

St Margaret Clitherow
Catholic Primary School



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

NOVEMBER 2019



Our Mission



Learn to love, love to learn

Our Mission is to provide a Catholic education based on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, in which the values of the Gospel underpin all aspects of school life. We insist on the highest standards of academic achievement so that our young people leave us as ‘agents of change’ – educated and caring people who have the qualifications, knowledge and skills they need to flourish as human beings and make the world a better place. We are committed to our mission and to raising standards in order to provide an excellent Catholic education for every child in our care. We work together as one Trust, one family of schools, a community inspired by a vision for excellence.

We aim to deliver our mission by:

- Promoting our **Core Gospel Values** which underpin all aspects of school life
- Promoting **stewardship** enabling our children to develop an understanding of the wider world and their role as global citizens
- Providing opportunities for our children to be **agents of change** and to make a positive difference to the world in which they live
- **Balancing academic success with wider attributes** & provides for learners broader development enabling them to **develop and discover their interests and talents**
- Promoting our **Learning Values** - resilience, responsibility, independence, creativity & collaboration
- Supporting our children to develop their **character** and help them to keep **physically and mentally healthy**
- Placing an uncompromising focus on the development and application of **reading, writing and mathematics skills**
- Playing a major role in developing our children’s **love and passion for learning**
- Celebrating **equity and diversity** supporting the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Developing **children as leaders** by valuing children’s voices and individual contributions and offering a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills



Rationale

At St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we believe that:

The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils 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 pupils well-being and safety.

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

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

The school's attitude to confidentiality is easily understood and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school.

Issues concerning personal information including sex and relationships and other personal matters can arise at any time.

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 health, sex and relationship or other personal issue they want to discuss.

Policy Development

A wide consultation has taken place with the whole school community, including our partner agencies. The final policy was agreed by the leadership team and the school's governing body, and has been widely disseminated to staff, pupils, parents/carers and partner agencies. The policy is disseminated to all new staff joining the school.

Definition Of Confidentiality

Confidentiality is defined as 'something which is spoken or given in private, entrusted with another's secret affairs'. The confider is asking for the content of the conversation to be kept secret. Anyone offering absolute confidentiality to someone else would be offering to keep the content of his or her conversation completely secret and discuss it with no one.

In practice there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered in our school. We strive to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well being and protection of our pupils and staff, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where pupils and staff can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information, child protection issues and good practise are followed.

This means that in most cases what is offered is limited confidentiality. Disclosure of the content of a conversation could be discussed with professional colleagues, but the confider would not be identified except in certain circumstances.

Staff should make it clear that there are limits to confidentiality at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring children's safety and well-being. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and be involved in the information sharing.

Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances:

In the classroom, in the course of a lesson, given by a member of teaching staff, or an outside visitor, including health professionals:

Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson setting the climate and establishing ground rules to ensure confidential disclosures are not made. It should be made clear to pupils that this is not the time or place to disclose confidential personal information. When a health professional is contributing to a school's health education programme in a classroom setting, they are working with the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.

One-to-one disclosures to members of school staff:

It is essential all members of staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer to both pupils and parents and carers and any required actions and sources of further support or help available both for the pupil or parent / carer, within the school and from other agencies where appropriate. All staff at this school encourage pupils to discuss different issues with their parents or carers and vice versa. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and the school staff will not automatically share information about the pupil with his / her parents unless it is considered to be in the child's best interests.

Disclosures to a counsellor, school nurse or health professional operating a confidential service in the school:

Health professionals such as school nurses can give confidential medical advice to pupils provided they are competent to do so and follow the Fraser Guidelines (guidelines for doctors and other health professionals on giving medical advice to under 16's). School nurses are skilled in discussing issues and possible actions with young people and always have in mind the need to encourage pupils to discuss issues with their parents or carers. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and the school nurse will not insist that a pupil's parents or carers are informed about any advice or treatment they give.

The Legal Position For School Staff

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Police Act 1997
- Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (No. 2) Regulations 2009
- School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff: Guidance for Local Authorities, Headteachers, School Staff, Governing Bodies and Proprietors of Independent Schools (DfE)

- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (DfE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children

All school staff should not promise confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect they will not be reported to their parents / carers and may not, in the absence of an explicit promise, assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No member of this school's staff can or should give such a promise.

The safety, well-being and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality.

School staff are NOT obliged to break confidentiality except where child protection is or may be an issue, however at St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we believe it is important staff are able to share their concerns about pupils' safety so that their well-being is maintained.

Teachers, counsellors and health professionals

Professional judgement is required by a teacher, counsellor or health professional, in considering whether he or she should indicate to a child that, the child could make a disclosure in confidence, and whether such a confidence could then be maintained, having heard the information. In exercising their professional judgement the teacher, counsellor or health professional must consider the best interests of the child, including the need to both ensure trust to provide safeguards for our children and possible child protection issues. All teachers at this school receive basic training in child protection as part of their induction to this school and are expected to follow the School's child protection policy and procedures.

Counsellors and health professionals

At St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we are able to access counselling services for the support of pupils. The school nurse also visits the school. These services are confidential between the counsellor or health professional and the individual pupil. No information is shared with school staff except as defined in the school's child protection policy. This is essential to maintain the trust needed for these services to meet the needs of our pupils.

Visitors and non-teaching staff

At St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we expect all non-teaching staff to report any disclosures by pupils or parents/carers of a concerning nature to the designated child protection co-ordinator as soon as possible after the disclosure and in an appropriate setting, so others cannot overhear. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide what, if any, further action needs to be taken.

Parents/carers

At St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we believe that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavour to keep parents/carers abreast of their child's progress at school, including any concerns about their progress or behaviour. However, we also need to maintain a balance so that our pupils can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a pupil does discuss a difficult personal issue, staff at St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, they will be encouraged to also discuss the matter with their parents or carers and may be supported to do so where it is appropriate. The safety, well-being and protection

of all our pupils is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality.

Volunteers in School

At St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we value the help of parents, students and others. Everything that volunteers see and hear (particularly in relation to children's, welfare or levels of work) must be held in confidence and not shared with others outside of the school. If volunteers have any questions regarding anything they see or hear in school, or they have concerns about the well-being of a child, they should speak to the class teacher or the Head Teacher. Students taking part in recognised qualifications & training will be advised of our confidentiality policy & required to respect it.

Record keeping

Every child has a personal record with their contact details, medical information and settling in information. These records are kept in a locked cabinet and are only accessible to the child's key person, class teacher, SLT or school Administrator. CPOMS is used to record all health, safeguarding and behaviour concerns. Interactive Learning Diaries are used to record the learning of Foundation Stage children which is accessible to parents. Staff records and details are kept locked in the school office.

Staff are aware that when they are discussing a child, confidentiality should take priority. This will always be the case regardless of talking with parents or other staff in the setting.

Key Points

- Teachers/Key workers of SEND children will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of curriculum planning / group management, with people other than the parents, carers or key person of that child.
- Support Staff/volunteers will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of curriculum planning / group management, with people other than the Class Teacher or SLT. Parents should be directed to the class teacher/SLT by the Support Staff member/volunteer.
- Information given by parents / carers will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- The use of social network internet sites should not be used to discuss any school issues
see Social Media Policy.

Complex Cases

Where there are areas of doubt about the sharing of information, St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School will consult with the local area Safeguarding Board.

When Confidentiality Should Be Broken And The Procedures For Doing This

See the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Gill. The Deputy Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Callaghan and Mrs Dudman.

Support For Staff

Staff may have support needs themselves in dealing with some of the personal issues of our pupils. At St. Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School we prefer staff to ask for help rather than possibly making a poor decision because they don't have all the facts or the necessary training, or taking worries about pupils home with them. Staff should discuss any concerns with the headteacher or DDSLs.

Links With Other Policies

This policy has links with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- PSHE
- Sex and Relationships
- Drug Education
- Anti-Bullying

Dissemination And Implementation

This policy has been distributed to all teaching and non-teaching staff as part of whole school training on Child Protection/Safeguarding. A copy of the policy can always be found in the policies files in the headteacher's office. All new staff receive a copy of the policy when they join the school.

Monitoring And Evaluation

The impact of the school's Confidentiality Policy will be monitored through school improvement updates for governors. This policy will be reviewed as part of the standard cycle of policy review and will take into account initiatives and progress in this developing area.

Signed _____ Headteacher

Signed _____ Chair of Local Governing Body

Date _____

Confidentiality Agreement

I understand that confidential information means all information obtained whether orally, in writing or by any other means.

I am in agreement that: -

- all personal information regarding pupils or school staff is confidential and will be kept so;
- all school staff and parental helpers will abide by a strict code of the highest professional and ethical standards in order to safeguard confidentiality of all practices and information held within the school;
- the Head teacher is responsible for taking action if a member of staff or parental helper is identified to having disclosed confidential information regarding school practices or personal information regarding a pupil or a member of the school staff;

I ,(_____), am in agreement with the above and agree that I will treat all information received in the strictest confidence and will not divulge any information outside the school.

Signed	Date Agreed

.....(Headteacher)

Date:...