

EDMUND DE MOUNDEFORD V.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Confidentiality Policy

Aims and Objectives

This policy provides guidance and information on confidentiality procedures in the school for staff, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and governors. Please refer to our data protection policies, including our GDPR policy and Freedom of Information Policy for further details about how information is handled.

Policy Statement

This school operates in a way that respects every individual and family's right to privacy. All our staff, volunteers and governors are expected to work within the guidelines of this policy in order to protect confidentiality. They will all sign a confidentiality agreement.

In practice this means:

- All information about a child or an adult is private and will only be shared with those staff that have a need to know (and in the case of a child their people who have parental responsibility). Parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child, but not to those of any child they do not have parental responsibility for. Children's records will be passed onto the receiving school when they leave.
- Not discussing confidential matters related to pupils, parents, visitors or staff with other people unless it's absolutely necessary e.g. discussing with other agencies when parental permission is not possible. There are times when absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed (see the Child Protection section).
- Making sure that data is handled carefully so that only those who need access to it can read it in a secure manner.
- Encouraging people to discuss matters directly with the relevant staff member rather than making assumptions or discussing school business with other people.

Equal opportunities

All pupils and adults shall be given equal confidentiality rights irrespective of race, religion or belief, culture, gender, academic ability, disability, family circumstances or socioeconomic background, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity or class.

School staff.

School staff must observe complete confidentiality in dealing with issues concerning individual staff, pupils and families.

They must not share information with their family members and, with this in mind, care should be taken when making phone calls and using email.

Staff must exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises, being careful not to appear to give opinions on behalf of the school. They should take care when using social media or when they are socialising with members of the wider school community. Unless they are using their school e mail they should not discuss anything to do with work outside of school hours or the school property.

Any staff known to have committed a breach of confidentiality will be disciplined.

Agency staff

Agency staff, for example supply teachers or canteen staff, must show the same discretion as school staff. Their agency will deal with any breaches.

School governors

Governors must observe complete confidentiality in dealing with issues concerning individual staff, pupils and families and whenever they have been asked to do so by the governing body.

They must not share information with their family members and, with this in mind, care should be taken when making phone calls and using email.

Governors need to be mindful that confidential issues, about staff and children and their families, may be discussed or brought to their attention. Any sensitive correspondence should be clearly marked as 'confidential' and minuted separately. Once read, these confidential papers must be returned to the Chair for secure filing.

Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based must be regarded as confidential. Only the details which are in the agreed, signed minutes are public knowledge.

Governors serving on committees, e.g. pay or complaints, where sensitive issues about staff, children or families are discussed, should not share this information with the wider body of governors, particularly as, in the case of an Appeal or Complaint, a group of governors without any prior knowledge of the case would need to convene to hear details of it and form an unbiased opinion.

Governors must exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body, being careful not to appear to give opinions on behalf of the Governing Body

Any governor known to have committed a breach of confidentiality may be asked to stand down.

External visitors

Volunteers are made aware of the confidentiality policy and will sign the same confidentiality agreement as the staff and governors. They will be asked to stop their volunteer work if a breach of confidentiality is found.

Other professionals work within their own codes of confidentiality when they deliver their services to individual children.

Child Protection.

Pupils will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidentially and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made, certain actions will ensure. At the same time, pupils will be offered sensitive and appropriate support. The following procedures will be adhered to by all adults:

1. When a child or adult makes a disclosure or has a suspicion of possible abuse, (emotional, physical, sexual or neglect) the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures will be followed. (See Safeguarding policy).
2. Upon a child disclosing information, the adult will tell the child that this information will have to be shared. The information must be passed on to the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads, via c poms.
3. Any action that is taken as a result of a disclosure will always have put the best interests of the child first and foremost. The school would ask parental permission to share the disclosure with the correct authorities, except where this was not in the best interests of the child's safety.