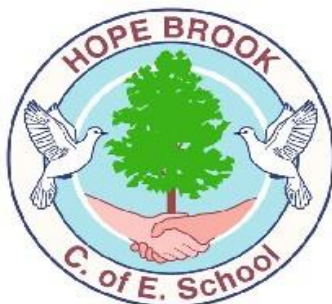


Hope Brook Church of England Primary School



Confidentiality Policy

The staff and governors are committed to the development of each child in a positive, healthy and respectful learning environment to encourage all children to achieve their fullest potential.

We want all the children and adults to achieve success through their own efforts, teamwork, self-discipline and motivation; and through links with the Church, the local community and the global community, work towards a better future for themselves and the world in which they live.

Confidentiality Policy

Definition of Confidentiality

The dictionary definition of confidential is "something which is spoken or given in confidence; private, entrusted with another's secret affairs"

Aim:

- To protect the child, and staff, at all times
- To provide all staff involved with clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles
- To ensure good practice throughout the school that is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Rationale

- At Hope Brook C of E Primary School, the safety, well-being and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decisions staff make about confidentiality
- We are committed to developing creative and positive ways for a child's voice to be heard, whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received
- We recognise that we are placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is an expectation that a professional response will be used in all matters of confidentiality
- The school has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parent/carers and staff. It also needs to work with a range of external agencies and sharing information between school staff and some external organisations is an essential element in ensuring our pupils well-being and safety. Establishing an effective and professional balance between these two aims is crucial to the effectiveness of a confidentiality policy
- Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns.
- The school's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school
- Issues concerning personal information can arise at any time

In our school we aim to do this through:

- Fostering an ethos of trust within the school
- Actively promoting a positive ethos and respect for the individual
- Providing consistent messages in school about how information about children will be handled, once it has been received
- Reassuring pupils that their best interests will be maintained
- Encouraging our children to talk to their parents and carers about any concerns they have
- Ensuring that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- Ensuring that there is equality of provision and access for all
- Ensuring that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed

The principles we follow at Hope Brook C of E Primary School are:

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis
- All social care, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff

- Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs but this information should not be on view to other children or parents
- All children and families have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, ability, disability, medical concerns and special educational needs
- Confidentiality is a whole school issue
- Clear ground rules are set for any classwork such as circle time and CPSHE sessions. When the lesson is tackling particularly sensitive matters such as puberty, sex or drug education, we will add another rule which is that:
'Whatever we talk about in this lesson will stay between us in the classroom.'
- Children and families are made aware we cannot guarantee confidentiality if we think they will:
 - hurt themselves
 - hurt someone else
 - or they tell us that someone is hurting them or others

Following a disclosure, we will agree with the child – who we will talk to, what we will say and how we will continue to support them

- Issues are addressed promptly to reduce/alleviate the level of distress and we aim to ensure that children or parents are not put in the position of having to repeat distressing matters to several people
- Encourage pupils, whenever possible, to confide in his/her own parents/carers or immediate family for support and for the purpose of transparency
- Photographs of children will not be used without parent/carers permission especially in the press and internet. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

School staff:

School staff (including non-teaching and voluntary staff) should not promise confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect that incidents will not be reported to his/her parents/carers and may not, in the absence of an explicit promise, assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No member of this school's staff can or should give such a promise.

School staff are NOT obliged to break confidentiality except where child protection is or may be an issue. However, at Hope Brook C of E Primary School we believe it is important staff are able to share their concerns about pupils with colleagues in a professional and supportive way, on a need to know basis, to ensure staff receive the guidance and support they need and the pupils' safety and well-being is maintained.

School staff are reminded that the use of social media, as set out in the school's 'Use of ICT' policy, also falls under the Confidentiality policy.

Whilst working in school, volunteer parents agree not to discuss the things that they see and hear in the school setting with people outside the school, this includes any parents or friends.

Parents/carers:

Hope Brook C of E Primary School believes that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavour to keep parents/carers informed about their child's progress at school, including any concerns about their progress or behaviour. However, we also need to maintain a balance so that our pupils can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a pupil or family does discuss a difficult personal matter with staff at Hope Brook, they can be assured this information will be treated with respect.

Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and that the school has a duty to report child protection issues.

Governors:

Governors need to exercise complete confidentiality especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils and parents.

School Records

'Confidentiality' also refers to protecting the information we hold about the pupils in this school and their families. Information about children will be shared with the child's parents. All personal information about a child is regarded as confidential. Parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school, if their child changes school.

All staff and volunteers will endeavour to maintain confidentiality when appropriate, for example by considering the conversations they have about pupils and their families, the purpose of these conversations and where these take place.

All children and helpers at the school will be made aware of this through our Confidentiality Statement (see below).

Confidentiality Statement:

Staff talk about their job constantly. Conversations at breaks and lunchtimes are often about school, individual children and their families.

We ask that such conversations are regarded as confidential by all staff and volunteers.

Similarly, the work, progress and behaviour of individual children is a matter of fact for the staff, the child and the parents of the child. Any comments made by students about a child, or an incident at school may be misinterpreted and lead to misunderstandings.

Small incidents are dealt with in school and should end there. More serious incidents will be discussed with teachers who will take appropriate action.

We feel sure you will understand the need for such confidentiality on school matters. As a student/ helper in the school we ask that you respect confidentiality on such matters to avoid misunderstandings and upset.

Date of policy: May 2019

Date of next review: May 2024

This policy was formulated in consultation with the Headteacher and teaching staff.

This policy was accepted by the Governing Body at their meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2019, and will be reviewed in 5 years.