



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

This Policy was approved by Governors in:	March 2024
This Policy was shared with staff in:	March 2024
Implementation of this Policy will be monitored by:	Head Teacher, SLT and Head of Pastoral Care
Policy Review Date:	February 2024
Date of next Review:	February 2025

The named person for Confidentiality	Mr Haylock - Head Teacher
--------------------------------------	---------------------------

We aim to protect all children at all times and to give all staff clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and responsibilities and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by children, parents/carers and staff.

The safety, wellbeing and protection of our children are the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an essential element in ensuring our children's wellbeing and safety.

It is an essential part of the ethos of our school that trust is established to enable children, staff, governors and parents/carers to seek help both within and outside the school and minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure children, staff are supported and safe

Children, parents/carers, governors and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns, including sex and relationships.

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.

Everyone in the school community needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.

Everyone in the school community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any personal issue they want to discuss.

Sharing information inappropriately, or unnecessarily, is an erosion of trust.

We are mindful that staff are 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

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children and adults
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents/carers and children are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures and act upon them.
- To encourage all children and adults to be aware of confidentiality issues relating to their peers.
- To reassure children that their best interests will be maintained.
- To encourage children to talk to their parents/carers.
- To encourage staff to talk to a colleague they feel they can trust
- To ensure that children and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that parents/carers have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to those of any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for

GUIDELINES

All information about individual children is confidential and is only shared with those staff/adults that have a need to know.

All safeguarding, medical and personal information about a child is held in a safe and secure place which can only be accessed by appropriate staff.

All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, culture, class, medical concerns and special educational needs.

All children, parents/carers, staff members and governors must enjoy privacy from gossip. All matters are dealt with according to the school's procedures and out of the eye of the wider community. It is important that: -

Staff do not discuss details of individual cases to any person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.

No member of staff discusses an individual child's behaviour/situation etc. in the presence of another child.

Staff do not enter into detailed discussion about a child's behaviour with other children or their parents/carers.

Staff performance management is carried out confidentially.

Matters of child protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.

Class teachers and support staff may need to be made aware of some confidential matters in order to support individual children and adults. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.

Volunteers, such as parents/carers and friends of the school do not discuss school matters in the wider community

Volunteers, students and supply teachers read this policy before working in school.

Staff should be aware of children in their care with medical needs. This information is accessible to staff who need it but is not on general view to other parents/carers and children.

Photographs/videos of children are not used without parent's/carers' permission, especially in the press and internet.

Governors must observe complete confidentiality, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parents/carers. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based are regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside of the governing body.

GDPR and The Data Protection Act (2018) DO NOT PREVENT OR LIMIT THE SHARING OF INFORMATION FOR SAFEGUARDING PURPOSES.

COUNSELLORS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS:

We offer children the support of a school counsellor with appointments accessed discreetly through the Head of Pastoral Care. This service is confidential between the counsellor and the individual pupil. No information is shared with school staff except as defined in the school's child protection policy, and guidance from the * Child Protection Committee and Child Protection law. This is essential to maintain the trust needed for these services to meet the needs of our children.

GROUND RULES WHEN TALKING AS A CLASS

We adopt ground rules to ensure a safe environment for teaching in particular in PSHE, Circle time and social skills. This reduces anxiety to children and staff and minimises unconsidered, unintended personal disclosures.

At the beginning of each PSHE lesson, Circle time or social skills, children are reminded of the ground rules by the teacher or outside visitor. The teacher establishes the ground rules together with the children at the beginning of each half term of teaching PSHE and Circle time.

The principles we follow at Poverest School are that in all cases we:

- Ensure the time and place are appropriate, when they are not we reassure the child/adult that we understand they need to discuss something very important and that it warrants time, space and privacy.
- See the child normally (and always in cases of neglect, or abuse) before the end of the school day. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible.
- Tell the child/adult we cannot guarantee confidentiality if we think they will be at risk.

Children can also obtain confidential help themselves,
e.g.: school nurse, GP, local drug and alcohol agencies, Childline, etc.

Outside agencies will be shared with adults seeking confidential help e.g. Samaritans

OTHER PROFESSIONALS

Multi-agency professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality.

CONCLUSION

All personal information about children/adults is confidential and should only be accessed on a need to know basis.

Poverest Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards children, parents/carers and staff. The care and safety of the individual is always paramount.