



## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

This policy covers our school's approach to confidentiality and provides clear, unambiguous guidance to ensure good practice throughout the school. It applies to *anyone* working within our school community.

### Overall School Aims and Objectives

Our school's overarching aims and objectives in relation to confidentiality and sharing information are:

- to protect pupils at all times and to give the school workforce clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles in relation to sharing information and confidentiality, ensuring good practice throughout the school which is understood by the whole school community including families;
- to foster an ethos of trust within the school and reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained;
- to provide consistent messages in school about handling and sharing information about pupils once it has been received;
- to ensure that the school workforce, families, pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and information sharing procedures and that families, pupils know that adults cannot offer unconditional confidentiality;
- the school workforce will encourage pupils to talk to their parents and carers;
- 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;
- to ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons group agreements are set for the protection of all; and
- to ensure that if there is a safeguarding issue then the correct procedure is followed.

### Rationale

The policy seeks to address the issues which may arise about sharing information and confidentiality. The school 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. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child supports the view that pupils should be entitled to confidential support alongside safeguarding them from harm.

The school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of information sharing and confidentiality. Families, children, young people and other adults should all expect that information they identify as confidential will not be shared with any other party *unless it is a safeguarding issue* in which case the appropriate member of the school workforce will be consulted or permission has been given as part of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.

In practice, there are few situations where absolute confidentiality can be offered in a school. The school aims to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of children, young people and the school workforce, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where any member of the school community

can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information, good practice is followed and, when appropriate, safeguarding procedures.

## Guidelines

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
- 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.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
  - i) The school has appointed the Headteacher Louise Young as Safeguarding/Child Protection Leader and Sue Burrows as Deputy Safeguarding/Child Protection Leaders and they receive regular training.
  - ii) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection issues.
  - iii) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
  - iv) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality in all cases, for example issues involving child protection or criminal issues. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parents, carers and children. All staff make sure they are available to talk to all parties concerned 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.
- Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress at any time, especially at parents' evenings. However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- Any personal data will only be kept as long as necessary or for the length of time as stipulated by law.
- Staff laptops are password protected.
- Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
- 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. 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 arises outside the governing body.
- Volunteer helpers are expected to keep anything that they see or hear about pupils, families or staff whilst working in school confidential. Any breach of this would negate them being able to work in school.

## **Creating a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment**

The school seeks to provide a safe, secure learning environment that enables pupils to gain accurate knowledge, develop their own values and attitudes, and develop skills to grow into happy confident successful adults.

Confidentiality will be taught as part of the planned PSHE curriculum. 'Group agreements' are negotiated with classes and include the boundaries of confidentiality within the classroom.

## **SEND, Inclusion, Equality and Diversity**

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Teaching about confidentiality will take into account the ability, age, readiness, and cultural backgrounds of our young people to ensure that all can fully understand the boundaries of confidentiality in and out of the classroom.

## **The Use of Visitors, Agencies and Other Adults Within and Outside the Classroom**

External contributors working in the classroom will follow this confidentiality policy. This includes agencies working with individuals or small groups of pupils outside the classroom. Any visitors that are invited to work within our school will be asked to read this policy and sign the 'Confidentiality Agreement'.

Visitors must agree to the guidelines set out in this policy before working with staff or children.

Updated on: 09.01.2018

To be reviewed: Autumn Term, 2019/20

Nikki Allen

**WORSTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Confidentiality Agreement**



**CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

All members of staff, regular visitors and volunteers are required to sign the following statement relating to confidentiality.

***I have read and understood the Confidentiality Policy and agree to adhere to this in my role at Worsthorne Primary School, during my time at the school and after I have left.***

- I agree to only discuss information relating to Worsthorne school and its pupils and staff on a 'need to know' basis, as defined in the policy.
- I agree not to post or share information online through any means, including all areas of personal social media (for example, Facebook or Twitter) which brings Worsthorne Primary School into disrepute.
- As a volunteer, I understand that the school decides when and where I will be volunteering in school. I also understand that I am responsible to the teacher I am placed with and I should discuss with them any concerns or information that needs to be shared about pupils or staff.
- I agree to refer all requests for information by an outside agency or the media to the Headteacher.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Name (please print): .....

Role in school: .....

Signature of school representative: .....

Date: .....

*\*Please sign and date and hand to Mrs Fox or Mrs Marsden in the office*