

Review Date October 2026

Belmont CP School

Confidentiality Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunity, Equality and Diversity Strategy and Child Protection and Safeguarding

This policy provides guidance and information on confidentiality procedures in the school for staff, pupils, parent/carers and governors.

Moral and Values Framework

The Confidentiality Policy reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Responsibility for their own actions
- Responsibility for their family, friends, school and the wider community

Policy Statement

The school operates in a way that respects every individual and family's right to privacy. All staff and visitors are therefore expected to work within the guidelines of this policy. In practice this means:

- Making it clear that gossip is discouraged
- Keeping personal records of behaviour confidential
- Not discussing pupil or family personal matters in a general way
- Using teaching methods which protect confidentiality
- Always encouraging pupils to talk to their parents/carers about any anxieties they may have, while at the same time offering support for individuals and families from staff specialising in pastoral care

Personal Disclosures

Pupils will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidentially and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made, certain actions must be taken. Any action that is taken as a result of a disclosure will always have considered the best interests of the child first and foremost. At the same time, pupils will be offered sensitive and appropriate

support. Procedures outlined in the school's Child Protection Policy will be adhered to by all adults upon the disclosure by a child or suspicion of possible abuse.

Confidentiality in the Classroom

All teaching will be done in a way that re-affirms respect for everyone in the school and those associated with it. The following strategies for maintaining confidentiality in a class situation will be used in this school:

- Setting ground rules – teaching staff will work with pupils to develop 'rules' for lessons and discussions and show why these need to be agreed and respected by everybody, eg
 - No-one will have to answer a personal question or disclose any personal details
 - Everyone has the right to 'pass' on a question if they want to
 - No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion
 - Everyone has the right to be listened to and have their views respected
 - No teasing or bullying of any kind
 - Teaching staff will protect pupils' privacy in the class by always depersonalising discussions. Pupils can explore the issues being raised without having their personal lives or those of their families implicated or invaded and 'used' inappropriately by other pupils.
 - Class teachers must remain aware of their terms of contract and that they cannot promise children absolute confidentiality

Other Professionals Working in School

Pupils may come into contact with a number of other professionals within the school. The involvement of these professionals raises a number of confidentiality issues:

Maintaining confidentiality in a classroom – other professionals may need some support in working with groups in a way that protects confidentiality. In a one-to-one setting it is good practice for other professionals to talk to a child personally, to make sure that their concerns are identified, and that they understand the advice they are given. In a classroom setting it is not appropriate to talk directly to individuals about their personal experiences.

Professional codes of conduct – whereas teachers are bound by their terms of contract and cannot promise pupils absolute confidentiality. Other professionals, when working with individual pupils, are bound by their professional codes of conduct which give pupils the right to confidentiality and it would be unreasonable

to expect a professional to act outside his/her professional code within a school setting. Confidentiality, in these situations, should only be breached in exceptional cases (such as a safeguarding concern) and not without first informing the child.

Data Protection – confidentiality does not just relate to disclosures of information which could have legal implications such as abuse. Staff members should not handle any confidential information carelessly as pupils and other members of staff may regard this as the norm and respond in a similar manner if a confidence is passed to them.

The following measures are in place to ensure confidential information is dealt with appropriately:

- Pupil records are kept in a locked filing cabinet. Pupil files are forwarded onto other schools when pupils leave. Other files are destroyed after 6 years eg child going overseas
- All information is strictly confidential and must not be discussed with third parties outside the school
- Personal pupil information should not be stored in the staffroom and not displayed on notice boards, except for health and safety notices about specific children's allergies etc
- Discussing pupil, family or other staff members' personal matters in a general way is discouraged
- No pupil personal details should be given over the telephone until the validity of the request has been ascertained via eg a return call
- No guarantee of confidentiality should be given in response to a disclosure
- If an adult receives external information that leads them to believe there is a child protection issue, they should refer the information to the child protection co-ordinator
- No adult should enter into detailed discussion about a child's behaviour or academic progress with other pupils or their parents
- Information about pupils will be shared with parents/carers but only about their child. Parents/carers will not have access to any other child's marks and progress grades at any time. However, information about pupils will be shared with receiving schools, if and when they change school
- Information regarding health reports eg speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports will be kept secure in a locked cabinet
- Any document containing personal information about a pupil or family being shared with an outside agency must be encoded

Governor Meetings – governors, in particular those sitting on discipline committees, will not divulge details about individuals (staff, families or individual children) to any person outside of the meeting.

Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and pupils. 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/carers.

Ratified by governors at their meeting on	4 October 2023
Signed	
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