



# Dale Community Primary and Stonehill Nursery Federation

## Confidentiality Policy

**Head Teacher:** Louise Foster

**Chair of Governors:** Diane Williams

**Policy Approved by:** Governors Finance and Personnel Committee

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## CONFIDENTIALITY

Dale Community Primary School and Stonehill Nursery School have a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers, and staff. We also 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 policy.

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that confidentiality and Data Protection Compliance are a natural part of good practice in throughout the school environment.
- Provide the governors and staff workforce with clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles.
- Make certain that the procedures throughout the school can be easily understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Schools hold a lot of confidential information about children, staff and sometimes parents and carers. Whilst it is important that we continue to develop positive ways to use that information, we all recognise that it is our responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.

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. Our obligation to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, the GDPR and other legislation and statutory guidance underpins our management of data.

Staff and Governors are required to take part in annual GDPR training to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and adhere to the school's GDPR policies and procedures.

### **Objectives:**

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children and adults once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, governors, volunteers, students, 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 pupils to talk to their parents and carers.
- To ensure that pupils/parents/carers know that we cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Refer to our Safeguarding Policy.
- To ensure that information shared, as part of a child protection issue, is managed correctly.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that everyone understands their personal responsibilities.

## Guidelines:

- All information about individuals 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 Safeguarding Policy will be applied and monitored by appropriate school personnel.
- All children and adults have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns, and special educational needs.

## Day-to-Day Practice

Confidentiality is a whole school issue. 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. Information about children will be shared with parents and carers but only about their child. **Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents evening.**

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 sealed envelopes, as encrypted files or shared and held in secure area(s) and once read should be returned for secure filing. Staff are unable to store/copy materials to their desktops and flash drives are disabled on all staff computers.

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.

Staff should exercise prudence and consider the dignity of individuals during conversations on the school site, for example in the staff room, particularly if non-members of staff are present and in the presence of children.

Non-members of staff, for example, students and voluntary helpers, will be asked to follow the principles of the confidentiality policy and sign a confidentiality agreement.

## Governors

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 should be destroyed after use.

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 and Governors will sign a confidentiality agreement annually.

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.