



St Francis Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Confidentiality Policy

Developed by PSHE Coordinator

Drafted:	October 2006
Agreed by governors:	March 2007
Reviewed:	Autumn 2010
Next Review:	Autumn 2012
Reviewed:	March 2016/Ratified September 20 <sup>th</sup> 2016
Ratified:	March 19 <sup>th</sup> 2018
Next review:	March 2020

## **Aim**

We seek to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe, secure and trusting learning environment. This is set out in our vision, which states:

*'We believe that all children are a gift from God. That they are all special and should be allowed to develop and grow in a nurturing environment secure in the knowledge that they are cherished.'*

DfES Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (July 2000) states 'Schools should have a clear and explicit confidentiality policy which is advertised to pupils, staff, parents and visitors'. This policy will support our school in ensuring children have a safe, secure and trusting learning environment.

The policy of the school is to work in partnership with parents in order to promote the welfare of children. The school also aims to build up relationships of trust with children, and to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards them as part of the staff's general responsibility for pastoral care. Children and parents should feel able to raise with the school concerns about safety and welfare in the knowledge that these will be dealt with sensitively. The school recognises that confidential discussions need to take place in a confidential environment. Therefore, public places such as the staffroom, the classroom and the playground are not suitable. Due to the sensitivity of these issues, the school will operate on the presumption that anything imparted in confidence will be treated in confidence. This is subject to four qualifications:

1. Anything imparted "in confidence" to one member of staff or person approached as an associate of the school, may be shared with a restricted number of colleagues if that person feels in need of support and guidance from them.
2. If serious concerns are raised about the safety or welfare of a child, the person approached may be obliged, in terms of the school's child protection procedures, to pass that information on to the Child Protection Co-ordinator (Mrs Farrell) for consideration as to whether it should be shared with the appropriate authorities. In these circumstances, the person approached would not, except in emergency, breach the confidence without letting the person seeking assistance know that he/she intended doing so.
3. The school must, of course, pass on information when legally obliged to do so, for example, by a court of law.
4. Parents/carers and pupils have the right to view educational records upon written request. It is therefore not possible to guarantee the confidentiality of recorded information.

Children must also feel able to share concerns with staff. Problems may arise when a child consults a member of staff about a problem and does not want that information to be shared with parents. Whilst staff will try to encourage children to share the information with parents where that is appropriate, there may be circumstances in which any pressure to pass the information on could result in the child keeping the problem to him or herself or not sharing concerns in the future.

## **STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) will be made aware of the confidentiality policy and their entitlement to training and support in its implementation. All staff are under a contractual obligation to uphold the policy as with all other policies.

Staff can seek advice and support for themselves when dealing with a disclosure whilst keeping the individual's identity anonymous. The school will maintain an up-to-date list of appropriate contacts for staff so they can seek support.

# Process for handling a disclosure

A pupil starts to talk to you about something important to them



- Interrupt and make the pupil aware that you may not be able to keep certain information confidential.
- TAs and certain non-teaching staff need to refer to the appropriate class teacher at the earliest opportunity.
- Give examples of what can and cannot be kept unofficial which are appropriate for the child's understanding.



Find a suitable place to listen to the pupil's concerns where there will be no interruptions. Consider the need for another adult to be present and remember significant points to record afterwards.



Is only listening required?



Do you need to know more?



Is action or referral required?



Reassure the pupil that they can come back to talk about this or anything else



Get further information from school resources or outside agencies. Ensure that discussions with colleagues take place in private.



If there is serious concern, the information must be passed to the school child protection officer (Mrs Farrell) who will implement the child protection procedures.  
**The pupil must be informed that their concern is being passed on.**



At a later date, ideally within 3 weeks, inquire how the pupil is to encourage them to revisit any concerns.



Encourage the pupil to talk to their parents about their concerns



When a pupil no longer requires support – No further action is needed