



UPLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Rationale

Uplands Primary School recognises that it is placed in a position of trust and is committed to using, holding and safeguarding information received with respect and in a professional manner. Uplands Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff to ensure that the care and safety of the individual is paramount. We also work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis however, confidential information is shared on a **need to know basis only**.

This policy links to all other policies but especially with policies relating to:

- Child protection and safeguarding
- Whistleblowing/code of conduct
- Behaviour
- GDPR
- SEN/inclusion and supporting pupils with medical conditions
- PSHE including drugs and SRE
- Staff discipline/grievance
- IT policies such as use of social media and appropriate use of IT

Aims

- To protect the child and their family when appropriate at all times
- That all members of staff, teaching and non- teaching, visiting staff and Governors are clear about the levels of confidentiality that they can offer to the school community and expect themselves.
- For all members of the school community to understand and be aware of the existence of this policy and Uplands' procedures.
- To uphold public trust in the school and maintain a professional ethos
- To protect staff and Governors from allegations relating to unprofessional conduct.

Safeguarding and child protection

- Safeguarding of our pupils is at the heart of everything we do. We have clear policies for protecting pupils which all staff are trained to follow. The school has appointed a senior member of staff as a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for all staff with regular reminders.
- Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues. As stated in the child protection policy, the school does have the right to contact children's services

or the Police if there are concerns about the safety and well-being of a child. However, in most cases the school will inform the parents first.

- When speaking to pupils we will make it clear that we cannot promise not to share information if we are concerned about their well-being or safety.
- All child protection issues will be handled with sensitivity and records will be stored securely away from the main office.
- Outcomes and details of child protection meetings will not be discussed outside the meeting.
- When a child/family leaves the school, records will not be passed on or information shared until the school has confirmation that the child/family are on roll at another school.
- Staff must follow the school's whistleblowing procedures and not promise confidentiality to another colleague if they suspect behaviour that might be harmful towards another child.

Expectations for all school staff including teaching, non-teaching, work experience and volunteers

Many of the bullet points listed below link to other policies especially our GDPR policy. Training, which is given to all staff on induction, is updated at least annually.

- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
- Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other Personal Development Learning sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.
- Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
- Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. At no time should the child's name be used alongside a photograph so that they can be identified unless agreed by parents. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events. Only school cameras may be used to photograph pupils and the camera must be returned to the office after use. Photos of pupils will be wiped when the child/year group moves on to another school.
- All staff must adhere to our IT policies and information about the school and the school community must not be shared online or with parents who may be friends.
- If staff are approached outside of school to talk about the school or a family, they must refer the individual to the appropriate channels of communication.
- Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents evening. However, parents should be aware that

information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. All personal information about children, including Children's Services records, should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information.

- Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in a confidential manner and once read should be returned for secure filing.
- Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log. In all other notes, briefing sheets etc a child should not be able to be identified.
- Information held in the office, for example, contact numbers, must be kept in the office and stored in a secure place. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
- In order to fulfil their contracts, staff may take work home. This could be books to mark or reports to write. Staff must ensure that any work taken home must be kept as secure as possible. For example, use of password protected memory sticks. See GDPR policy.
- Office staff will not give out information about a child or family over the phone or via e-mail. For example, if a caller asks, 'Is Fred at the school', they will not give out this information.
- Information about pupils and their families will be kept and disposed of in accordance with Hampshire's retention schedule. Staff must ensure that any documents containing information about pupils is shredded not thrown in the general waste bins. For example, copies of old planning with pupil names on.
- Information collected for one purpose will not be used for another. Information about pupils and their families will be used in accordance with our GDPR guidelines.
- When the school is open for community events such as the Christmas Fayre, then all information must be locked away and staff must not leave out paper/books/planning etc with pupil's names or information on.
- If staff need to pass some information to the Headteacher and she is not immediately available then the information needs to be passed through the 'black book' signing system.
- Computer screens must be logged off when staff are not at their desks or in their classrooms.
- When teaching staff are taking a break from their classrooms, any notes, planning reports etc with information about pupils on must be stored away in a secure place.
- Discussions in the staff room and key areas around the school should be professional at all times. Staff need to be aware that parents may be in the school building or a supply teacher may know a child/family in the school. If staff need to discuss an incident or a concern about a child then this needs to be done in a private space.
- At the end of the day or term, desks and workspaces must be left clear and information stored securely away.

Guidelines for Governors

- Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such issues should be treated as confidential. Confidential papers should be destroyed.
- Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body. There will be a confidentiality reminder at the beginning of all meetings and Governors are expected to adhere to the code of conduct at all times.
- If Governors have other links to the school for example, a parent Governor, then they must follow the school's normal procedures when dealing with any complaints or concerns not relating to the matters of the Governing body.
- Governors will have safeguarding training and be aware of the school's procedures when dealing with child protection issues.

Guidelines for coaches/before/after school clubs where staff are not employed by the school

- Before starting a club, any individual who is not a regular member of staff must meet with the Headteacher or Subject Lead and discuss this policy and the need to maintain confidentiality.
- The Headteacher will ensure that the coach/adult in charge of the club is aware of child protection procedures and how they can pass on any concerns they may have.
- Registers of children attending the club will be returned to the office and locked away after the club has finished. The information will be shredded at the end of the term.
- School staff will be available to assist with dismissing pupils at the end of the club and to ensure secure handling over of any information/concerns.

Parents/Carers

- The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always 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 may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents. Should a parent or carer wish to discuss a concern in private then they can ask to meet with a member of staff at a specified time or ask if they can talk in a private space.
- If during or after a conversation with a parent a member of staff feels that information needs to be shared, then the parent will be informed of this. Examples of this might include the Headteacher needing to discuss with the Finance Officer arrangements to support a parent with funding a trip or the school making a referral to an outside agency.
- Staff may take minutes during a meeting. Parents/carers can request a copy of the minutes. The minutes will always be kept secure and shredded in accordance with our retention policy.
- Occasionally, pupils may fall out with each other and parents may seek some information about the other child involved. Whilst the school will meet parents to

discuss an incident and any action being taken, the school is not able to discuss in detail the background or issues relating to another person's child.

- We do not publish class lists of children for parents to view or give out lists to parents.

Concerns/complaints

Should a member of the school community feel that confidentiality has not been maintained or information has been shared inappropriately or without good reason, then they need to report their concerns to the Headteacher in the first instance. The Headteacher will investigate and take appropriate action where necessary. This may include a report to the ICO or disciplinary action. If the concern is about the conduct of the Headteacher of the Governing body, then we encourage that the relevant sections of our further complaints policy are followed. This policy can be found on our website.

Policy agreed January 2020