



# Confidentiality Policy

## SOUTH NORMANTON NURSERY SCHOOL

Adopted at the meeting of the Full Governing Body on **7<sup>th</sup> March, 2023**

Minute Number **62/23**

Chair of Governors

### Record of Policy Amendment / History

Version/ Issue	Date	Author	Reason for Change
1	27/01/16	MH	New policy
2	9/01/17	MH	Updated to include rights respecting schools
3	16/01/18	MH	Amendments in yellow, examples of practice shown in pink.
4	24/01/19	MH	Amendments shown in yellow
5	05/03/23	MH	Amendments in yellow

This policy has been considered and written in conjunction with our Rights Respecting School's charter adapted from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.

"In our school, we believe that every child has the right to play, learn and grow in an inspiring, empowering and safe environment protected from harm and treated fairly. We believe that each one of us has a responsibility for the world and its inhabitants, both of which deserve respect and nurture."  
South Normanton Nursery School Charter

## Confidentiality and Handling Sensitive Issues for Pupils & Parents Policy

### What is confidentiality?

Confidentiality is the protection of personal information, it is an understanding that any information shared with someone in trust can only be passed on to a third party with the agreement of the person disclosing it.

### Why do we need a Confidentiality Policy?

South Normanton Nursery School recognises the following benefits of working to a confidentiality policy:

- it highlights the importance of **children** being able to talk to adults in the school to share their problems in a safe and supportive environment.
- it safeguards the well-being of those involved in the disclosure of confidential information.
- it builds trust between **children** and staff.
- it empowers each **child** to exercise control over the choices that will affect their life.
- it prevents the need to deal with each disclosure as a crisis in isolation.

In practise, there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered in our nursery. We strive to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of our children and staff, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where children and staff can ask for help when they need it, and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information and/or safeguarding issues, respectful practises are followed.

This means that in most cases, what is offered, is limited confidentiality. Disclosures of the content of a conversation could be discussed with professional colleagues.

**Staff should make it clear at the beginning of the conversation, that there are limits to confidentiality. These limits relate to ensuring children's safety and well-being. Children will be told that confidences have to be shared.**

**One-to-one disclosures to members of school staff** – it is vital that all staff know the limits of the confidentiality they can offer to children, and parents/ carers. The needs of the children are paramount, and the nursery staff will automatically share information about children with their parents/carers, unless it is considered to be not in the child's best interests.

Members of staff will be made aware of who to inform in the event of different types of disclosures of a personal nature. A disclosure is the sharing of any private/personal information.

**The nursery** will always provide opportunities for its pupils and parents to access confidential support in school.

### **Age-Related Considerations**

Confidentiality issues need to take into consideration the differing abilities of children to understand the consequences of their choices. This understanding depends on the level of maturity of each individual, but there may be some correlation to their age.

The judge in the Victoria Gillick case gave the following general advice:-

“It is suggested that a child or young person’s ability to make decisions about his/her life depends on him/her having "sufficient understanding and intelligence to be capable of making up his/her own mind".

Before sharing any disclosed information with parents/carers, we need to either obtain the consent of the child or consider the possible consequences of sharing the information, taking into account knowledge of family circumstances. This will need to be done on a case by case basis.

Our school will need to consider issues relating to confidentiality and the age/maturity of our children.

### **Responsibilities to Parents/Carers**

- members of staff are not legally obliged to inform parents or carers in many instances when personal information has been disclosed.
- staff will encourage the child to speak to and seek support from their parents/carers.
- in most cases information provided by a child will only be passed to their parents/carers if it is in the best interests of the child.

### **Staff roles and responsibilities**

All staff are reminded of confidentiality upon induction, via conversations with the Headteacher and the Staff Code of Conduct.

Nursery staff should not promise confidentiality. The safety, well-being and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions, staff at this nursery make about confidentiality.

All staff, are expected to follow the Safeguarding Policy and procedures and will receive training in child protection. The member of staff responsible for Child Protection needs to monitor practice. Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary procedures being followed.

Staff can seek advice and support for themselves when dealing with a disclosure whilst keeping the individual's identity anonymous. The nursery will maintain an up-to-date list of appropriate contacts for staff so that they can seek support – the DSL's for the nursery are: **PETER HALLSWORTH (Lead DSL); RUTH DAVISON, and MOIRA HOUSTON.**

### **Parent Helpers**

Parent helpers, volunteers and students are reminded of confidentiality during their induction meeting with the Headteacher, and sign a declaration on the Student and Volunteer Policy to say that any information they learn in nursery will remain confidential at all times.

### **Working with & referrals to Outside Agencies**

Anyone working with pupils from the school needs to be made aware of the school's confidentiality policy.

This school acknowledges and supports the differences between the role of any non-school staff as educators, and as providers of information and support to pupils. The boundaries between these roles will be clarified and agreed prior to involvement.

## **Commitment**

South Normanton Nursery School recognises the importance of protecting the personal data we are entrusted with, and our Data Protection Policy sets out how we comply with relevant legislation. This states that we will:

- treat other people's information in the same way that we would want our own personal information treated
- safeguard all personal information whether in hard copy or computerised
- collect and use personal information with care
- endeavour to keep accurate information
- inform parents why such information is collected
- provide parental access to their child's information
- not divulge any personal details of children, or staff, without their prior permission, unless any information received, gives rise to concern about the safety or well being of a child
- not disclose information over the phone, unless we are sure of whom we are talking to, and that they have a right to ask
- only keep information as long as it is required
- deal with subject access requests from parents/outside agencies as laid out in our Data Protection Policy

## **Breaches of confidentiality**

Any breaches of confidentiality will be treated as a serious matter, and will be dealt with as such.

## **Policy Development & Review**

Where necessary, this policy will be reviewed after each significant disclosure to ensure that the policy and procedures work appropriately.

This policy will be reviewed annually, in line with other policy documents.

## **Communicating the policy**

The policy will be communicated to all school staff and Governors **upon induction** and will be freely available to parents/carers, partner agencies and relevant visitors via the nursery's website. (Freedom of Information Act 2000).

## **Policy Links**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

*Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*

*Behaviour Policy*

*Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy*

*Staff code of conduct*

*Staff key information booklet*  
*Student and Volunteer Policy*  
*Managing Allegations Against Staff*  
*Data Protection Policy*