Letchmore Infants' And Nursery School

Confidentiality Policy

March 2026

Review Date – March 2027

At Letchmore Infants' and Nursery, confidentiality is an essential element of the success of the school and is relevant to all members of the school community.

Aim

To protect everyone on site at all times, to give all stakeholders clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school.

Rationale

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. The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decision making. It is an essential part of our ethos that everyone trusts the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school. The duty of confidentiality applies to every person in the school.

Objectives

1. To provide consistent messages in school about handling information.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
3. To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures.
4. To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
5. To encourage pupils to talk to their parents and carers.
6. To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all, including rigorous monitoring of identified groups.
8. To ensure that if there are child protection issues, the correct procedures are followed.
9. To ensure that confidentiality is part of the whole school culture 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.

Procedures

1. All information about individual pupils is private and should only be shared with those staff that need to know.

2. All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place, which cannot be accessed by individuals other than identified school staff.

3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:

a. The school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies for child protection who receive regular training.
b. There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents and all staff have regular training on child protection issues (see Child Protection Policy Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School - Policies)
c. There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
d. Staff deliver effective relationship education as part of our PSHRE curriculum which focuses on healthy and trusting relationships.
e. Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
f. Any intolerance or prejudice about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools Behaviour Support and Relationships policy Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School - Policies

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 commits to providing good communication with parents and carers, and staff are always 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 and may in some cases support the pupils to talk to their parents.

6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.

7. All pupils have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.

8. Confidentiality is a whole school culture. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHRE sessions dealing with sensitive issues. Strategies are in place for dealing with sensitive information

which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. School needs to be proactive so pupils feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.

9. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of pupils with medical needs but this should not be on general view to other parents/carers and children.

10. Photographs of pupils should not be used without parents/carers permission. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

11. Information about pupils will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress at any time. Parents should be made aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. All personal information about pupils including social services records are regarded as confidential and are only accessed by Designated Safeguarding Leads in school. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be held securely.

12. Logs of administration of medication to pupils should be kept secure and each pupil should have their own individual log. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and pupils will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

13. Governors need to be mindful that from time-to-time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and pupils. All such papers should be marked as confidential. These confidential papers should be destroyed. Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing board, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are public documents, 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 arises outside the governing board. Part 2 minutes will be used where discussions are bound by strict confidentiality.

Stakeholders

Staff:
There are three main points for staff to bear in mind:

- Details of pupils are not to be disclosed to any parents other than those of the child concerned.
- Information regarding a pupil's progress is passed on only by the class teacher concerned, assistant headteachers, or the Co-headteachers, to the parent.
- Staff should feel that they can talk freely about pupils within the school, safe in the knowledge that what they will say will not be repeated elsewhere.

Parents:

As parents involve themselves with the school, they become members of a professional team. Parents in this situation will see and hear a great deal but must not discuss anything in the wider community.

Parents need to acknowledge that in some circumstances they may not fully understand the rationale for decisions/expectations, but this may be because the teacher is not at liberty to discuss them, e.g. confidential aspects of the pupils' lives which may affect their behaviour or progress.

We expect parents to understand this and respect the position in which they find themselves.

Governors:

The important role of the Governing Board ensures that it has to be informed of highly personal and confidential matters at each meeting. The Governors' Guide to the law states: 'how individual governors' vote, and opinions by governors involving a named person which are in any way sensitive or critical, should always be regarded as confidential'.

To help governors understand the importance of their role, the following points should be considered:

- No information regarding pupils' assessment and test results, other than that legally required, should be passed on to others.
- Insecure filing of confidential papers
- Passing information to partners
- Co-Headteacher performance review details

- Paperwork containing individual salaries remain confidential.

If governors receive complaints regarding governors, Co-headteachers or staff it is important that they ascertain that the complainant has followed the procedures in the complaints policy Letchmore Infants' and Nursery School - Policies