ECCLESTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

incorporating

Beechbuds Pre-School

Confidentiality Policy

Inspiring independent learners to thrive in a changing world

A definition of confidentiality:

Confidentiality is defined as 'something which is spoken or given in private, entrusted with another's secret affairs'.

Rationale:

At Eccleston Primary School we believe that:

- The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils well-being and safety.

- It is an essential part of the ethos of our school that trust is established to enable pupils, staff and parent/carers to seek help both within and outside the school in order to minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure pupils and staff are supported and safe.

- Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable discussing personal issues and concerns, including sex and relationships.

- It is important to develop creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to hold and safeguard information received.

- Everyone in the school community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health, sex and relationships or other personal issue they want to discuss.

- 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.

Aims:

- 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 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:

- 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 the Headteacher as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection and backup DSLs (Deputy Headteacher, Early Years leader, School Business Manager and Family Support Worker) who each receive biannual 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 an allegation is made against a member of staff.

- 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 should follow the schools Behaviour Policy.

- 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 would share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities.

- 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. A lot 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 every three years for all staff and updated regularly.

- Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSE session dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them 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** especially in the press and on the internet. Guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events is:

  *In our school we believe parents should be able to photograph or video their **own child** during a school performance. However, these photographs or films are for use within that family. At no time should other children's photographs or children's names be placed on social networking sites such as "Facebook" by members of staff or volunteers. The school strongly discourages parents/carers from posting photographs taken in school on social media websites.*

- Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades. However, parents should 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. 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 should be filed securely or saved securely electronically.

- Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept in relevant record files.

- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

- 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 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. The governing body must adhere to the agreed Code of Conduct distributed in the Autumn term meeting each year and available, by request, from the Clerk to Governors or the Headteacher

Review of Confidentiality Policy
Reviewed: November 2026
Next Review Date: November 2027