



# **Whole School Confidentiality Policy**

November 2021

## **Confidentiality Policy**

### **Aim**

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 children, parents/carers and staff.

### **Rationale**

Holly Primary School seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of the 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 hold, use and safeguard information received.

Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. 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.

### **Objectives**

- To provide consistent messages in school about the handling of information about children.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- 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 there is equality of provision and access.
- To ensure that if there are child protection issues the correct procedure is followed.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that during lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- 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 care, 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:

- a) The school has appointed a senior lead teacher for child protection who receives regular training.
- b) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection issues.
- c) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
- d) Staff are aware that effective sex and relationship education, can lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue.
- f) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools discipline policy.

- Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers. Staff are always 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.
- Parents/carers and children should will be made aware that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality may be broken.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
- Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE sessions which may deal with sensitive issues such as sex and relationships and drugs.
- The school will take account of the views of those parents who do not wish for their child's photo to appear in print or on the school website. Where images are published, only first names are printed. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.
- Information about children will be shared with parents, but only about their own child. Parents will not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time, especially at parents evening. However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- Parent helpers must first read and then agree to the school's Guidance for Volunteers, acknowledging the issues of confidentiality that a voluntary role within the school involves.
- All personal information about children, including social care records should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it.
- Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social care minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in envelopes or folders and once read should be returned for secure filing.
- 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. Certain issues within governor meetings may, in themselves, be regarded and marked as confidential.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The policy will be reviewed as part of the school's monitoring cycle.
- The PSHE scheme of work will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.
- The Head teacher (Duncan White) and governors have responsibility for monitoring this policy.

### **Conclusion**

Holly Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards children, 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.