Confidentiality Policy

Title:	Confidentiality Policy
Status:	APPROVED
Date:	16.07.24
Adopted on:	16.07.24
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Review Date:	July 2027

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Contents

Introduction 3
Aim 3
Rationale 3
Objectives 4
Guidelines for school staff 5
Confidentiality for governors 7
Monitoring and evaluation 7

INTRODUCTION

Cranham C of E Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, 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 purpose of this document.

This policy is in line with our privacy statement and meets the requirements of GDPR.

AIM

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

RATIONALE

Cranham C of E Primary School seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It adheres to the Keeping Children Safe in Education document and it is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to 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 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 needs.
- To ensure that if there are child protection issues 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.

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
- 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.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
- The school has appointed Designated Safeguarding Leads for child protection who receive regular training.
- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents and all staff have regular training on child protection issues.
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
- Staff are aware that effective relationship and sex education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
- Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
- Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should result in action in accordance with the school's behaviour policy (pupils) or the Code of conduct (members of staff).
- Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- 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, and 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. The school always informs the correct authorities of any child protection disclosure. The decision about informing parents would depend on the nature of the disclosure, and the advice of those authorities.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A great deal of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children should not be able to be identified.

- Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken.
- Confidentiality is a whole school issue, and all members of staff are made aware of this policy.
- Classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE session dealing with sensitive issues such as relationships, sex and drugs. Strategies are in place for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. School needs to be 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.
- 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 that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
- Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission, and specific permission is required for images to be used in the press and on the internet. 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.
- Information about children will be shared with their parents, avoiding reference to other children unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time. This needs to be considered when organising parent consultation evenings.
- 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 consideration will be given to whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information. Information linked to safeguarding should be scanned and stored digitally as part of the My Concern system. However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- 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 shared with relevant staff with care and then returned to secure storage.

- 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.

CONFIDENTIALITY FOR GOVERNORS

As a general rule, all aspects of school life that are discussed at governor meetings and through governor monitoring should be regarded as confidential (particularly at the stage before minutes are agreed upon). 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 and should be copied onto different coloured paper. These confidential papers should be shared only on the school site if possible and then 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.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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

The PSHE scheme of work, the RSE (Relationships & Sex Education) policy and Drug Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy.

The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy.