

Hawkinge Primary School

Confidentiality Policy



Written - August 2023

Review date – August 2024

We aim to protect all children at all times and to give all staff clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and responsibilities and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by children, parents/carers and staff.

Rationale

We put the child at the heart of the learning process and provide a safe and secure learning environment. We are committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising our responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information.

Sharing information inappropriately, or unnecessarily, is an erosion of trust.

We are mindful that staff are 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
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents/carers and children are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures and act upon them.
- To encourage children to be aware of confidentiality issues relating to their peers.
- To reassure children that their best interests will be maintained.
- To encourage children to talk to their parents/carers.
- To ensure that children and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that parents/carers have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to those of any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for

Guidelines

- All information about individual children is confidential and is only shared with those staff/adults that have a need to know.
- All safeguarding, medical and personal information about a child is held in a safe and secure place which can only be accessed by appropriate staff.
- We pride ourselves on good communication with parents/carers and staff are available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. We encourage children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children in talking to them.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, culture, class, medical concerns and special educational needs.
- All children, parents/carers, 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 to any person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.
- no member of staff discusses an individual child's behaviour/situation etc in the presence of another child.
- staff do not enter into detailed discussion about a child's behaviour with other children or their parents/carers.
- 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.
- staff performance management is carried out confidentially.
- matters of child protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.
- class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order to support individual children and adults. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.
- volunteers, such as parents/carers and friends of the school do not discuss school matters in the wider community
- volunteers, students and supply teachers read this policy before working in school.
- Staff should be aware of children in their care with medical needs. This information is accessible to staff who need it but is not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
- Photographs of children are not used without parents/carers' permission, especially in the press and internet.
- Governors must observe complete confidentiality, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parents/carers. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based are regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside of the governing body.

Other Professionals

Multi-agency professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.

Conclusion

All personal information about children is confidential and should only be accessed by staff on a need to know basis.

Hawkinge Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards children, parents/carers and staff. The care and safety of the individual is always paramount.