

Coalway Community Infant School

Confidentiality Policy

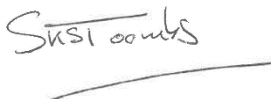


This policy will be reviewed annually

Review date: Oct 2023

Date of policy: Oct 2023

Next Review date: Oct 2024

Signed: 

Chair of Governors:

This policy also links to our policies on: Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils, Acceptable Use Agreement for staff, governors volunteers and visitors, Anti-bullying and Hate, Attendance, Behaviour Management, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Complaints, Health and Safety, Early Help Offer, RHSE, Safer Recruitment, Children who go missing from Education, SEND, Staff Code of Conduct, GCC Whistleblowing

Our school recognises the legal duty under section 175 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from “*significant harm*”. The issue of confidentiality is significant here as children have a right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment and are encouraged to share any concerns or worries they have with staff they trust. In order to maintain this trust and confidence, it is essential a child is informed of any need to disclose their information further, and possibly encouraged and supported to do this themselves. Pupils need to be assured their best interests will be maintained and understood; staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.

Our school seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards people of all ages within their respective communities. We encourage parents and children to discuss any concerns or worries which may affect emotional health/well-being and educational progress, and to see the school as a safe place.

We will:

- highlight the importance of pupils being able to talk to adults in our school to share their problems in a safe and supportive environment.
- build trust between pupils and staff.
- provide opportunities for our pupils to access confidential support on school premises in a variety of ways,
- ensure the wellbeing of those involved in any disclosure, and the safeguarding of confidential information
- act to avoid any single disclosure being treated as a crisis in isolation

To achieve our aim we will:

- work to help pupils understand their own feelings and opinions, and be confident in expressing them.
- ensure that pupils are aware of and understand how confidentiality works within our school.
- ensure that pupils know who they can talk to and when situations are treated as confidential.
- ensure that pupils and staff know where they can access relevant support when they need it.
- ensure that referrals to outside specialist services are easily made and are appropriate to needs.
- ensure that staff are trained in dealing with issues of confidentiality, and that they feel confident doing so
- inform staff, pupils, parents/carers and partners about confidentiality, and its limitations in our school. Some issues have to be shared with other people/agencies, e.g. child protection. The differences in requirements of confidentiality between professionals should be recognised.
- encourage and facilitate communication, between pupils, staff, parents, other members of both school communities, and relevant parties, to take place freely in the spirit of mutual trust and respect.
- enable confidential discussions to take place in a confidential environment. Public places such as the staff room, the classroom, and the playground are not confidential environments.

The Headteacher, with the support of the teachers and other staff, oversees all aspects of confidentiality in our school.

This includes ensuring:

- that there is an effective structure in place for overseeing the development, implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

The Head teacher will ensure that staff are aware:

- that they are required to pass on confidential information in circumstances of Child Protection
- that there are some circumstances where the confidentiality of some information cannot be guaranteed under this policy. For example, our school facilitates Parents/carers' and pupils' right to view their own educational records upon written request (under such circumstances, it is not

possible to guarantee the continued confidentiality of recorded information once it leaves the school's control).

- of whom (if anyone) to inform in the event of different types of disclosures of a personal nature
- all staff, including support staff and lunchtime supervisors, are entitled to, and can access. support and training relating to confidentiality. Needs will be identified and implemented through existing staff development systems such as staff audit, performance management, etc.
- that staff may keep a disclosing individual's identity anonymous whilst seeking advice and support for themselves in dealing with a disclosure.

Our school will maintain an up-to-date list of contacts from whom staff can seek support, including:

- the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The Gloucester Safeguarding Children Partnership (GSCP)

Our school places great value on working in partnership with parents/carers and with the wider community of school stakeholders, and sees this as an essential part of promoting healthy lifestyles. This will be promoted through policy development and working with parents (including home-school contracts), health professionals, and other outside agencies. This can have implications for confidentiality and may require the essential sharing of some information under a variety of circumstances

Guiding principles of implementing this policy are therefore that:

- Any information recorded about a pupil will be written in a way that assumes it will be read by either the subject or their parents/carers.
- Staff will encourage pupils to inform and seek support from their parents/carers.
- If a pupil wishes to make a disclosure to a member of staff, the pupil will be advised (wherever possible prior to the disclosure) what kinds of disclosure will require information to be shared, what will be done with the information and who else will have access to it.
- Where it is believed that the pupil may be at emotional or physical risk, or in breach of the law, staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of the risks they face.
- In most cases information provided by a pupil will only be passed to their parents/carers with the pupil's consent.
- Members of staff are not legally obliged to inform parents/carers in many instances when personal information has been disclosed. When our school chooses to inform parents/carers, it will only be done only if it is considered to be in the best interests of the child.
- Our school acknowledges and supports the differences between the roles of any non-school staff as either educators, or as providers of information and support to pupils. The boundaries between these roles will be clarified and agreed with, and prior to involvement of, non-school staff. Any distinctions in terms of confidentiality will be made clear to the pupil(s) involved.
- Notwithstanding the above, agencies such as the Police, and Children and Young People's Services, Local Authority's legal department and insurers, as well as other solicitors, (e.g. in custody cases) may be able to get a court order to gain access to *processed* information which our school deems confidential.