

Larchfield Primary & Nursery School



Our Vision

Our children are central to all that we do.
Nurturing, caring and preparing them to add value to an ever-changing world.

Confidentiality Policy

Approved by:	The Full Governing Body	Date: October 2025
Last reviewed on:	November 2024	
Next review due by:	October 2026	

Aim

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff, governors and volunteers 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

Larchfield Primary and Nursery School believes that the well-being and protection of the children is of paramount importance in all decisions staff make regarding confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between staff is an essential element of ensuring the well-being of our children. It is essential that there is a clear and explicit policy on confidentiality in order to ensure that children, young people, parents/carers and staff are able to seek help both within and outside the setting. The school is committed to developing positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.

Objectives:

- To provide consistent messages in school regarding handling information once received
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school
- To ensure staff, parents/carers and children are aware that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- To reassure children that their best interests will be upheld
- To encourage children to talk to their parents/carers and school staff
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all
- To ensure that if there is a child protection issue, the correct procedure is followed
- 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.

Definition of Confidentiality

For the purpose of this policy the following definition of confidentiality will apply:

“Discretion in keeping private information”

We aim to ensure in this setting 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. The general rule in this setting 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.

Responsibilities

Working within the school, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, adults are likely to have access to personal information regarding pupils, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature. All staff, governors and regular volunteers are asked to read the Confidentiality Policy.

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with the staff that need to know.

- 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.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
- The school has a designated safeguarding lead which is the Headteacher.
- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
- Staff are aware that effective Relationship and Sex Education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
- Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
- Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the school's Behaviour Policy / Anti-bullying Policy.
- Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.

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.

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

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 able to 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 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.

Health professionals have their own code of practice for 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.

Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and internet. At no time should the child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. The school gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public school events.

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.

However, parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.

Children's Records

Many examples of sensitive information are held in school in compliance with GDPR law (refer to the school's Data Protection Policy/ Privacy Notices). Such information ranges from observations of children in the school, samples of their work, test scores and comparative data to information including registration and admission forms and signed consent forms. Correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child such as developmental concerns or child protection / welfare matters are stored in a lockable file or cabinet and are kept secure by the person in charge.

Parents have access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child. Parents do not, however, have an automatic right of access to child protection records.

Other Records

Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.

Student volunteers, staff/ parent or coaching volunteers who are working or observing in the setting are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

Links

This Confidentiality Policy is linked to the School's policies for PSHE & Citizenship, Drug Education, RE, Equality, Relationship & Sex Education, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-bullying, GDPR Policy, Acceptable User Policy and Whistleblowing Procedures.

Monitoring and Review

All setting personnel and visiting staff will have access to a copy of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually. All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its contents.