



Holy Trinity C of E Primary Academy

Vision Statement

At Holy Trinity CE Primary Academy, inspired by and rooted in Christian values and teaching, we nurture children to become aspirational, courageous, compassionate and joyful young people.

The values of our school: Courage, Joy, Aspiration and Compassion

POLICY DOCUMENT	Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy
Status	Non Statutory
Legislation	
Lead Member of Staff	Headteacher
Lead Governor (Monitoring)	
Publication/Revision Date	
Governor Committee	Policy & Curriculum
Approval Date and by	10 th January 2017
Review Frequency	Three years
Date of next review	January 2020
Publication Date: Academy Website/ Staff information folder	
Chair of Governing Body signature	
Supporting documents	

1 Introduction:

- 1.1 Inspired by and rooted in Christian values and teachings, Holy Trinity C of E Primary Academy seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of 'Every Child Matters' Agenda and to address the issues, which may arise about confidentiality. It is 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 The Department for Children Schools and Families Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (July 2000) states 'Schools should have a clear and explicit confidentiality policy which is advertised to pupils, staff, parents and visitors'.
- 1.4 The Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Human Rights Acts all apply. (Appendix 1)

2 Aim

- 2.1 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.

3 Where and to whom the policy applies:

- 3.1 All teaching and non-teaching staff employed (paid and unpaid) by the school and all visiting staff working with young people on or off the school site at all times.

4 Objectives:

- 4.1 To provide consistent guidance in relation to handling sensitive information concerning children once it has been received. (Received will include observations such as unexplained bruising on a child)
- 4.2 To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- 4.3 To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures.
- 4.4 To encourage children to be aware of the need for individual privacy concerning sensitive issues relating to their peers. (To be trustworthy)
- 4.5 To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained at all times.
- 4.6 To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers about sensitive issues.
- 4.7 To ensure that pupils and parents/carers understand that the welfare of the child is paramount at all times, hence school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- 4.8 To ensure that parents/guardians have access to any records the school may hold on their child (no information in relation to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for will be shared).

5 Guidelines

- 5.1 All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with relevant staff on a need to know basis.
- 5.2 All social services, medical and personal information about a child must be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
- 5.3 Holy Trinity CE Primary Academy prides itself in 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. (Refer to the Schools Safeguarding and Behaviour Policy).
- 5.4 All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. Schools generate data in relation to these groups; however, individual children should not be able to be identified.
- 5.5 Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education (PHSCE) session dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationships and Health.
- 5.6 All children, parents, staff members and governors must enjoy privacy from gossip. All matters are dealt with according to the school's procedures and out of the eye of the wider community. It is important that:-
 - ▲ Staff do not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings to any person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.
 - ▲ No member of staff discusses a child's behaviour in detail in the presence of another child although mention of good or poor behaviour may be made in the whole class/school situation in the interests of school discipline and classroom management.
 - ▲ Staff do not enter into detailed discussion 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 in school, working as volunteers do not report cases of poor behaviour, pupil discipline or any other personal information to other parents in the school. This allows teachers to deal all matters in line with school policy.
 - ▲ At Governing Body meetings matters such as pupil exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in the head teachers Report under Part 2 confidential. This is not for the knowledge of persons outside the Governing Body meeting. Minutes in Part 2 are minuted separately and minutes are not published.
 - ▲ Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be held in the strictest confidence in the head teacher's office. Electronic records will only be available from the head teacher's computer.

- ▲ Matters of Child Protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.
- ▲ It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order 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.
- ▲ Volunteers, students and regular visitors have the principles of this policy explained to them. They are given access to read the full policy and are asked to sign a statement that they will abide by this policy before working in school or on school business.

5.7 Relevant information about children will be shared with the receiving school when a school change occurs.

5.8 All personal information about children including children's 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, that this is on a need to know basis.

▲ Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and children's 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 should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log.

▲ 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 (for example child protection issues) or to a receiving school.

6 Multiple Roles

6.1 Some staff may have multiple roles where they may become privy to information not necessarily available to colleagues in other roles. Staff needs to be mindful of the context in which they are entrusted with information and only share where necessary in line with this policy.

6.2 The Head teacher should be consulted where a staff member is unsure about a procedure to resolve any ambiguity.

7 Other Professionals

7.1 Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality when working in a one to one situation. When working within the School Boundaries or on School business, 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.

7.2 Staff should be aware of children with medical needs. This information should be accessible to staff who need it but not on general view to other parents/carers and children. In exceptional circumstances for

example where a medical condition needs to be in the fore front of all staffs' mind, so they may act without delay to prevent a medical emergency, the Head Teacher receiving parental consent may authorise selective publication. All reasonable efforts should be deployed to restrict this so only those likely to need to know have access.

- 7.3 Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. Governors must observe complete confidentiality, 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 arises outside the governing body.

8 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.1 The policy will be reviewed as part of the school's annual monitoring cycle or whenever deemed necessary by the Head teacher and Governors in the light of events and changes in the law.
- 8.2 The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 Holy Trinity CE Primary Academy has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers 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.

10 APPENDIX 1

SIX KEY POINTS ON INFORMATION SHARING extracted from H.M Government Information Sharing for Managers.

- 10.1 You should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (see glossary for definition) including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.
- 10.2 You must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.
- 10.3 You should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information, if in your judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent.
- 10.4 You should seek advice where you are in doubt, especially where your doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.
- 10.5 You should ensure that the information you share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see it and shared securely.
- 10.6 You should always record the reasons for your decision – whether it is to share information or not.

10.6.1 EVERY CHILD MATTERS

- 10.7 www.education.gov.uk
- 10.8 Downloads
Information Sharing: Practitioners' Guide.pdf
Information Sharing: Further Guidance on Legal Issues.pdf
Information Sharing: Case Examples.pdf
- 10.9 The *Common Assessment Framework for children and young people (CAF)*, a shared assessment tool used across services to avoid children and families having to tell and retell their story and to help practitioners develop a greater shared understanding of a child's needs.
 -  The lead professional to co-ordinate action if more than one service is involved.
 -  The *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* (DfES, 2005) for everyone working with children, young people and families.
 -  The *SureStart Children's Centres Practice Guidance* (DfES, 2005), which focuses on identifying and intervening in the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach families.
 -  The statutory guidance to support the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), which form the basis of public protection, including protection to children, and which operate on a multi-agency partnership basis throughout England and Wales.

 “Working together to safeguard children 2015”. Sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004.

10.10 It is important that practitioners understand when, why and how they should share information so that they can do so confidently and appropriately as part of their day-to-day practice. This document seeks to give practitioners clear practical guidance, but the Head teacher should be consulted for consent and procedural advice.

10.10.1 Human Rights Act 1998:

10.11 Gives everyone the right to “respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence”, unless this is overridden by the ‘public interest’, e.g. for reasons of Child Protection, for the protection of public safety, public order, health or morals or for the rights and freedoms of others.

10.11.1 Data Protection Act 1998:

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

10.12.1 Freedom of Information Act 2000:

10.13 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. Schools data or record keeping policy should also cover the requirements of this Act.