

The Catholic School of Saint Gregory The Great

Believe and Achieve



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

To be read in conjunction with all school policies and adopted Local Authority & Diocese Policies

To be reviewed by May 2025

Mission Statement

Believe and Achieve

“We are a safe and happy school where we all shine as part of God’s family.”

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, parent/carer and staff.

Rationale

The Catholic School of Saint Gregory The Great 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 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 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.

Objectives

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received following GDPR.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents/carers and pupils are aware of the school’s confidentiality policy and procedures.
- To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
- To encourage children to talk to their parent/carer.
- To ensure that pupils and parent/carer know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
- To ensure that if there are safeguarding issues then the correct procedure is followed.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons, ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To understand that health professionals and other professional bodies are bound by their own code of conduct.
- 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.

Guidelines

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff who have a 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 the relevant school staff.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
- Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.

- Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality as the school has a duty to report safeguarding issues and so there may be exceptional circumstances where confidentiality will be broken.
- The school prides itself on good communication with parent/carer 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 parent/carer any safeguarding disclosure, unless it puts the child at unacceptable risk.
- All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality, irrespective of gender, race, religion, background, medical concerns and special educational needs and disabilities. 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 PHSCE session dealing with sensitive issues such as relationships, sex and substance misuse. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of safeguarding procedures. School needs to be proactive so children 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.
- Information about children will be shared with parents/carers but only about their child. Parents/carers should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time. However, parents/carers 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 care 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. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEND reports, SEND minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated via secure email (egress) and shared internally on cpoms with those who need to know. Paper copies will be locked in children's files in staff room or destroyed via confidential waste.
- Addresses and telephone numbers of parents/carers and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
- Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. Governors must observe complete confidentiality, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents/carers. 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 prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arise outside the governing body.
- The PHSCE scheme of work, Relationship and Sex Education policy and Drug Policy will enable identified opportunities to deliver aspects of this policy in specified year groups.
- All volunteers read and sign a confidentiality agreement prior to starting their voluntary work at School.

Conclusion

The Catholic School of Saint Gregory The Great 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.