

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Review Date:	Autumn 2018
Next Review Due:	Autumn 2019
Person in Charge:	CEO
Governance:	Chair of Board

Pastoral Care/Spiritual Development

The quality of relationships between all members of school, staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of a church school. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. Jesus was clear in his instructions to the disciples on this matter.

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.

‘This is my commandment: love each other’ - John 15:17.

Everyone associated with the school is made in the image of God and is to be loved. This is the commandment from which Northern Lights Learning Trust derives its policy for pastoral care.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that Christian love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environment is created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the school is organised and the policies are written and implemented.

The Academy’s Confidentiality policy is part of the academy’s pastoral and safeguarding system.

Please refer to GDPR Regulations 2018 and Pupil and Workforce Privacy Notices.

Aim

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

Rationale

- Northern Lights Learning Trust will put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It will 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 use hold and safeguard information received.
- Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. The academy 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 about children once it has been received.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the Academy.
3. To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the Academy'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 Academy staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
8. To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is 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 different code of conduct.
11. To ensure that parents have a right of access upon request in writing 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 children's 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 school staff.
3. The Academy continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the Individual:
 - a) The Academy has appointed a senior lead teacher for child protection who receives regular training.
 - b) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection issues.
 - 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 school's discipline policy.
 - g) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
4. Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the Academy has a duty to report child protection issues.
5. The Academy prides itself on 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.
 - a) The Academy encourages children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents. The Academy would share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities unless there is concern that by doing so the welfare of the child would be seriously compromised.
6. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
7. 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 schools by these
 - a) categories but individual children should not be able to be identified.
8. The Academy has appointed a senior member of staff as Designated Safeguarding Lead. There are 3 other safeguarding leads on the staff. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for all staff.
9. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as Kidsafe, circle time and other PHSCE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. School needs to be proactive so children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. Room 2 talk has been a welcome addition to the school providing a safe haven for children who need support.
 - a) 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.

10. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
11. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. This is often a cultural issue that the school needs to be aware of. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. Children's photographs will be used in a medical room to identify their medical need but there will be restricted access. The Academy gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.
12. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents evening. However parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. All personal information about children including social services records should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information.
 - a) 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 circulated in envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing. Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log. In all other notes, briefing sheets etc a child should not be able to be identified. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
13. Directors and Local Governing Body members 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 and should be copied onto different coloured paper. These confidential papers should be destroyed. Directors and members of the Local Governing Body must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the local governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.
 - a) 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, Directors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the local governing body or Board meetings.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
2. The Personal Development scheme of work, including Kidsafe, Sex and Relationship policy and Drug Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.
3. The CEO has responsibility for monitoring this policy. Following any curriculum monitoring a positional statement is written which contributes to the Academy Development Plan.

Conclusion

Northern Lights Learning Trust - 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.

NORTHERN LIGHTS LEARNING TRUST - CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

It is the policy of Northern Lights Learning Trust, Benedict Biscop C.E. Academy to provide our employees or pupils with a level of privacy and confidentiality with any information concerning any of our employees or pupils. In the course of your work, you may have access to confidential information (oral, written or computer generated not otherwise available to the public at large) about employees or pupils, their families and/or personal business. School business information includes computer programs, software and supporting documentation, technological improvement plans, strategic plans, financial information and employee information (including but not limited to co-workers and their families).

THEREFORE, I AGREE that:

My right to enter or make use of confidential information is restricted to my need to know the data or information to perform my job responsibilities. I will keep my computer access password(s) confidential. If another method of accessing a computer system is used, I will restrict its use to myself. I will not discuss any confidential information in any public areas, hallways, gathering spaces etc.

I will hold all confidential information of which I have knowledge in the truest confidence, as required by law. I agree to utilise confidential information obtained by me only for the benefit of the employer in performance of my job responsibilities. Unauthorised disclosure, copying and/or misuse of confidential information is a serious breach of duty and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or contract with Northern Lights Learning Trust, Northern Lights Learning Trust. Further, this agreement mandates compliance extending beyond employment, contract, or association with Northern Lights Learning Trust, Northern Lights Learning Trust, as required by law.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT AND AGREE TO ITS TERMS.

Employee Signature

Employee Name (print)

Date _____