



CHEW STOKE CHURCH SCHOOL

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

This policy is written with reference to the Christian Foundation of the school.

'Confident in Learning, Caring in Life'

Our vision has been inspired by Luke 10:27

This policy should be taken and used as part of Chew Stoke Church School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our aims and values as a Church of England School.

RATIONALE

At Chew Stoke Church School we seek to provide a happy, safe and secure learning environment for children, and to place them at the heart of the learning process. We seek to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters agenda and to address issues that may arise in relation to confidentiality. We are committed to developing positive and creative ways for the child's voice to be heard, whilst recognising the professional responsibility we have, to use, hold and safeguard children in our care and information received.

The school is aware that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is an expectation that a professional approach will be adopted in all matters of confidentiality.

Aim

The aim of our Confidentiality Policy is to protect the child at all times and to give staff clear, unambiguous guidance as to their professional roles in relation to confidentiality. The policy ensures that there is consistent practice across the school and that this practice is understood by staff, adult volunteers, pupils and parents / carers.

Objectives:

- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To ensure that staff, adult volunteers, parents / carers and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality, policy and procedure
- 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 and that the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
- To ensure that where there are child protection issues, correct procedures are followed.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that during teaching time, ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To ensure that parents / carers 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

To ensure that all those using and working in the school can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know. However, it is recognised that as a small school all teaching staff do develop caring relationships with all children and so it is general for information to be shared with all teaching staff in a culture of total trust.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
- The school has appointed a senior member of staff (Mr Ben Hewett) who has responsibility for child protection and receives regular training. There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection.
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
- 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.
- 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 all incidents will be dealt with and reported using Local Authority reporting arrangements.
- Information collected for one purpose will not be used for another.

- All records of a confidential nature are stored in a secure area, with safeguards in place to minimise loss, unauthorised use, modification or misuse.
- 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 teachers 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 will share with parents / carers any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the appropriate authority, unless this is deemed to put the child at greater risk.
- We will endeavour to conduct meetings / interviews in a private place. Matters of a confidential nature should never take place in a public area or in front of pupils.
- Any expressed concerns or evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file (please see the school's Child Protection Policy).
- Information specified as confidential given by a parent / carer to the Head / class teacher will not be passed to other adults without permission. All personal information about the pupil is regarded as private, and staff will not pass it on indiscriminately.
- Parents / carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will 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; ground rules must be set for any teaching time that deals with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship or drugs education. Children must be aware of the strategies in place for dealing with sensitive information, which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. Children need to feel supported so that information is not necessarily revealed in a public arena.
- Staff need to be aware of children with medical needs; relevant information is available in each classroom for supply teachers.
- Photographs and digital images of children will not be used without parents / carers permission.
- Information about children will be shared with parents / carers but only about their child. Parents / carers should not have access to any other child's books, marks or grades at any time. They should also be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- All personal information about children including social services records should be regarded as confidential and will be kept in a secure filing cabinet in the Head teacher's office.

- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on without prior permission being sought.
- 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 / carers. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are in the public domain, the discussions on which these decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.
- All teachers and support staff working in school have been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). All adults working in school (paid or unpaid) who have regular, unsupervised contact with children, will have an enhanced CRB check. Teachers who work in school will be advised of our Confidentiality Policy and will be expected to respect it.
- Visitors to school should be made aware of this policy and the importance of maintaining a professional approach to confidentiality. Supply teachers, students, work experience students and adult volunteers receive guidelines for working in the school and the issue of confidentiality is mentioned specifically.

Review, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Head teacher is responsible for monitoring this policy and it will be reviewed in line with the school's monitoring cycle. The number of reported incidents where confidentiality has been broken will form the basis of evaluation.

Conclusion

Chew Stoke Church School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents / carers and staff. It also works with a range of outside agencies and shares information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

This policy was approved by the governing body September 2022.

Review date: September 2024.

Related policies: Child Protection, Inclusion, Behaviour