

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

DATE PALM STATEMENT of INTENT

At Date Palm our vision is for the School to ensure our pupils grow like a Date Palm tree – with **strong foundations, lofty branches and produce fresh fruit:**

- ✓ To build **Strong Foundations for Character Development** that:
Instil values; inspire each pupil; display best manners.
- ✓ To have **Lofty Branches of Educational Excellence** that will:
Provide a broad and varied range of experiences and learning opportunities; help each pupil progress and develop in all aspects; support their skills and talents.
- ✓ To produce **Fresh Fruit that provides services to their Communities** in order to:
Become responsible and confident citizens; make a positive difference; commit to charitable endeavours; become effective contributors towards Britain's future.

Reviewed by	Position	Signature
Afsana Khanam	Deputy Head / DSL	
Sabina Yesmin	Safeguarding Governor	

Reviewed: May 2021

Next review date: May 2024

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 school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Rationale and statement on the importance of confidentiality at Date Palm Primary School.

We believe that:

- The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff and volunteers in school is an essential element in ensuring our pupils well-being and safety.
- Whilst we recognise that social media is used by many parents, parents should only post photographs of their own children, and always seek permission from parents if other children are included in the photographs. Parents should be aware that not all parents or carers want photos of their children out in the public domain for a number of reasons, which could include safeguarding.
- It is an essential part of the ethos of our school that trust is established to enable pupils, staff, and parents/carers to seek help both within and outside the school and minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure that pupils and staff are supported and safe.
- Pupils, parents/carers and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns, including sex and relationships.
- The school's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood and everyone should be able to trust, respect and comply with the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school.
- Issues concerning personal information including sex and relationships and other personal matters can arise at any time.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health, sex and relationship or other personal issue they want to discuss.

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff who 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 which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual
4. The school has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every year for all staff.
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead receives regular training. The Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for child protection.
6. There is clear guidance for procedures for the handling of child protection incidents.

All staff have regular training on child protection issues.

- a) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of inappropriate conduct.
- b) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
- c) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools discipline policy.
- d) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.

Definition Of Confidentiality

The dictionary definition of confidential is "something which is spoken or given in confidence; private, entrusted with another's secret affairs."

When speaking confidentially to someone the confider has the belief that the confidant will not discuss the content of the conversation with another. The confider is asking for the content of the conversation to be kept secret. Anyone offering absolute confidentiality to someone else would be offering to keep the content of his or her conversation completely secret and discuss it with no one.

In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is offered in Date Palm Primary School. We have tried to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of our pupils and staff, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where pupils and staff can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information child protection issues and good practice is followed.

This means that in most cases what is on offer is limited confidentiality. Disclosure of the content of a conversation could be discussed with professional colleagues but the confider would not be identified except in certain circumstances.

The general rule is that staff should make clear that there are limits to confidentiality, at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring children's' safety and well-being. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and will be encouraged to do this for themselves whenever this is possible.

Different levels of confidentiality for different circumstances:

In the classroom in the course of a lesson given by a member of teaching staff or an outside visitor, including health professionals.

Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, setting the climate and establishing ground rules to ensure confidential disclosures are not made. It should be made clear to pupils that this is not the time or place to disclose confidential, personal information.

When a health professional is contributing to a school health education programme in a classroom setting, s/he is working with the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.

One to one disclosures to members of school staff (including voluntary staff).

It is essential all members of staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer to both pupils and parents/carers and any required actions and sources of further support or help available both for the pupil or parent/carer and for the staff member within the school and from other agencies, where appropriate. All staff at this school encourage pupils to discuss difficult issues with their parents or carers, and vice versa. However, the needs of the pupil are paramount and school staff will not automatically share information about the pupil with his/her parents/carers unless it is considered to be in the child's best interests.

(Note: That is, that when concerns for a child or young person come to the attention of staff, for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure, however insignificant this might appear to be, the member of staff should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding officer as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. Please see the school Child Protection Policy.)

The legal position for school staff:

School staff (including non-teaching and voluntary staff) should not promise confidentiality. Pupils do not have the right to expect that incidents will not be reported to his/her parents/carers and may not, in the absence of an explicit promise, assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No member of this school's staff can or should give such a promise.

The safety, well being and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality.

Members of Date Palm Primary School are NOT obliged to break confidentiality except where child protection is or may be an issue, however, at Date Palm primary School we believe it is important that staff are able to share their concerns about pupils with colleagues in a professional and supportive way, on a need to know basis, to ensure staff receive the guidance and support they need and the pupils' safety and well being is maintained. School staff should discuss such concerns with the DSL.

Visitors and non-teaching staff:

At Date Palm Primary School, we expect all non-teaching staff, including voluntary staff, to report any disclosures by pupils or parents/carers, of a concerning personal nature to the designated child protection co-ordinator as soon as possible after the disclosure and in an appropriate setting, so others cannot overhear. This is to ensure the safety, protection and well being of all our pupils and staff. The DSL will decide what, if any, further action needs to be taken, both to ensure the pupil gets the help and support they need and that the member of staff also gets the support and supervision they need.

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.

The school 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. The school 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 school would share with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities.

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 categories but individual children should not be identified.

Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as death etc. 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 necessarily 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.

Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and on the internet and further details about this are clearly stated in the School's Acceptable (Internet) Use Policy.

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 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

Record Keeping

The school shall keep the following records:-

- Pupil Education Records
- Pupil Admission Documents and Personal Information
- Personnel Records
- Financial Records
- Curriculum Policy Documents
- Non-Curricular Policy Documents

Pupil Education Records

Keeping, Disclosure and Transfer

The school shall keep and update curricular records on pupils, covering their academic achievements, other skills and abilities and progress in school. (This may well include summative records, formative records, examples of work, copies of reports and profiles, SATS results) Other material, although not mandatory may also be recorded. The curricular record, together with this additional material will comprise a pupil's educational record.

Confidential reports (e.g. from Social Services, Psychological Reports etc, SEND information, Medical Information) must be kept separately from the above general information.

Pupils' educational records shall be disclosed on request to parents within the time specified by the statute in force at the time, and to schools considering a pupil for admission or following a request from another school after transfer.

Pupil Admissions Documents

The School shall keep admission records specifying any information required by the LA, School Governors or DFE relating to pupils on roll at the time. These shall be kept up-to-date and amended as and when pupils join or leave the school, providing that the keeping of such information does not contravene any law or statute in operation at the time.

Personnel Records

The School shall maintain records of personnel relating to their qualifications, experience, length of service, salary levels, and documents will be kept securely in the school office and an electronic copy with a secure password.

Curriculum Policy Documents

Documents which describe the schools policies on areas, subjects of the curriculum, topics, schemes of work etc. shall be maintained up-to-date and available for inspection by authorised persons (e.g. parents, advisors, inspectors, governors etc.). The Headteacher will maintain a master copy of each document in safe keeping and available for inspection by authorised and appropriate personnel.

Non- Curricular Policy Documents

Documents which describe the school's policies on non-curricular matters as required by the Governing Body, Ofsted, LA or DFE shall be prepared, maintained and kept up-to-date and made available to authorised persons as required. A list of the required policies shall be made available also and updated as appropriate. These policies shall include the Ground Rules of each committee of the Governing Body as they exist at the time.

Key Points

- Staff / volunteers will not discuss individual children, other than for the purposes of curriculum planning / group management, with people other than the parents, carers or key person of that child.
- Information given by parents / carers will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- The use of social network internet sites should not be used to discuss any school issues.

