Confidentiality Policy
September 2020

Date	Review Date
April 2021	**April 2023**

Head teacher:		**Date:**	20/04/2021
Chair of Governing Body:		**Date:**	20/04/2021

Introduction

1.0 All Academies are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues including abuse, drugs use or other dangerous or illegal activities. It is important that the whole academy follows the same clear and explicit policy. Pupils, parents, parent helpers and carers should be made aware of this and how it works in practice.

1.1 At Girnhill Infant School we believe confidentiality is when someone, during a private conversation, entrusts another with their secrets and with the confider expecting absolute confidentiality from the confidante. Government guidance requires professionals to consult as much as possible with parents about their children when referring to another agency. In general, parent should be asked if they wish to be referred, unless there is a reason to think that obtaining such consent may put the pupil(s) at risk.

1.2 We feel we can only offer **limited and not absolute** confidentiality at this school as the safety, well-being and protection of our pupils are the main consideration in all decisions academy personnel make.

1.3 We stress that school personnel must make it clear when in discussion with pupils or parents/carers that there are limits to confidentiality that can be offered, so that they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person/s to talk to about the personal matters that have been disclosed.

1.4 We believe we have created a safe and supportive academy environment which encourages pupils to talk to school personnel in order to share their problems. Trust between pupils and staff is an established part of the school ethos.

1.5 We acknowledge that a transparent confidentiality policy will help us meet the Every Child Matters outcomes of 'be healthy' and 'stay safe'.

Aims

- To give clear guidance to all members of the school around confidentiality.
- To encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems.
- To ensure that all information shared in confidence by pupils, parents/carers will only be used to enhance the safety, well-being and protection of our pupils.

This policy forms an Appendix to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Procedure / Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Governing Body

1.6 The Governing Body has delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure that all school personnel are aware that they should not promise absolute confidentiality and that the safety, well-being and protection of the pupil is the Headteacher consideration in all decisions academy personnel make about confidentiality.

1.7 Governors, in particular those sitting in on disciplinary committee, do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person outside of the meeting.

1.8 At full Governing Body meetings, matters such as pupil exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in the Headteacher's report under Part 2 'confidential'. Any information shared under this section of the report is not for the knowledge of persons outside of the Governing Body. Minutes in Part 2 are minuted separately and minutes are not published.

Role of the Headteacher

1.9 The Headteacher will communicate this policy to all school personnel, pupils, parents/carers, governors, outside agencies and visitors by:

- Organising in-house training for academy personnel on Child Protection and Safeguarding;
- Including the policy in the staff handbook;
- Including the policy in the school prospectus;
- Including the policy in the handbook for school visitors;
- Organising governor training sessions;
- Listing it on the academy's publication scheme (Freedom of Information Act 2000);
- Producing a confidentiality statement for pupils.

1.10 Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the Headteacher's office and electronic records will only be available from the SLT drive.

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

Role of Academy Personnel

1.12 Academy personnel will:

- Comply with this policy by not promising at any time absolute confidentiality when a disclosure has been made to them;
- Undertake appropriate training;
- Pass on confidential information for the safety, well-being and protection of our pupils to the Child Protection Coordinator.
- As part of the transition process the next class teacher may be informed of any matters which may affect a child moving into their class;
- Ensure all documentation with personal details regarding children, staff and parents will be kept in a lockable cabinet and will only be accessible by the appropriate members of staff.
- Not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff and/or care and concern meetings to any person without direct professional connection to, and interest in the welfare of, the individual concerned.
- Ensure that anything that occurs within the setting must remain confidential and should not be discussed outside the working environment;
- Act on disclosures. Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate place or time. If this happens, the member of staff should talk again individually to the pupil before the end of the school day. The member of staff may be able to discuss the issue with an appropriate colleague, to decide on suitable action, without giving the name of the pupil.
- Ensure that at no time do they discuss another child with a parent/carer other than their own child, including signing accident or medicine forms;
- Ensure Children's Learning Journey Books are displayed for parents/carers to view in the Foundation Stage but only the parent/carer of the child may look at their child's profile and will be told so by a member of staff if they attempt to look in

another child's profile. A letter stating the importance of this will be sent out to each cohort of new starters.

Role of Pupils

1.13 Pupils will be aware:

- That they can talk about any concerns or worries they have with school personnel;
- Of the confidentiality statement and that information will be shared for their own safety and well-being;
- Of how to access external confidential support;
- That they will be encouraged by the school to discuss any matters that they have brought to the attention of the school with their parents/carers.

Role of Parents

1.14 Parents will be aware that:

- Parents/carers work in partnership with the school and are kept informed of their child's progress and behaviour;
- Parents have ready access to the files and records of their children.

Role of Students on Placement, Adult/parent Volunteer Helpers and Academy Visitors

1.15 Students on placement, Adult/parent volunteer helpers and school visitors will be aware that:

- All school visitors (including students on placement and adult/parent volunteers) will be made aware of the school policy about disclosures and confidentiality;
- All parent helpers are asked to sign a confidentiality agreement before working in school;
- Parents and volunteers in academy should not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents in the academy. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy;
- All visitors must report any concerns they have regarding a pupil/s;
- All disclosures must be reported.

1.16 This policy should be read in conjunction to the separate Adult Volunteer and Student Placement Policy that forms part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.