



Settrington All Saints C.E. Primary School

Confidentiality Policy

Aim

To ensure the safety, protection and wellbeing of all children by providing clear, consistent guidance to staff, governors, volunteers and visitors on handling confidential information. This policy ensures all members of the school community understand the boundaries of confidentiality in accordance with statutory safeguarding responsibilities and the principles of nurture.

Rationale

Settrington All Saints C.E. Primary School recognises the importance of placing the child at the centre of all we do. Our ethos is grounded in the principles of nurture: ensuring that children feel safe, valued, and emotionally secure. We recognise our duty under the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024, UK GDPR, and Working Together to Safeguard Children to protect personal information and handle sensitive issues professionally and appropriately.

The school is committed to open, honest, and respectful communication, recognising that unnecessary sharing of personal information erodes trust and may compromise safeguarding duties.

Objectives

1. Ensure all staff understand when and how to share or withhold confidential information in line with statutory guidance.
2. Foster a culture of emotional safety, trust, and respect throughout the school.
3. Support children in understanding confidentiality and the value of trusted relationships.
4. Clarify the boundaries of confidentiality in safeguarding matters.
5. Promote parental engagement and transparent communication, while protecting children's rights.
6. Ensure all staff, governors, volunteers, and external professionals adhere to this policy.

Key Principles (Including Nurture Approach)

- The child's wellbeing is at the centre of all decisions.
- Emotional security and consistent relationships are crucial for learning and development.
- Information is only shared when necessary, lawful, proportionate, and in the child's best interests.
- Staff model appropriate boundaries and professional behaviour to promote a culture of safety and respect.

Guidelines

a. Information Sharing and Record Keeping

- Confidential information is shared on a **“need-to-know” basis** only.
- All safeguarding concerns are recorded in line with **KCSIE 2024** and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Medical, social care and educational records are stored securely, either electronically (on a secure MIS) or in locked cabinets.
- Records are accessed only by authorised staff and shared externally only with appropriate consent or statutory obligation.
- The **UK GDPR** lawful bases for processing personal data are observed.

b. Safeguarding and Child Protection

- **No guarantee of absolute confidentiality** can be offered where a child is at risk of harm.
- Children are encouraged to speak to trusted adults. Staff will always act in the best interest of the child, even if this involves breaking confidentiality.
- Information may be shared without consent if a child is believed to be at risk of significant harm, or in line with statutory safeguarding duties.

c. Classroom and Curriculum Practice

- Ground rules are established in PSHE, circle time or sensitive lessons to ensure safe, respectful environments.
- Staff avoid initiating or encouraging inappropriate disclosures in class or public settings.
- Distancing techniques and anonymised examples are used when discussing sensitive issues.

d. Professional Conduct

- Staff, governors, students, and volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality both in and out of school.
- Gossip or discussion of school matters in public or informal settings is strictly prohibited.
- Staff do not discuss individual children's behaviour or needs in front of other children or parents, unless directly relevant.

e. Use of Digital and Social Media

- Staff must adhere to the school's **Social Media Policy**.
- Confidential or personal information must never be shared online or discussed on social platforms.
- Photographs and videos require **explicit parental consent**, and children are not named in public forums or school social media.

f. Parents and Carers

- Information about a child is shared with parents/carers **only if it relates to their own child**.
- Parents are informed of their right to access their child's records but not those of other children.
- The school supports children in communicating with parents where appropriate and safe.

g. Volunteers, Visitors, and External Professionals

- All volunteers and external professionals (e.g. supply staff, therapists) are expected to read and comply with this policy.
- They may only access information that is essential for their role and are briefed by a senior leader before engagement.

Specific Confidentiality Measures

- Children with SEND or medical needs are supported discreetly.
- FSM, pupil premium or other funding status is handled sensitively.
- Performance management, disciplinary or safeguarding matters involving staff are handled under Part 2 (confidential) of governor meetings.
- Governor minutes, where confidential, are securely stored and marked clearly.

Six Key Principles for Information Sharing

(Adapted from Government guidance)

1. Be open and honest with children/families from the outset about why, what, and how information will be shared.
2. Consider the safety and wellbeing of the child at all times.
3. Seek consent wherever possible, unless doing so places the child at risk.
4. Seek advice if unsure about information sharing decisions.
5. Ensure information shared is relevant, accurate, timely and shared securely.
6. Keep clear, secure records of decisions to share or withhold information.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed every two years or sooner if statutory guidance changes. Staff will receive annual training on confidentiality, information sharing and safeguarding.

Linked Policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Social Media Policy
- PSHE & RSE Policy
- Record Keeping Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- GDPR & Data Protection Policy

Approved by Governing Body: June 2025

Review Due: June 2027