

Burnhope Primary School

Confidentiality Policy

This policy has been formulated and approved by the staff and governing body of the above school.

It should be read in conjunction with the following relevant policies: PSHE, Relationships and Sex, Marking, Safeguarding, Behaviour, Reporting of Racist Incidents, Drug Education & Incident Management.

Rationale

At Burnhope Primary School we believe it is good practice to have a comprehensive Confidentiality Policy in order to give parents, pupils, staff and visitors clarity about the levels of confidentiality that can be offered in different circumstances.

Aims

- to ensure clear advice and guidance on the rules of confidentiality in the school for pupils, staff, parents / carers and visitors.
- to give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues.
- to seek to implement the underlying principles of the 'Every Child Matters' Agenda and to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality.

Objectives

- to provide consistent messages in school about handling information to do with 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 ensure that pupils and parent / carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- to ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all regardless of cultural, gender or special educational needs.
- to ensure that if a child Protection issue arises, the correct procedure is followed.

- to ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- to understand the health professionals are bound by different codes of conduct.
- to ensure that parents have a right of access to all records the school may hold on their child but not to records held about any child they do not have parental responsibility for.
- pupils should be informed that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported appropriately.

Guidelines

These objectives will be met by following the guidelines below:

- Child Protection procedures should be followed closely if any work with children leads to a disclosure which raises suspicion that a child is a victim of abuse or is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- all information about individual children is private and should only be shared with staff that has a need to know.
- all social services, medical and personal information about a child is kept in a safe and secure place within the Head teacher's Office and may only be accessed by key members of staff.
- when visitors or health professionals are used to deliver aspects of the curriculum they should also follow the school's confidentiality policy. However, in a one-to-one situation with individual pupils they are bound by their own professional codes of conduct.
- ground rules should be set where sensitive issues are to be addressed.
- staff should be careful not to put pressure on pupils to disclose personal information and should discourage fellow pupils from applying any such pressure.
- we pride ourselves on good communication with parents and carers. Staff are normally available to talk to both children and parents / carers about issues that are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents / carers about issues causing them concern and where appropriate will support the children in talking to their parents. Child Protection disclosures are shared with parents before going on to inform the correct authorities.
- all children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. Care should be taken to ensure that individual children can not be identified in data generated by these categories.
- photographs of children should not be used without the permission of parents / carers – especially in the press and internet. At no time should a child's name be used with a photograph in a way that they

could be identified. The school gives clear guidance (following LA Guidelines) to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

- information about a child will only be shared with that child's parents. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time including parents' evening. However parents should be made aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.
- business in Governor's meetings relating to individual pupils or staff should be confidential at all times.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored at regular intervals (every 2 years) to ensure:

- that objectives are being met
- that clear advice and guidance on the rules of confidentiality in the school is available for pupils, staff, parents / carers and visitors.
- that staff are confident to deal with sensitive issues.
- that the underlying principles of the 'Every Child Matters' Agenda are being met.

The head teacher is responsible for monitoring and evaluating this policy.

Conclusion

The school has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents / carers and staff. It also has to work with outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

Reviewed June 2020