



Confidentiality Policy

November 2018

Review date: November 2019

Confidentiality Policy

Aim

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear guidance as to their legal and professional roles. To ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Rationale

Lowerplace Primary School aims to provide a safe and secure learning environment. 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. The school is aware 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

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust.
- To ensure that staff, parents, volunteers 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 the correct procedures are followed in cases of child protection.
- 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 codes 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.

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 has appointed a senior lead staff member for child protection who receives regular training.
- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection issues which have been made clear to the staff.
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.

- 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.
- 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 school's discipline policy.
- Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and that school has a duty to report child protection issues.
- 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 and may in some cases support the child to talk to their parents. The school would share with parents any child protection disclosures before going on to inform the correct authorities, unless it was deemed to put the child at further risk.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of their special needs requirements. 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.
- Health professionals have their own code of conduct 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.
- Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. At no time should the child's full name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified.
- Information about children should be shared with their parents/carers but only about their own child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress records at any time, especially at parents evening. However, parent should be aware that information about their child will be passed on when their child changes school.
- All personal information about children including social services records should be regarded as confidential. This, and any other personal information relating to the child such as medical reports, speech therapy, SEN reports and records should be circulated in folders or envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing.
- Should any child need to be given regular medication in school, logs of administration of medicine should be kept secure along with the medicine and an individual log kept for each child.
- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except to receiving schools or, in very exceptional circumstances, to other professionals.
- Staff records are also a matter for careful confidentiality and staff should take great care to ensure all performance management records are treated with care and confidence when being passed between assessor and the person being assessed.

- Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such information should be treated with confidence and papers no longer needed should be destroyed. Although decisions reached at governors meetings are normally made public through the minutes the discussion on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of care when discussions of potentially contentious issues arise that they are not shared outside the governing body.

Conclusion

Lowerplace Primary School 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 policy.

Review of Policy

Headteacher: _____

Chair of Governors: _____

Policy to be reviewed: November 2019