



Hollywood Primary School Confidentiality Policy

Aims

- To safeguard the child at all times
- To give all staff, Governors, parents and adults working in the school clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles
- To ensure consistent professional practice throughout the school
- To provide consistent messages in school about handling and sharing information about children and families once it has been received.

Rationale

Hollywood Primary School seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters Agenda and to address 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 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.

This policy should be read in partnership with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies; see also Safe Use of the Internet Policy and guidelines from Birmingham City Council on the use of images.

Guidelines: Children and Families

1. All information about individual children and families is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. All social care and health, 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. If a member of staff receives information that leads them to believe that there is a child protection issue, they should refer the case to the Head teacher and/or Learning Mentor. (See Child Protection Policy)
4. The school continues to promote actively a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
 - a) The school has appointed a DSP and a Deputy for child protection who receives regular training.
 - b) There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents and 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 schools behaviour policy.
5. 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.
 6. 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, unless the child is believed to be at risk once advice has been taken from Social Care and Health.
 7. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
 8. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSE session 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. 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. 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.
 10. 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.
 11. 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 NC levels 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.
 12. 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.
 13. 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.
14. Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log.
 15. 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.

Guidelines: Governors

1. Governors 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. Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. 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. Governors should exercise the highest degree of caution when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.
2. The Governing Body must always be aware that it acts as a body or group and that no individual Governor should share information or act without the consent of the full Governing Body or appropriate delegated committee.

Guidelines: Staff

1. Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance data will be in the head teacher's office.
2. Staff personal information is held on the CMIS system and can only be accessed through a protected system with a password. Only appropriate staff authorised by the Headteacher can access this information.
3. Staff must be aware of the need to be professional role models of the highest integrity. It is never ever appropriate to share personal information about staff or children with parents or any other person outside school. This would be a severe betrayal of trust and professional misconduct.
4. Staff also may not give advice to parents on the progress and attainment of children in school unless in a professional meeting and following appropriate guidance on professional conduct, for example during an IEP review or Parents Evening. Staff may also not comment on the attainment, behaviour or personal information of children in the school to parents or other adults unless speaking directly to the parent or carer.



Personal disclosures

Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate place or time. If this happens, the member of staff should contact the DSP and deputy as soon as possible. Disclosures may also take place from parents – again the member of staff involved must report the issue to the Head Teacher and/or Learning Mentor who will record any information as appropriate.

Guidelines: Parents and Volunteers

- Parents in school, working as volunteers, or as part of the Parents Association, do not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents in the school. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy.
- When volunteers, such as parents and friends of the school are working in classes, they do not discuss educational matters outside the classroom. For example the specific use of teaching assistant time for particular pupils or groups of pupils, teaching assistants have different roles within a class, including the support of children with special educational needs, the provision and work with these children is for the teacher to discuss with the relevant parents or carers.
- Volunteers, students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in school.

Equal Opportunities

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

Staff may wish to discuss an individual case with a class or group. For instance it can support the inclusion of a child with Aspergers Syndrome or Autism, if their peers are made aware of the condition and so have some idea of what to expect. Similarly a child with visual impairment can be supported if his/her friends know how to look out for them in the playground. In such cases permission will be sought from the child and his/her carers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle.
2. The PSHE scheme of work, Sex and Relationship policy and Safe Use of Drugs Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy across the school as appropriate.
3. The School Leadership Team has responsibility for monitoring this policy.



Conclusion

Hollywood Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers, staff and the community within which we work. 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.

Head Teacher

Date February 2013