

Confidentiality Policy



Cam Everlands Primary School

"We believe, achieve and celebrate"

Approved by:	Governing body	Date: January 2026
---------------------	----------------	---------------------------

Last reviewed on:	January 2023
--------------------------	--------------

Next review due by:	January 2029
----------------------------	--------------

Contents

Contents.....	2
1. Introduction	2
2. Confidentiality Statement	2
3. Aim	2
4. Objectives	3
5. Implementation	3
6. Role of governors	5
7. Monitoring and Evaluation	5
8. Links to other policies	5

1. Introduction

We aim to protect all children at all times and to give all staff clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and responsibilities and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by children, parents/carers and staff.

We put the child at the heart of the learning process and 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 our responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information.

Sharing information inappropriately, or unnecessarily, is an erosion of trust.

We are mindful that staff are 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.

2. Confidentiality Statement

Conversations between adults at break and lunchtimes are often about school, individual children and their families and such conversations must be regarded as confidential. Similarly, the work, progress and behaviour of individual children is a matter of fact for the teacher, the child and the parents of the child. Any comments made by about a child, or an incident at school may be misinterpreted and lead to misunderstandings. Small incidents are dealt with in school and should end there. More serious incidents will be discussed, in confidence, with parents.

Confidentiality also refers to protecting the information that is held about the pupils in this school and their families. Parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child, but not to those of any other child they do not have parental responsibility for. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time, especially at parents' evening.

All staff endeavour to maintain confidentiality when appropriate, for example by considering any conversations about pupils and their families, the purpose of these conversations and where these take place. All volunteer helpers at the school will be made aware of this through the Induction Process.

Everyone must be clear about the need for confidentiality on any such school matters. Volunteer helpers in school are all asked to respect confidentiality on such matters to avoid misunderstandings and upset.

3. Aim

Our aim is to set out guidelines for responding to situations when staff and helpers are working with children on personal, social and health education programmes, or in the teaching of any sensitive

or controversial issue, when it is possible that some children will want to discuss information that is of a personal nature, or may sometimes make disclosures about risky or illegal behaviour.

4. Objectives

Our objectives are to:

- ensure that staff, parents and pupils understand what will happen if these situations occur
- define 'confidentiality' and ensure that staff, pupils and parents understand what is meant by 'confidentiality' at our school
- explain the implications of this for application within the school
- ensure that staff consider the issue of confidentiality when discussing the children in their care and incidents that may have happened in school

5. Implementation

5.1 Confidentiality – Sharing Information

In a confidential relationship there is openness and agreement about what will happen to information disclosed between two, or more, people. It may not have to take the form of total secrecy. In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is possible and, in many cases, only limited confidentiality can be offered. The boundaries of confidentiality must be made clear at the beginning of the conversation.

If it is felt that there is a possibility of children being harmed or put in danger, the necessity to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is responsible for child protection within the school will be explained. If confidentiality has to be broken, the child must be informed first and reasons given. The child must be reassured that confidential information will only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis and only in their own best interests.

If a member of the school community receives information where they believe there is a child protection issue, they should refer the case to the DSL.

Where any information is shared with another professional, in the interests of the child, then a record of the information and with whom it was shared will be kept securely in school.

5.2 Confidentiality and Pupils

The school prides itself on good communication and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern – whatever they might be. The school encourages children to confide in parents/carers and may in some cases support the children in this.

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 and information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.

Confidentiality is a whole school issue and staff are aware that classroom work, such as MyHappyMind or PSHE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex, relationships and drugs, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. If a child did begin to talk about something personal and sensitive, teaching staff would protect them from sharing such information with the group, and later encourage the child to talk about their issue in private and advise and support them accordingly.

However, 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 would share

with parents any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities, except where this was not in the best interests and safety of the child. The school has appointed a senior member of staff as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents and all staff have regular training on child protection issues. Please refer to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for more detail on this.

All information about individual children is private and will only be shared with those staff that have a need to know. All social services, medical and personal information about a child, including Special Education Needs paperwork, will be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff. Professionals visiting the school, such as school nurses, counsellors or advisors, for example, are bound by professional codes of conduct which uphold confidentiality, but in classroom situations will work within the school policy. More information on this is available in the school's Data Protection and GDPR policy.

Parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child, but not to those of any other child they do not have parental responsibility for. 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 leave. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

5.3 Confidentiality and Staff

All staff can expect that their personal situations and health will remain confidential, unless it impinges on their terms of contract or endangers pupils or other members of staff.

Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Performance Management targets for individuals, named lesson visit records and other performance data will be securely stored online or, if they need to be printed, in the Head teacher's office. A copy will also be held by the person to whom the information pertains.

5.4 Confidentiality and Governors

Governors need to be mindful that confidential issues, about staff and children and their families, may be discussed or brought to their attention. Any sensitive correspondence should be clearly marked as 'confidential' and minuted separately. Once read, these confidential papers should be destroyed, or returned to the Chair for secure filing.

Governors serving on committees where sensitive or contentious issues about staff, children or families are discussed, should not share this information with the wider body of governors, particularly as, in the case of an Appeal or Complaint, a group of governors without any prior knowledge of the case would need to convene to hear details of it and form an unbiased opinion.

Governors must observe complete confidentiality in dealing with issues concerning individual staff, pupils and families and whenever they have been asked to do so by the governing body. They should not share information with their family members and, with this in mind, care should be taken when making phone calls and using email.

Any governor known to have committed a breach of confidentiality may be asked to stand down.

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, and names of individuals need not be mentioned. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body, being careful not to appear to give opinions on behalf of the Governing Body.

5.5 Confidentiality and Visitors

A 'Visitor' in this context is any person who works in school either in a paid or a voluntary capacity, for example, parent readers or music tutors. In some instances, a visitor may become privy to personal information regarding pupils, parents and staff that is of a sensitive or confidential nature.

All regular visitors to school receive Safeguarding advice through an induction as well as in an information leaflet. This advice makes it explicit that any personal information they may come across should remain confidential and not be shared outside of school. It also gives clear guidance about what to do in the event of 'disclosure' by a child and that in these circumstances they do not guarantee confidentiality to the child and who they should speak to in these circumstances.

Parents in school working as volunteers in the office, classrooms, or as part of the School Association will not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents. This allows the teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy and on occasions to allow children to put the matter right without the direct involvement of their parents.

6. Role of governors

Governors will make sure that:

- all staff and volunteer helpers working at school are made aware of the contents of this policy and the implications of it for everyday practice
- this policy is made available to the public
- all external agencies working in school to deliver elements of PSHE will be made aware of this policy and its contents by the teacher of that group. When working with the whole class or groups of children, their practice will be covered by this policy. When working with individual children or families, they will be bound by their own professional code of conduct

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis through consideration of the following:

- number of incidents reported
- levels of confidentiality
- informal feedback from staff and parents

8. Links to other policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection and GDPR
- Whistleblowing
- Online Safety