

Confidentiality Policy

Policy Reviewed: November 2021
Next Policy Review Date: November 2022

This policy is prepared using the following publications:

Data Protection Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998

Statement of Intent

MWS staff aim to have a confidential relationship with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children, and their parents and carers, while ensuring that they experience high quality education here. We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. There are record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements; means of storing and sharing that information take place within the framework of the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.

Procedures

We always respect parents wishes with regard to information they share with us which they wish to keep confidential.

Parents may sometimes share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff; the school cannot be held responsible if information is shared beyond those parents in whom the person has confided.

Information shared between parents and staff in a meeting is usually bound by a shared agreement that the information is confidential to the group and not discussed outside it without permission.

Information given by parents/carers to staff will not be passed on to other adults without permission unless it is a safeguarding issue, in which case it will be shared with relevant agencies on a need to know basis.

We keep all records securely (in a securely locked cupboard). Care is taken by teachers and office staff not to leave documents in places where they may be read by people not authorised to see them. Electronic files and emails relating to parents and children are password protected and computer screens are not left on when unsupervised.

On a routine basis staff discuss together, in confidence, the progress of individual children; sometimes a visiting adviser, teacher or student teacher may be involved in these discussions. On occasions when lengthier, in-depth studies of the progress of individual children are planned, the permission and participation of parents is sought. From time to time, with parents' permission, individual children may

be referred for pedagogical reasons to a doctor or psychologist and the contents of the doctor or psychologist's report may be shared in confidence with teachers and therapists in meetings which focus on the child's progress or welfare. Additional to these situations, staff will not discuss individual children, other than for the purpose of curriculum planning/ group management, with people other than the parents/carers of that child without first obtaining parents' permission.

Students on recognised courses who are working in school will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it. They will need to obtain written permission from parents whose children they may wish to observe for longer term case studies.

From time to time children's art work and photographs showing schoolchildren may be used by the school for publicity purposes, but only with parental permission. To assist with internal communication the school circulates within the school community a contact list of parents' and teachers' names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses; an individual's details are included only if permission is given and details of children are not included on the contact list.

Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the Staffing Sub Group of ECTE.

Staff records are kept securely and confidentially by the school administrator.

Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality.

Parents/carers, if they request, will have access to the files and records of their own children but they will not be allowed access to information about any other child.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the school to the safety and well-being of the children.

At times information has to be shared with the school council, North Yorkshire County Council and the Department for Education; this is factual information, names, addresses, dates of birth, number of sessions attended etc. This information is kept confidential by these agencies.

When a child moves on from the school to another setting reports or progress data may be passed on to the next setting, but only when signed permission has been given by the child's parent/carer.

The records the school keeps are:

- Observations of children, samples of work, assessments and summaries of learning, with contributions from staff, children and parents; these can be accessed daily and everyone is asked to respect confidentiality;
- Copies of annual pupil reports
- Registration forms and emergency and accident forms

Eskdale Community Trust for Education

- Learning support records and correspondence and written observations from other agencies, relating to developmental concerns or matters on safe guarding children
- Notes of pedagogical discussions relating to individual children
- Notes from meetings with the school doctor
- Minutes of weekly teachers' and College of Teachers' meetings
- Minutes of Eskdale Trust Council meetings and working groups
- Staff personnel records
- Single staffing record
- Results of Criminal Records Bureau/Disclosure Barring Service enhanced disclosure requests – after 6 months we retain dates and reference numbers only.
- Audited accounts and financial planning documents
- Children's records of progress
- Parental permissions for trips, use of children's photographs and artwork, lunches in Village households
- Records of parental financial contributions in support of the school
- Correspondence between parents and teachers and between parents and the College of Teachers
- Notes of staff development triangle meetings and staff appraisals
- Records of accidents and incidents
- Records of complaints and concerns.

These are kept in a locked cupboard when the school is closed, and during session are only available to relevant staff members or to parents requesting access to their own children's records. Electronic copies are password protected on the school computer.

Additionally individual teachers will keep their own informal records of teaching plans and pupils' achievements to assist with lesson planning, and children's work will be displayed in classrooms and other school areas to celebrate and promote learning and achievement.

Endorsement:

Name: Linda Parker

Position: Chair of ECTE

Date: 28/11/2021