South Gosforth First School

'Roots to grow and wings to fly'

South Gosforth First School

Confidentiality Policy

	Staff • Read it • Chance for feedback	FGB/Sub committee • Approved	Accessible • Website link saved
Review Date:	**November 2026**	**November 2026**	**November 2026**
Next Review Due:	**November 2029**		

Members of staff with responsibility:

- **Mr Bradley-Adams (Head Teacher)**
- **Miss Rachael Blackburn (Deputy Head Teacher)**
- **Mrs Catherine Burnett (EYFS Lead)**
- **Mrs Amanda Logan (KS2 Lead)**
- **Miss Kate Rutherford (SENDCO)**
- **Mrs Lucy Parker (School Business Manager)**

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Aim

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

Rationale

South Gosforth First School seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. We seek to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality. We are 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

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, 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 children to talk to their parents and carers.
- To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all, including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
- To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed in line with our safeguarding policy.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all, especially in PSHE and Relationships Education.
- To understand that health professionals are bound by different code of conduct.
- To ensure that parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for.

Guidelines

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff who have a professional need to know.
- All social services, medical and personal information about a child is held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than appropriate members of school staff.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection/safeguarding incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection/safeguarding issues.
- The school has appointed a senior member of staff as the Designated Person for child protection/safeguarding. This is the Head Teacher, Mr Adams and in his absence the Deputy

Head Teacher, Miss Blackburn or other Deputy DSLs, Mrs Burnett or Mrs Logan. These staff have regular DSL training.

- There is clear guidance for procedures if allegations are made against staff.
- Staff are aware that PSHE education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
- Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about children's' social class, gender, race and cultural heritage in a sensitive manner.
- Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the school's restorative approach to positive behaviour policy.
- Unless children are deemed to be in danger, information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- Parents/carers and children are made aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues which are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents.
- If possible, the school seeks to share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities (in line with procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy).
- All children have a 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.
- Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSE session dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship 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 unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. 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.
- Photographs of children are not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet (as set out in the school's acceptable use policy).
- 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 evening. However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- 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 envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing.
- Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log. In all other notes, briefing sheets etc. a child should not be able to be identified. The only exception to this is for a specific medical plan, such as allergic reaction, when identifying the child is essential to their safety.
- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances, if a child was in danger or to a receiving school.

- 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 not be discussed out of the meeting.
- These confidential papers should be destroyed. 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 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

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.

2. The PSHE scheme of work, Relationship policy and Drug Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.

3. The Standards and Curriculum Committee has responsibility for monitoring this policy.

Conclusion

South Gosforth First 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 child is the key consideration which lies behind this policy.