

Bredenbury Primary School

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

March 2013

Signed and dated:
Chair of Governors
Headteacher

AIM

The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this policy. At Bredenbury Primary School we seek to implement the underlying principles of safeguarding in its wider sense, and to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality. All persons involved will be given clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles, and we will strive to ensure good practice throughout the school, which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff. The school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is a high expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality.

The Employers Code of Conduct forms the basis of for the following policy.

DEFINITION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality means:

A strict principle of privacy that allows for information to be shared only amongst certain specified individuals. Having confidentiality may allow people to express things that they would otherwise keep to themselves.

Amended in:	November 2012
Consultation with governors on:	27.02.2013
Confirmed by staff on:	5.03.2013
Ratified by governors on:	12.6.2013
To be reviewed by staff in:	September 2016
To be reviewed by governors in:	September 2016
The Committee responsible for maintaining, monitoring and evaluating this policy is:	The Finance, Pay & Staffing

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RATIONALE

Bredenbury Primary School seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. We are 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 erodes trust. The School is active in promoting a positive ethos and respect for the individual.

A large volume of data is generated in schools by gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs categories - individual children or staff should not be able to be identified.

OBJECTIVES:

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, governors, volunteers, students, parents 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 parents and carers.
- To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that if there are child protection 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 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.

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GUIDELINES

1. All information about individual children is private, and should only be shared with staff that has 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 has appointed two Child Protection Officers who receive regular training.
4. There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents and all staff have regular training on child protection issues.
5. There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
6. Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the schools discipline policy.
7. 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.
8. 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 their family about concerns. In some cases staff support the children to do so.
9. Parents/carers and children should feel reassured that only in exceptional circumstances will confidentiality be broken.
10. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
11. The school has appointed two senior members of staff as Child Protection Officers. Child protection procedures are made clear to all staff. All staff are given training at least every three years, in order to ensure the required training for their role.
12. 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.

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- 13.** 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
- 14.** Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing in 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.
- 15.** 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 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.
- 16.** All personal information about children including social services records should be regarded as confidential. 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/files and once read should be returned for secure filing.
- 17.** In all other notes, briefing sheets etc. a child should not be able to be identified.
- 18.** Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.
- 19.** 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 treated as confidential. These confidential papers should be destroyed after use.
- 20.** Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the Governing Body or the Headteacher, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.
- 21.** Governors will sign a confidentiality agreement annually.
- 22.** Although decisions reached at Governors' meetings are normally made public through minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Staff and governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body. No matter

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discussed during a governor meeting should be openly discussed by either staff or governors until the Headteacher releases the information by circulation of minutes. The contents of these minutes will remain confidential within the school until released to the parents and general public by the Headteacher. Staff and governors should not discuss any such matter with anyone unless given express permission to do so by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

- 23.**Staff should exercise prudence and consider the dignity of individuals during conversations on the school site, for example in the staff room, particularly if non-members of staff are present and in the presence of children.
- 24.**All staff will be expected to sign a Confidentiality Policy Agreement at the beginning of each Academic Year. Non-members of staff, for example, students and voluntary helpers, will be asked to follow the principles of the confidentiality policy and sign a confidentiality agreement. Appendices for agreements are attached (Governors, Volunteers, Students / work experience).
- 25.**Where discussions are held with an individual that might result in disciplinary or capability measures, the matter must not be discussed with any person other than the Headteacher. To do so would be deemed a disciplinary issue in itself as it has the potential to undermine any independent investigation that might be held in the future.
- 26.**Staff should be aware that making comments on social networking and other internet sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) can potentially lead to disciplinary action, if a breach of confidentiality is made.

SAFEGUARDING

Bredenbury Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

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STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

A clear, explicit and well publicised confidentiality policy ensures good practice throughout the school which staff can easily understand. The school needs to be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities e.g. Child Protection procedures.

Sometimes parents/carers and families may wish to disclose information confidentially to the school. The school needs to be clear about its position. It is important for the school to share information so that pupils can be safe, healthy, enjoy life and reach their potential but we need to do this in a way which meets our legal requirements and is understood by the school community.

This policy will be signed by all members of staff at the beginning of each academic year.

_____ Print name

_____ Signature of member of staff

_____ Position held within school

_____ Date

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GOVERNOR CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Thank you for volunteering to be a Governor of this school. Your help and support in this role is greatly appreciated. In this role you are supporting the life of this school. This role carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters.

By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold our Bredenbury Primary School's Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil / staff information with anyone other than those who are directly involved.

Examples of confidential information are:

- Information about staff and pupils.
- Information about actions of the Governing Body that are not published in Governing Body minutes.
- Information accessed by 'privilege' e.g. notices on the staff noticeboard.
- Information about future school plans / actions than have not been disclosed to parents.
- I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private.
- I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in termination of my membership of the Governing Body.

_____ PRINT NAME

_____ Signature of Governor

_____ Date

_____ Signature of school representative

_____ Date

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VOLUNTARY HELPER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Thank you for volunteering to be a helper at this school. Your help and support in this role is greatly appreciated. In this role you are supporting the life of this school. This role carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters. By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Bredenbury Primary School's Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil / staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are:

- Information about staff and pupils and events that occur in school. For example, a parent who knows you are a helper at the school may ask you how their child is getting on (e.g. academically / behaviour). To prevent any misunderstanding, it would be better to advise the parent to speak to the class teacher.
- Information accessed by 'privilege' e.g. notices on staff noticeboard / conversations.

If you see something in school that concerns you, please discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in me no longer being required to be a volunteer helper.

_____ PRINT NAME of Helper

_____ Signature of Helper

_____ Date

_____ Signature of school representative

_____ Date

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STUDENT/WORK EXPERIENCE CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Please read the school's Confidentiality Policy.

This work placement/experience carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters. By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Bredenbury Primary School's Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil / staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are:

- Information about staff, pupils and events that occur in school.
- Information accessed by 'privilege' e.g. notices on staff noticeboard/conversations.

If you see something in school that concerns you, please discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

You must never use information about individual children outside the school without parental permission (photographs / names).

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in me no longer being allowed to continue my placement.

_____ PRINT NAME

_____ Signature of Student/Helper

_____ Date

_____ Signature of school representative

_____ Date