

Locking Primary School Confidentiality Policy



Aim:

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

Rationale:

Locking Primary School seeks to put the welfare of the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address the issues, which may arise about confidentiality. It is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to collect, 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 appertaining to children once it has been received.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
3. To ensure that staff, 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 the staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender, social and special educational needs.
8. To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedures are 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 a different code of conduct.
11. To ensure that parents 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.

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.
3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
 - a) The school has an appointed teacher and Governor for Child Protection.
 - b) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have child protection training.
 - c) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
 - d) Staff are aware that effective sex and relationship 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.
- 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 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. The school will share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities.
- 6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
- 7. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHEC sessions dealing with sensitive issues.
- 8. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. The school gives guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.
- 9. 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. 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 arise outside the governing body.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- 1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
- 2. The PHSCE scheme of work, Sex and Relationship 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.

Conclusion:

Locking Primary School has 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.

Written by:.....

Date: January 2013

To be reviewed: January 2015

Other relevant policies: PSHCE, S&R, Marking, CP, Discipline / Behaviour.