



# Cambois Primary School CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

## 1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that children are protected at all times.
- To provide clear, unambiguous guidance to all staff as to their professional roles.
- To ensure good practice throughout the school which is clearly understood by pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors.
- To foster an ethos of trust, respect and equality within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents/carers and pupils are aware of the school's responsibility on confidentiality.
- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To encourage children to talk to their parents, carers and staff.
- To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that if there are child protection concerns, the correct procedures are followed.
- To ensure confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in some lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To ensure that parents/carers have a right of access to any records that the school might hold on their child but not to any other child for whom they have no caring responsibility.

## 2. HOW WAS THE POLICY FORMULATED & DEVELOPED?

This policy is based on the guidance provided by the Local Authority (LA), which has been adapted to suit the needs of Cambois Primary School following consultation with staff and governors. The policy is linked to and supported by other policies of the school.

## 3. WHERE AND TO WHOM THE POLICY APPLIES

The policy applies to the whole school community and is made available to:

- All staff employed by the school
- Depending on their contractual arrangements, all visitors working with children on the school site during the school day.
  - Parent helpers and volunteers.

## 4. POLICY GUIDANCE

The school prides itself on effective communication and close relationships with parents/carers. Staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support children in talking to their parents/carers. Some children may feel that they can turn to staff members for support. While wanting to be as helpful as possible staff recognise that there may be potential difficulties in this. Staff should adhere to the following guidance:

- When talking with pupils it is important to be aware of the maintenance of professional boundaries.
- Staff must make it clear to children that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when they first begin to talk about something sensitive or an issue concerning their welfare,
- Children should be warned that if there is a child protection issue where they, or others, are likely to be at risk of significant harm, staff have a **duty to inform the schools designated Child Protection Officer (M. Allan or Anne Richardson)**, who in turn might need to involve other agencies. This must be done sensitively. It should be made clear that appropriate people who can help will be informed but only those who need to know will be involved.
  - Social media should not be used at all to discuss children or families.

- School staff can only offer confidentiality to pupils on issues that do not involve significant illegal activities, e.g. vandalism, arson etc... If the conversation begins to move to this kind of issue children must be warned that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- In all cases where it is felt that confidentiality with a child will be broken the pupil must be informed in the first instance and reassured that their best interests will be maintained.
- Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHCE sessions dealing with sensitive issues. Distancing techniques should be used when dealing with sensitive issues.
- All information about individual children should be considered private and should only be shared with those staff that have a **need to know**.
- All social, medical and personal information held by the school should be kept secure in a manner that means it cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
  - Child protection information is held in secured lockable location and should not be accessed by any staff other than designated officers. Any unauthorised access to this could result in disciplinary procedures.
- Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
- 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 school relative to the above but it should not allow individual children to be identified. Any data about children should be stored and kept in encrypted memory sticks only.
- Pupils should be made aware of the specialist confidential services that may be available in the school community e.g. the public health nurse.

## 5. CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION ABOUT FAMILIES/CARERS/PARENTS

The school recognises that sometimes there may be family issues which might affect a pupil and which the family might only disclose if they can be sure the information will be treated confidentiality. School staff will respect the wishes of the family and where it is necessary to share the information given, this will be discussed with the parent first, unless a pupil is considered to be at an immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection concern.

## 6. INFORMATION ABOUT STAFF & GOVERNORS

All staff can normally expect that their personal situations and health will remain confidential unless:

- It impinges on their contract terms.
- It endangers pupils or other members of staff
- There is a legal obligation to disclose information
- It is necessary for disclosure in legal proceedings
- Despite the duty of confidence and the staff member's interest, the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

|       |         |       |
|-------|---------|-------|
| Name: | Signed: | Date: |
|-------|---------|-------|