Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery

Confidentiality Policy.

With accompanying confidentiality statement to be signed by all staff/visitors including Governors

Written January 2021

Reviewed March 2024

Due for review March 2026

Aim

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

Rationale

Ladygrove Primary School & Nursery seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.

Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. The school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality.

Objectives

1. To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.

2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school.

3. To ensure that staff, including Governors, parents/carers and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures.

4. To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.

5. To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.

6. To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.

7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.

8. To ensure that if there are child protection/ safeguarding issues then the correct procedure is followed.

9. To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.

10. To understand that health professionals are bound by different code of conduct.

11. To ensure that parents with parental responsibility have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for. (Parents request records through the Headteacher in writing)

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.

2. All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.

3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual

   a) The school has appointed 8 designated safeguarding leads who receive regular training.

   b) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents, and all staff have regular training on child protection issues – 'Raising Awareness' and updates from the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

   c) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.

   d) Staff are aware that effective relationship and sex education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

   e) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.

   f) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools discipline policy.

   g) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.

4. 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.

5. 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/carers. The school would share with parents/carers any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities unless discussion with parents will be deemed to put the child at further risk.

6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.

7. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns, and special educational needs. A lot of data is generated in schools by these categories, but individual children should not be able to be identified.

8. The school has appointed 8 members of staff as Designated Safeguarding leads. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken regularly for all staff.

9. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE/SMSC session 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. School needs to be proactive so children feel supported, but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena.

   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.

10. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. 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.

11. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. This is often a cultural issue that the school needs to be aware. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. Children's photograph should not be used in a medical room identifying their medical need without consent from parents. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

12. 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 social 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, SEND reports, SEND minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in envelopes 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. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

13. Governors need to be mindful that from time-to-time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such papers should be marked as **confidential.** These confidential papers should be handed back in at the meeting or 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.

14. Staff are aware of their duty of care and confidentiality out of school and if they cease employment at the school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.

2. The PSHE/SMSC scheme of work, RSE policy and Drug Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.

3. The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring this policy and ensures that all staff sign a confidentiality statement if they join the staff team.

Conclusion

Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery along with its Governors have a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. It also needs to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

Policy- Document Status			
Date of Policy Creation	**January 2021**	**Named Responsibility**	Jo Weichlbauer
Date of review completion	**March 2022**	**Named Responsibility**	Pupils, Staff, Parents and Governors
Inception of new Policy	**March 2024**	**Named Responsibility**	Jo Weichlbauer Kirsty Stewart

Date of Policy Adoption by Governing Body	**March 2024**

Ladygrove Primary School and Nursery & Extended Day of Confidentiality (including disclosure of convictions and medication use).

March: 2024-2026

Please note that the word 'staff' in the statement includes Governors

Ladygrove Primary School & Nursery & Extended Day seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a **safe and secure learning environment**.

We are committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and **safeguard information** received.

Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. The school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all staff and there is a general expectation that a **professional approach** will be used in all matters of confidentiality. Sensitive information is shared on a 'need to know' basis. Many staff are **trained in data protection** rules and regulations. If you are in any doubt please ask the Headteacher, School Business Manager or Deputy Headteacher for advice.

Staff are **expected to disclose** any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).

Staff are **expected to disclose** if anyone who lives with them has any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands that disqualifies them working with children.

Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If staff are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, they **should seek medical advice.**

Ladygrove Primary School, Nursery and out of School clubs ensures that those practitioners only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. Staff medication on the premises must be **securely stored**, and out of reach of children, at all times.

March 2022

Name:

Signed:----------

Role: ----------

Date: ----------