



WESTGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1.0 Rationale

We are committed to the provision of a safe and secure learning environment for every child and respect every individual's and family's right to privacy whilst ensuring that we offer high quality care and education. All of our staff and visitors are expected to work within the guidelines of this policy, and conform to recent legislation and government guidelines, including General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

We recognise our responsibilities relating to holding, using and safeguarding information received.

In practice this means:

- Making it clear that information is shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- Not discussing personal information relating to any of our stakeholders (i.e. those who are connected with our school) in a general way or where it may be overheard.
- Keeping all personal records confidential.
- Using teaching methods which protect confidentiality.

2.0 Objectives

Through the implementation of our Confidentiality Policy we will ensure that:

- Stakeholders are protected at all times.
- All staff and visitors have clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles.
- Good practice is shared and understood by all stakeholders.

We will achieve our objectives through:

- Issuing clearly defined procedures.
- Providing consistent messages in our school relating to handling information, once it has been received, providing training where necessary.
- Fostering an ethos of trust within our school.
- Publishing our Confidentiality Policy.

3.0 Procedures

1. All information about individual stakeholders, however obtained (e.g. from personal records/ through observation/ through meetings/ through situations that arise during class, playtime or outside our premises), is private and will only be shared with those who have a need to know (i.e. those who need the information in their professional capacity). Information which relates to any individual stakeholder or brings our school into disrepute will never be posted or shared online, through any means including all areas of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter). Staff, regular visitors and volunteers understand that

this is a requirement during and after their time at our school and confirm this through signing an agreement.

2. Even when information appears to be widely known, it will not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.

3. All social services, medical and personal information will be held in the school office and cannot be accessed by individuals other than nominated school staff. It will be considered whether the staff concerned have access to all, or only some, of the information.

4. Personal information such as social services reports, speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, minutes of meetings etc. will be circulated, where necessary, in sealed envelopes and once read will be returned to the appropriate person for secure filing.

5. Correspondence to parents/ carers relating to social services, medical and personal information will be handed directly to the parent/ carer or posted, and not sent via pupils/ their book bags.

6. Confidentiality will be maintained when distributing class information: this information will be made accessible to staff who need it and will be stored securely.

7. Logs of administration of medication to children will be kept in the school office, in a cupboard to which only staff are allowed access.

8. The school's Designated Safeguarding Leads, Helen Carpenter and Marie Colannino, receive regular training. Child protection procedures are understood by all staff and training is undertaken regularly in accordance with local authority recommendations.

9. Adults are aware of the procedures relating to allegations against a member of staff and the policy is available on the VLE or as a hard copy upon request.

10. Staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/ carers about issues that are causing concern.

11. Parents/ carers and children are made aware that our school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and we have a duty to report child protection issues. Any child protection disclosure will be shared with parents/ carers before we inform the correct authorities unless we believe that this puts the child at greater risk.

12. Data generated by our school will be anonymised where necessary to ensure confidentiality. Information collected for one purpose will not be used for another.

13. Where staff need to take personal data off-site, this will be stored on school laptops or encrypted USB keys. Staff are encouraged to use One Drive to avoid storing personal data on USB keys where possible.

14. Clear ground rules will be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationships and drugs education. Staff are aware that effective sex and relationships education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Strategies are in place for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. Staff will be proactive so children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena.

15. Photographs or video of children will not be used without parents'/ carers' permission and our policy on the use of images of children will be adhered to at all times.

16. We ensure that parents/ carers have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child, within legislative requirements. Parents/ carers will not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time.

17. Only those identified on our MIS as having parental responsibility will be contacted in relation to school concerns about their child. Should there be any concerns relating to safeguarding, these will be referred to the designated safeguarding lead(s) before a parent/ carer is contacted.

18. Governors will be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed, or will be brought to their attention, about staff and children. All papers will be marked as confidential and copied onto different coloured paper. These confidential papers will be destroyed after meetings. Governors will observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the Governing Body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parents/ carers. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based may be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside Governing Body meetings.

Governors should also ensure that any papers downloaded to review electronically should be deleted after use, for example from the Downloads folder on their hard drive.

19. Health professionals have their own code of practice relating to confidentiality.

20. All requests for information (about our school or stakeholders) by an outside agency or the media will not be commented on by the person to whom the request was made, but will be referred immediately to the Headteacher.

4.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on an annual basis. Its effectiveness will be evaluated at each review.

This policy was first adopted by Westgate's governing body on 17/11/20. It will be reviewed next in May 2022 and annually thereafter.

Signed: (Head Teacher)

Signed: (On Behalf of Governing Body)

Date: 17/11/2020

See Also:

Freedom of Information Policy

Data Protection Policy

Acceptable Use of IT Policy