



East Sheen Primary School

Confidentiality Policy

This policy sets out to:

- define what levels of confidentiality are appropriate in different circumstances;
- ensure that the school's attitude to confidentiality is easily understood and that there is trust in the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school;
- communicate this information to parents / carers, staff, children and governors;
- enable the school to be fair to all its community.

The policy is underpinned by appropriate staff training. Information regarding the confidentiality policy will form part of staff's induction training. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils are the paramount considerations in all decisions staff make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' wellbeing and safety.

Where staff have access to confidential information about colleagues, pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the individual (see our [Code of Conduct](#), section 10).

All school staff members

We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and may wish to talk to a member of staff.

In these circumstances, staff should adhere to the following policy:

- when talking with pupils, it is important that they are aware of maintaining their professional boundaries
- they must make it clear to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue
- primary age pupils may need to be told that if a child is at risk of significant harm, staff are under a duty to inform the school's Headteacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead. Other agencies may have to be involved. It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the pupil that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to help

- in cases where staff feel that they have to break confidentiality with the pupil, they must inform the pupil, (unless there is a good reason not to inform them) and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained
- in talking with pupils, staff 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

Parents/Carers and Families

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which may affect a pupil and which the family 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 parents/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and /or there is an overriding child protection concern (see [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)).

Parents/carers should not seek to engage in any disclosure dialogue with pupils who are not their own. If they have a concern, they should refer it immediately to the class teacher or headship team. The headship team has training in dealing with disclosure and the procedure to follow in this instance. Also, any incidents in school should be referred to the class teacher or headship team to be investigated by a member of staff and not by a parent or carer.

Voluntary Helpers (please also see [parent helper guidelines](#))

Voluntary helpers should:

- respect the confidentiality of pupils & staff at all times
- respect the privacy of professional documentation
- not make value judgements of pupils
- not engage with pupils in any 'disclosure' dialogue, when spoken to, but refer immediately to the class teacher, or headship team (if more appropriate) who are appropriately trained to handle these situations.

Staff and Governors

Staff and governors will not discuss details of individual cases arising in meetings to any person without a direct professional connection to and the interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.

At full Governing Body meetings matters such as pupil exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in a confidential manner. This is not for the knowledge of persons outside the Governing body meeting. Confidential items will be minuted as 'Confidential'.

Governors will not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person outside of the meeting.

In addition, staff and governors can expect that their personal situations and health to remain confidential, unless:

- it impinges on their terms of contract
- endangers pupils or other members of staff
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information
- it is necessary for legal proceedings
- despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure

School staff

The headship team or senior staff in the school will liaise with parents/carers as appropriate in cases where a staff member has reported an issue over which they cannot offer confidentiality.

Staff will support pupils to inform their parents/carers about issues that are troubling them as appropriate. The Headteacher is ultimately responsible for deciding whether an issue needs to be taken beyond the school.

Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be securely stored in the Headteacher's office. A copy will also be held by the person to whom the information pertains.

Electronic Transfer of data

Appropriate procedures and protocols are always followed to ensure safe and secure transfer of pupil, staff, family and school data between ESPS and agencies and other schools. Data base transfer software is password protected.

Approved by Governors: Autumn 2024

Next review date: Autumn 2027