	New format 12 July 2011 update to include statement in Section 4.1 to say that all staff and volunteer helpers will be asked to read and understand the Confidentiality Policy and CPP. 02 July 2012 update to amend CPP to read CP and Safeguarding Policy
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Date next review for this document	November 2015

Chair of Governors signature:

Date: