



St Nicolas CE Primary School  
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Spoon".

HEADTEACHER SIGNATURE:

DATE ADOPTED: July 2021

DATE FOR REVIEW: July 2022

Additional notes:

Cross reference with the following policy/ies:

Anti-bullying  
Equalities  
PSHE & drug education  
RE Policy  
Safeguarding  
Sex and Relationship Education

# St Nicolas Primary School

## Confidentiality Policy

### **What is Confidentiality?**

Confidential information means information which is not trivial and not in the public domain. It is defined in the dictionary as “said or given in confidence; private; entrusted with another secret affairs”.

The overall meaning of a confidential relationship is openness and agreement about what will happen to information disclosed between two, or more, people. It may not have to take the form of total secrecy. In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is offered. In most cases only limited confidentiality can be offered. The boundaries of confidentiality should be made clear at the beginning of the conversation.

Data processing and retention times are in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

### **Aims**

To ensure that there is greater confidence by staff and consistency in practice regarding the levels of confidentiality that can be offered.

### **Objectives**

That all parties, (staff, governors, children and parents), understand the principles and practice of our approach to confidentiality and to understand the varying degrees of confidentiality which may be offered in different circumstances.

**Confidential information must not be disclosed either verbally, in writing or posted on the internet including social networking sites.**

### **Links**

This confidentiality policy is linked to the school’s Anti-bullying, Equalities, PSHE & Drug education, RE, Safeguarding & Sex and Relationship Education policies.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Confidentiality and children**

We recognise that there are occasions when children are worried about something and feel they cannot talk about it to their Parent’s/Carer’s. This can result in enormous stress for the individual which impacts on their education and health. Some children may feel that they can turn to teachers and other members of staff for support and we want to be as helpful as we can whilst recognising that there may be some potential difficulties in being supportive. This attempts to provide consistency of approach for all parties.

- You must be clear to the child that you cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a child first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.
- Children should be warned that if there is a child protection issue where the child or others, are likely to be at risk of harm, you are legally required to inform the school’s designated teacher who may have to involve other agencies. Mr Spooner is the lead Designated Lead for

Safeguarding officer for St Nicolas School, along with Mrs Mathers, Mrs Page, Mr Churchill & Mr Stead who are all trained to DSL level.

- School staff can only offer confidentiality to children on issues that do not involve significant illegal activities e.g. drug trafficking, arson. If the conversation begins to move to this kind of issue, the child must be warned that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- In all cases where you feel that you have to break confidentiality with the child, you must inform the child and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- In talking with children, you need to encourage them to talk to their Parents/ Carers about the issue that may be troubling them and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate.
- Children should be made aware of the specialist confidential services that may be available in the school community e.g School health nurse, doctor.

## **Confidentiality and Staff/Governors**

### **Staff and Governors**

Staff and Governors are bound by the principles of this Confidentiality Policy and we rely on their professional conduct to fulfil the aims and objectives of the policy.

All staff can expect that their personal circumstances will remain confidential unless it impinges on their terms of contract or endangers pupils or other members of staff.

All staff are expected to sign a confidentiality agreement (see appendix 1).

### **Confidentiality and families**

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which might affect a child and which families will only disclose to us if they can be sure the information will be treated confidentially. We will respect the wishes of the family and where it is felt necessary to share the information given to us, this will be discussed with the Parent first unless a child is considered to be at immediate risk and / or there is an overriding child protection concern.

### **Confidentiality and Visitors / Wider Community**

A 'Visitor' in this context is any person who works in school either in a paid or a voluntary capacity. In some instances, the visitor may become privy to personal information regarding children, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature. There is an agreement between the Governing body and everyone who works in school to sign a declaration not to use any such information outside the school context and to share relevant information with other agencies in situations of child protection (see appendix 1).

### **Lines of Responsibility**

If a member of the school community receives information where they believe a child protection issue is addressed, they should refer the case to the designated teacher – Mr Spooner. The person must make it clear to the child that they will be passing on the information but that that information will remain confidential between them and the designated teacher. If confidentiality has to be broken, the child should normally be informed first.

A teacher does not have a general duty to inform the Headteacher of disclosures by a child. The decision as to whether to do so must be a matter for a teacher's discretion, having regard for child protection issues, however, it is strongly recommended that support from a senior member of staff is sought.

## Appendix 1

### Confidentiality agreement for staff, Governors and Visitors of St Nicolas Primary School

This is an agreement between the Governing Body and everyone who works in school either in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Those working in school either paid or voluntary will be asked to sign the agreement either before or as they start.

#### Agreement

I understand that in the course of my work at school, I may be party to personal information regarding children, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature. I agree not to use any such information verbally, in writing or on the internet including social networking sites outside the school context. I agree to share relevant information with other agencies in situations of child protection in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (2018).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff / Volunteer / Governor please circle:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signed on behalf of the Governing Body / School:

Mr A Spooner: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Headteacher)