

Bentley CEVC and Copdock Primary Schools

Confidentiality Policy

This policy addresses the confidentiality expected from all adults working in school and the professionalism required as detailed in the Staff Code of Conduct. It is not to be confused with, but must be read in conjunction with our policy on confidentiality, contained within our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy. It is implemented in line with our Data Protection Policy, to protect personal data that the schools store and process.

Volunteers, students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school.

Aims & Objectives

- To protect the child at all times.
- To protect staff at all times.
- To protect the reputation of the schools.
- To give staff and volunteers clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and responsibilities.
- To ensure good practice throughout the schools.
- To reassure pupils, parents and carers that their best interests will be maintained.

Rationale

- For children and adults in school to enjoy privacy from gossip.
- To enable the schools to be fair to all members of their communities.
- For children and adults to have disciplinary matters dealt with according to school policy and confidentially.
- To enable the schools to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe, secure learning environment.
- To hold securely and safeguard information received and processed.
- To remind all staff that the schools are placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and, there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be taken in all matters of confidentiality.

Guidelines

Staff

- Staff will not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings or arising from any other source to any person, without a direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned. It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential matters in order to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.
- There will be no gossip in public areas about perceived problems within the school, especially in situations where stakeholders, or potential stakeholders, may be given a misleading, false or unnecessarily negative impression of the workings of the school. There is a very clearly defined and confidential procedure for real grievances to be raised. (See SCC Grievance Policy).
- No member of staff will discuss an individual child's behaviour in the presence of another child in or outside school.
- All safeguarding, medical and personal information about a child is held in a safe and secure place, which can only be accessed by appropriate staff.
- Staff will not enter into discussions about a child's behaviour with other children's parents, without the consent of the Headteacher or the Deputy /Assistant Head.

- TA's must liaise with and gain approval from teachers before passing on sensitive information to parents. They should be considerate and observe confidentiality when discussing such matters.
- Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for staff, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be stored in the Headteacher's office and electronic records will only be available from the Headteacher and line manager.

SEND and Child Protection

- There are clear guidelines for handling child protection issues (see Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy) and a senior leader has been appointed as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, this is the Headteacher. The Deputy DSL is Mrs North (Bentley) and Miss Cross (Copdock).
- Confidentiality must never prevent a member of staff from sharing information when this is necessary to safeguard a child or prevent harm. Staff should never promise a pupil, parent or colleague that information will be kept confidential.
- All special needs and social services information are held in a secure place, accessed only by authorised school staff.
- Information disclosed by a child during Relationships & Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education may be a safeguarding issue and should be disclosed to the DSL without delay.
- Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work, such as circle time. Strategies used in other PSHE learning, including managing relationships or drug education as mentioned in the RSE policy, should be discussed with children so that information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public area.
- Health professionals have their own code of practice.

Governors

- All Governors will adhere to the Governors Code of Conduct at all times.
- Governors, in particular those sitting on Disciplinary Committees, will not divulge details about individuals, (be they staff, individual children or their families), to any person outside of the meeting.
- At full Governing Board meetings, matters such as pupil exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in the Headteacher's Report under *Part 2 Confidential*. These issues must not be discussed with persons outside the Governing Board meetings. Matters in Part 2 are minuted separately and minutes are not published in the public minute book.
- All papers marked as confidential should be destroyed securely or appropriately filed in a secure place.

Volunteers, including parents

- Volunteers working in classrooms or as part of the PTA will not report aspects of learning or pupil discipline to other parents in the school. This allows the teachers to deal with any matters of concern in line with school policy and on certain occasions, to allow children to put matters right without the direct involvement of their parents.
- When volunteers are working in-class they should not discuss educational matters outside of the classrooms, for example the specific use of teaching assistants to work with particular pupils or groups of pupils. The provision for and work with these children is a matter solely for the class teacher to discuss with the relevant parents or carers.
- Photographs of children should not be used without the written permission of parents or carers. At no time should full names be attached to photographs which are available to view outside of the school. (for example, on the school website or on social media.)
- The schools set clear guidelines about the use of cameras and video recording during public events.
- Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and grades at any time. Information about groups and their attainments should not be on public display, especially during parent evenings. Personal data will not be disclosed unless by prior agreement with the individual (or their parents/carers, as appropriate). Certain personal data will be passed

on without approval to enable the general functioning of the schools, as required or permitted by law (see Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices).

What to do if you are unsure:

- Don't share information if you don't have a legitimate reason.
- If you're unsure, speak to the DSL/Headteacher/DPO.
- If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, follow safeguarding procedures without delay.
- Record significant decisions about sharing information.

Electronic and Digital Confidentiality

All staff, volunteers and other adults working in school must maintain confidentiality when using electronic and digital systems. Confidential information should only be shared through approved school email, messaging platforms and school systems such as Teams or Google Classroom, and only with those who have a legitimate professional need to access it. Personal devices, phones and social media must not be used to share or store confidential school information, photographs or videos unless specifically authorised by the school. Staff must keep passwords secure and must not share login details or leave confidential information visible on screens where it could be accessed by others. Care must also be taken when sending electronic documents or emails to ensure they are addressed to the correct recipient. Any accidental disclosure, loss or misdirection of confidential information must be reported to the Headteacher or Ju Usher (GDPR Lead) immediately.

Equal opportunities

Staff may wish to discuss an individual case with a class or group. For instance, it can support the inclusion of a child with Autism if their peers are made aware of the condition and so gain an understanding of the condition. Similarly, a child with visual impairment can be supported if their friends know how to look after them in the playground. In such cases, permission will be sought from the child and their parents/carers.

All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, culture, medical condition, special educational needs and disabilities.

Grievance Procedure

Procedures are clearly set out in the Suffolk County Council Grievance Policy, a copy of which is available from the school office or from the staff online storage area.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy and for ensuring that all persons invited into the school, for example volunteers, visitors, education providers (including sports provision) and educational specialists are aware of this policy. This policy will be reviewed annually but may be updated more frequently as the need arises.

Bentley CEVC and Copdock Primary Schools

Confidentiality Statement

The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decisions made about confidentiality, as is legal compliance. The sharing of appropriate information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' development, wellbeing and safety.

Disclosures

All members of staff are informed of our Confidentiality Statement and their role in implementing it within the school, as part of the induction process. We require all staff, including volunteers, to report all disclosures made by pupils or parents/carers, of a concerning personal nature to the DSL or, in their absence to the DDSL, as soon as possible after the disclosure. They will be asked to complete, sign and date an Incident Form giving details of the disclosure.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Joanne Austin, Headteacher

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Alice North (Bentley) Heidi Cross (Copdock)

The DSL will decide what, if any, further action needs to be taken, including, where appropriate, ensuring the pupil receives the help and support they need, also that the member of staff receives the support and any counselling they may need.

Confidentiality of information

We welcome the support of parents/carers, governors, students and other voluntary helpers in school. Such volunteers may support a range of tasks, including activities such as:

- school trips
- workshops which are led by external providers
- visiting speakers
- working within the classroom under the direction of the class teacher
- supporting Literacy development by hearing children read
- changing library books

We welcome pupils and families from a range of backgrounds and with a variety of needs. All pupils are valued as individuals in their own right and have a right to the maintenance of confidentiality about themselves, their work and their personal data. Information about pupils is processed on a 'need to know' basis. We expect all volunteers to maintain confidentiality about any information they gain whilst helping within the school. This confidentiality applies for both the duration of their time working in school and, also after they cease to work in the school.

"Staff and volunteers must not disclose confidential information except where there is a legitimate professional, safeguarding or legal reason to do so, or where disclosure is otherwise authorised by the school."

Confidentiality Agreement

Name:

I agree to keep any / all personal data, personal information about pupils and staff and the methods and provision of teaching and learning that I become aware of whilst working in the school confidential. I agree to inform the DSL of any concerns I have and, of all disclosures made to me whilst working at the school.

Signed..... **Date**.....

Pupil Statement Concerning Confidentiality

We understand that there may be times when things worry you, but you feel that you cannot talk about them with your family. Teachers and other members of school staff will do all we can to help but you need to know the following:

- If you want to talk to someone confidentially (without anyone else knowing what you have said) you can speak to an adult that you feel comfortable with.
- The teachers and other members of staff in school will often be able to help you with many of the things that may be worrying you, but they cannot promise to keep everything to themselves. If you tell them about serious matters such as stealing or selling drugs, they will have to speak to one of the senior teachers in the school who might then have to speak to your parents/carers or the Police or social care services.
- If the person to whom you are talking feels that they have to tell someone else what you have said, they will always tell you first before doing so, explaining why and they will help you sort it out, perhaps helping you to speak to your parents/carers if you want this.
- Very rarely there are things which you talk about that can be harmful for you or for other young people, for example someone trying to hurt you or make you do things. In such cases the person you are talking to will need to tell someone else about what you have said, but they will tell you first before doing so explaining why and they will always help you to sort things out.
- If you talk to another pupil about your problem and they feel that you may be in danger or they feel worried, awkward or uneasy, they will tell you that you should talk to an adult or, they will talk to an adult for you.

Remember all the adults in school are there to help you in any way that they can. They will always want to keep you safe, well and happy.