



## Confidentiality Policy

*"Working together  
with parents, church and community  
to create a distinctive environment  
where the unique nature of each child  
is respected and fostered"*

Consultation	Staff	Date: 2015	Governors	Date: 2015
Ratified by Governors:	April 2015			
Review Date:	Spring 2016	Spring 2017	Spr 1 2018	Spr 1 2019
Link Policies	Sex and Relationships		Data Protection	
	Drugs			
	Safeguarding			

Copies of this policy can be found:

- On the school's VLE in the Staffroom course
- In the Policy file in the PPA room
- In the Staff Handbook

The following Appendices are attached:

## Aims

- To protect the children at all times
- To give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles
- To ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff

## Rationale

St Helen's CE Primary School seeks to put the children at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality and implement the underlying principles to which every school adheres:

- Be healthy,
- Stay safe,
- Enjoy and achieve,
- Make a positive contribution,
- Achieve economic well-being.

It is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust.

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.

## Objectives

1. To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school
3. To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures
4. To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
5. To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers
6. To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
8. To ensure that if there is a child protection issue then the correct procedure is followed.
9. To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
10. To understand that health professionals are bound by a different code of conduct.
11. To ensure that parents have right of access to any records the school may hold on their child, but not to any other child they do not have parental responsibility for.

## Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff who have a need to know.
2. 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.
3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
  - a. There is clear guidance for handling child protection incidents
  - b. Two members of the Senior Leadership Team have responsibility for child protection and they receive regular training in line with current guidance
  - c. All other staff have regular training on child protection issues in line with current guidance
  - d. There is clear guidance of procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
  - e. 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
  - f. Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
  - g. Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the school's discipline policy
  - h. Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
4. 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.
5. The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers. Staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may, in some cases, support the children to talk to their parents. The school will share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities unless there are grounds to suspect that to do so would put the child (or other children) at further risk.
6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
7. All children have the 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.
8. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as Circle Time and other PSHE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex, relationships 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 necessarily revealed in a public place.
9. Health professionals have their own code of practice for dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of 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.

10. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permissions especially in the press and on the internet. This can be a cultural issue that school needs to be aware of. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of all photographic devices during public school events.
11. 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 at any time (especially at parents' evenings). However parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school if and when they change school.
12. 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.
13. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEND reports, SEND minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in folders and once read should be returned for secure filing.
14. Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log.
15. 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.
16. Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are 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 confidential papers 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. Although decisions reached at governors meetings are normally made public through the minutes 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**

- 1) The policy will reviewed as part of the school's monitoring cycle
- 2) The PSHE scheme of work, Sex and Relationships policy and Drugs policy will identify opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups
- 3) The head teacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy

## **Conclusion**

St Helen's CE Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. It also needs to 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 document.