



Stonesfield Primary School
Learning together to achieve our best

Confidentiality Policy

Date adopted by governors: March 2022

Date of review: March 2025

Stonesfield Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers, volunteers 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.

Aim

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

Objectives

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents 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 there is equality of provision and access for all, including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational need.
- To ensure that if there is a child protection issue then the correct procedure is followed.
- 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 a different code 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.

Links

This confidentiality policy is linked to the school's data protection, PSHCE, drug education, R.E, equal opportunities, sex and relationships education, child protection, and anti-bullying policies.

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. 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.

3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
 - a) The school's Designated Safeguarding Leads receive regular training. The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for child protection.
 - b) There is clear guidance for procedures 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 inappropriate conduct.
 - d) 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.
 - e) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
 - f) Acts of intolerance involving gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality are unacceptable and will be dealt with by following the school's Behaviour Policy for pupils and the Disciplinary Procedure for staff.
 - g) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
4. 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.
5. The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are available after school 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.
6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that confidential information will only be shared on a need to know basis.
7. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A lot of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children should not be able to be identified.
8. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSCE session dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationships and drugs.
9. All children, parents, 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 with 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 in the presence of another child in school.
 - Staff do not enter into detailed discussion about a child's behaviour with other children or their parents.
 - 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.
 - Parents in school, working as staff or volunteers, do not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents in the school. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy.
 - At Full Governing Body meetings matters such as pupil exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in the Headteacher's Report under Part 2

confidential. This is not for the knowledge of persons outside the Governing Body meeting. Minutes in Part 2 are minuted separately and minutes are not published.

- Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the headteacher's office and electronic records will only be available from the headteacher's computer.
 - Matters of Child Protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.
 - It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.
 - When volunteers, such as parents and friends of the school, are working in classes, they do not discuss educational matters outside the classroom. For example the specific use of teaching assistant time for particular pupils or groups of pupils, teaching assistants have different roles within a class, including the support of children with special educational needs, the provision and work with these children is for the teacher to discuss with the relevant parents or carers.
 - Volunteers, students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school.
10. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be accessible to staff who need the information, but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
 11. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers' permission. At no time should the child's full name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.
 12. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. However parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
 13. All personal information about children, including social services records, should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information.
 - Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing.
 - Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log.
 - In all other notes, briefing sheets etc a child should not be able to be identified.
 - Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
 14. 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. These confidential papers should be

collected and destroyed. 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.

Responsibilities of adults working in school or supporting the work of the school

Working within the school, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, adults are likely to have access to personal information regarding pupils, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature. All staff, governors and regular volunteers are asked to read the Confidentiality Policy and sign to confirm that they:

- Are clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so.
- Are expected to treat information they receive about children in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Will seek advice from a senior member of staff if in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or information that is requested from them.
- Know to whom concerns or allegations should be reported.

APPENDIX A

Confidentiality Agreement for Stonesfield Primary School

This is an agreement between the Governing Body and everyone who works in school either in a paid or a voluntary capacity.

I understand that in the course of my work in school I may be party to personal information regarding pupils, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature. I agree not to use any such information outside the school context. I agree to share relevant information with other agencies in situations of child protection.

Signature of member of Staff/Governor/Volunteer:

Print Name:.....

Date:.....

Signed:..... Headteacher Date:.....

Those working in school either paid or voluntarily will be asked to sign this agreement annually. In line with our GDPR policy the most recent agreement for each member of staff or volunteer will be kept on file until the termination of employment plus six years.