

Bournes Green Infant School

Confidentiality Policy

Our Vision

At Bournes Green Infant School the governors, staff, children, parents and carers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in a community that is strengthened and enriched by a diversity of background, culture and religion. Our priority is to foster the self-confidence, self-esteem and independence of *all* in a climate of growth and opportunity that will enable us to achieve the highest standards. We actively promote a healthy environment in which children enjoy learning and develop the skills needed to become responsible members of society. We aim to bring learning to life.

'Strength Through Wisdom' was the original mission statement for our school. Today we nurture our children to be confident and articulate with an enjoyment of learning in the belief that this will enable them to gain strength from their developing wisdom.

Introduction

All schools are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues including under age sexual activity, drugs use, abuse or other dangerous or illegal activities. It is important that the whole school follows the same clear and explicit policy. Children, parents and carers should be made aware of this and how it works in practice.

Aims:

- To give clear guidance to all members of the school community around confidentiality
- To encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems
- To give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues

In lessons:

- Ground rules and distancing techniques should be used where sensitive issues are to be addressed
- Staff should not put pressure on children to disclose personal information and should discourage other children from applying any such pressure

Personal disclosures

Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate place or time. If this happens, the member of staff should offer the child an opportunity to talk further before the end of the school day. The member of staff may be able to discuss the issue with an appropriate colleague, to decide on suitable action, without giving the name of the child.

Key Points:

- Children will be reassured that their best interests will be maintained
- Children will know that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- Children are reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported appropriately
- Children will be informed of sources of confidential help, for example, the school nurse, counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service
- Any personal information should be regarded as private and not passed on indiscriminately
- If a member of staff receives information that leads them to believe that there is a child protection issue, they will refer the case to a designated teacher for child protection after listening to the young person involved - See Child Protection Procedures
- Children should be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers and be given support to do so where ever possible
- Government guidance requires professionals to consult as much as possible with parents about their children when referring to another agency. In general, parents should be asked if they wish to be referred, UNLESS THERE IS REASON TO THINK THAT OBTAINING SUCH CONSENT MAY PUT THE CHILD AT RISK. If your referral is about child abuse (or the risk of it) rather than 'children in need', it is good practice to consult Social Services BEFORE discussing the issue with parents, unless a parent has asked you to make the referral and is already aware of it.

Further Guidance

To ensure

- All children, staff members and governors enjoy privacy from gossip
- For the school to be fair to all its community
- For children and adults to have disciplinary matters dealt with according to the school's own procedures and out of the eye of the wider school community.

Staff

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

An individual child's behaviour/attainment is not discussed in the presence of other children or their parents.

Performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the Headteacher's office and electronic records will only be available from the head teacher's password protected computer.

Matters of Child Protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.

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. Staff will be required annually to sign that they will abide by this policy.

Governors

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

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. Minutes are minuted separately and circulated to those present only and are not further published. Sensitive issues that require to be printed for discussion by Governors will be printed on pink paper and stored in a sealed envelope. They will not leave the building.

Governors will be required annually to sign that they will abide by this policy.

Parents, Students & Volunteers

Parents in school, working as volunteers, do not report cases of poor behaviour, discipline or attainment to other parents. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy.

When volunteers, such as parents and friends of the school, are working in classes, they do not discuss educational matters outside the classroom. They do not share anything that they see, hear or discuss in school with anyone out of school. Volunteers, students and supply teachers do not place any information, comments about the school or photographs on any social networking site. They are asked to read, and agree to the contents of this policy before starting work in school.

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 aspergers syndrome or autism, if their peers are made aware of the condition and so have some idea of what to expect. Similarly a child with visual impairment can be supported if his/her friends know how to look out for them in the playground. In such cases permission will be sought from the child and his/her parents or carers.

Health professionals

Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality when working in a one to one situation. When working in a classroom, they are bound by relevant school policies. In line with best practice guidance, like other school staff, they will seek to protect privacy and prevent inappropriate personal disclosures in a classroom setting, by negotiating ground rules and using distancing techniques.

Reviewed and approved by the Governors in Summer 2017

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Policies and key Documentation Review Timetable.