

Confidentiality Policy

June 2019



Oxenhope Church of England Primary School

If you are concerned about the safety of a child, act!

Our Named Persons for Child Protection are (Head of School), Alice Jones and Gillian Dyson (Pastoral Manager), Caroline Auty (Class Teacher) and Hannah Inman (Explorers Club Leader)

Useful phone numbers:

School – 01535 642271

Social Services Initial Contact Point 01274 437500

This policy must be read alongside the school's GDPR policy and the safeguarding and child protection policy

Aim of the policy

To protect the child at all times, 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 pupils, parents/carers and staff and volunteers.

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, volunteers, 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 needs.
- 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 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.

Instances when confidentiality will need to be broken

- Where there is risk of serious harm or threat to life.
- Where urgent medical treatment is needed.
- Where a serious crime has been committed.
- Where the use or supply of illegal drugs is involved.
- Where it is felt that an issue has a racial motive.

Guidelines

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with staff that need to know.

- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs.
 - Parents have ready access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child. Parents should 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.
 - Parents 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 has appointed a senior member of staff as child protection officer/ designated safeguarding lead. Child protection procedures are reviewed regularly and readily available to staff.
 - Any concerns/evidence relating to a child's personal safety are kept in a secure, confidential file and are shared with as few people as possible on a professional basis.
 - The school encourages children to talk to parents about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents. The school would share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities – unless this would put the child at further risk.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parents and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents about issues that are causing concern.
- Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSE session dealing with sensitive issues.
 - School is proactive so children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. 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.
 - Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and where to find further information if needed.
 - All parents are asked to sign a permission slip for using pupil photographs. An up-to-date list is held in the office and relevant names are given to individual class teachers. The school allows parents to photograph / film school public events (e.g. performances / sports events).
 - Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports are filed in a secure location.
 - Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality.
 - Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.

Role of the Governing Body

Governors are mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. Governors observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning

individual staff, pupils or parents. Decisions reached at governors' meetings are made public through the minutes, except confidential items which are not a public record. Governors exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of sensitive issues arise outside the governing body.

Written by Alice Jones – June 2019

Review date – June 2021