

Christ Church Charnock Richard C.E. Primary School

*Inspired to learn, grow and flourish within our Christian
family*



Confidentiality Policy
Reviewed Autumn Term 2019

Dissemination

This policy will be shared with all interested parties both in the school and in the wider community and will apply to all staff, visitors and volunteers to the school except where they are working explicitly under their own professional guidelines. The school will only in exceptional circumstances handle information without parental knowledge.

Background information

Our school is a mixed gender, 4–11 school catering for children from 4-11 in a semi rural area. Pupils are drawn from a wide catchment area, including Charnock Richard, Eaves Green and Gillibrand estates.

Policy development and consultation

The PSHE Co-ordinator wrote the policy after consultation with the teachers, pupils and parents. It was presented to the Governors for final consultation and approval.

Rationale

At our school we wish to create an atmosphere where pupils feel able to speak to staff. In order to support staff, pupils, visitors and volunteers it is important to have a clear and explicit policy on confidentiality so that all parties involved are aware of the boundaries and legal frameworks to which they have to adhere. The school at all times puts the safety and welfare of the child first and any issue will be referred to the school's Designated Senior Leadership for Child Protection (DSL) if necessary. This policy is in effect for all situations inside and outside of the classroom. It will underpin other school policies such as the SRE (Sex and Relationship) and Drug Education and Drug Related Incidents policies.

Definition of Confidentiality

For the purpose of this policy the following definition of confidentiality will apply: "Discretion in keeping private information".

Staff, visitors and volunteers' responsibilities

All people working with children or young people in this school will:

- have the best interest of the pupil at heart at all times,
- use distancing techniques and ground rules in lessons in order to try to avoid situations that may encourage disclosures,
- at the outset inform pupils that they cannot offer complete confidentiality in certain circumstances,
- inform any pupil wishing to make a disclosure, or who has inadvertently made a disclosure, that they may have to share the information with another member of staff and as far as possible tell the pupil the name of the person with whom they will share the information,
- at all times abide by the school's child protection policy,
- encourage pupils where appropriate to talk with parents/carers,
- be duty bound to act appropriately upon information not directly given to them.

Principles for referral

1. There is a statutory duty to report child protection issues.
2. If in doubt tell the Designated Senior Leadership for Child Protection (Helen Brooks)
3. Visitors to the school should be made aware of the DSL (Designated Senior Leader for child protection) when they arrive at the school.

Principles of working with pupils

1. It will be made clear to pupils the limits of confidentiality that they can be offered.
2. Pupils must always be told that no information is confidential.
3. Pupils will be told with whom the information will be shared.
4. Pupils will be encouraged where appropriate to talk with parents or carers about their issues.

Ground Rules

In order to create the right sort of learning environment and to help safeguard people's rights to confidentiality it is best to establish a clear set of ground rules to work within whilst in the classroom.

Ground rules will enable sensitive or controversial issues to be explored in a way that can minimise the risks of inappropriate disclosures being made.

Any set of ground rules should be a working document, so that rules can be added or modified as situations arise. When initially setting out to formulate some ground rules for a group the overriding question that needs to be asked is:

“What do we need to do to create a safe environment for everyone to work in and what behaviour will show this?”

As adults we are usually aware of the standards and behaviour required to fulfil the requirements of agreed ground rules. This may not be the case for all pupils and it is important to spend time to talk about how we demonstrate respect, honesty, trust, empathy, encouragement and value. Pupils, staff and visitors need to be clear about what is meant by confidentiality and its limits within a school. A set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils.

Examples of ground rules include:

- Value everyone’s contribution..
- Don’t feel pressurised to contribute
- If you wish to contribute do not use other people’s experiences as an example – depersonalisation techniques to be used.
- Keep a sense of humour – laugh with someone not at them
- Listen to views and opinions
- No-one will have to answer a personal question
- Make sure you are aware of what you are saying and its possible implications
- No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- Only the correct (anatomical) name will be used for the body
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- Not everyone is the same and shouldn’t try to be the same.

Passing on information indiscriminately

- All staff are aware that they should not pass information about children or their parents/carers indiscriminately.
- Confidential information is kept securely in the headteachers room.
- Staff consider the suitability of the surroundings and the presence of other people when they have conversations with children, parents or carers that might need to be kept confidential.
- Access to personally identifiable information should be on a strict need to know basis.

Other areas of concern

If a member of staff, visitor or volunteer becomes aware of concerns about a member of staff they can consult Mrs N Calvert (Acting Deputy headteacher) if confidentiality is needed so long as the concern is NOT related to child protection.

Child Protection/Safeguarding Children

The Designated Senior Person (DSL) for Child Protection is the Headteacher, Helen Brooks and the back up DSL is Mrs Alison Barron. If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g. unexplained marks, bruises, soreness or if a child discloses something of a child protection nature, you have a responsibility to report it to the DSL/Headteacher. A clear written record of the concern will need to be completed as soon as possible.

If a child makes an allegation against an adult working at the school, this will be investigated by the Headteacher (or by the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher) in accordance with the agreed procedures.

Any adult who has concerns about the conduct of a colleague at the school or about any improper practice will report this to the Headteacher (Helen Brooks) or to the Chair of Governors (Sue Ashton) if the concern is about the Headteacher.

Staff Conduct

In terms of staff conduct both on and off the school premises please read the 'Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children & young people in educational settings'. (Document A8 CP Procedures).

As a member of the school staff you are expected to agree to and abide by the contents of the guidance. You will also be expected to read and agree to abide by the school's E-safety policy, with specific reference to social networking sites.

See also the General Teaching Council publication 'Code of Conduct and Practice for registered teachers' for information and guidance (copy in the staff room)

Further Guidance can be found in the document: Consent, Confidentiality & Record Keeping A10ii (LEA Child Protection)