

Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy

Applies to:

- the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), before and after school activities, and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), students on placement, the proprietor and volunteers working in the school.

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the School website www.pattisons.co.uk, and on request, a copy may be obtained from the Office.

To meet the needs of all the children in our care it is important to share information with parents and with one another in order to support the child's development. It may also be necessary in some circumstances for the nursery to seek the help and advice from outside professionals. If this action is taken the parent's permission will first be sought.

Information may be shared without parental consent with the relevant child protection agencies should concerns arise about a child's safety or well-being - see safeguarding policy. Guidance available in the Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (DfE, 2015)

Any information and knowledge concerning children, parents, staff or the school will be on a need to know basis and will be kept confidential. Staff, volunteers and students on placement will not discuss individual children other than purposes of curriculum planning/group management, with people other than parents/carers of that child. Information given by parents/carers to the staff will not be passed on to other adults without permission.

All members of staff will agree to respect the school's confidentiality policy and will sign a copy of this document to indicate their agreement.

Students attending the setting will be advised of our confidentiality policy.

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.

The Principal will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than two years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Mrs E McConnell
Principal and Proprietor

Date: September 2016

Our work with children and their families will bring us into contact with confidential information which will only be used to enhance the welfare of the children. Parents have a right to know and be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information and we will be open and honest and explain to families how, when and why the information will be shared about them and with whom. It is a requirement for the school to hold information about the children, families and the staff working at the school. There are record keeping systems in place that meet legal requirements and means of storing and sharing information in line with the Data Protection guidelines. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their families. To ensure that all those using Pattison College can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:

- Confidential records are stored in a locked filing cabinet.
- Written permission is obtained in the parent pack to hold personal details on children and staff.
- Written consent is sought from parents before information is shared with external agencies unless a child is considered at risk when our safeguarding policy will be followed.
- Parents have access to files and records of their own children but not to those of any other child, except where a safeguarding concern prevents this.
- All staff are aware that personal information given by parents is confidential and only for use within the school. Information will be communicated to colleagues within the school on a need to know basis.
- If parents share information about themselves with other parents as well as staff we cannot be held responsible if information is shared by those parents whom the person has 'confided' in.
- Staff, student and volunteer inductions include an awareness of the importance of confidentiality
- Decisions about staff employment remain confidential to those directly involved in the process
- If staff breach this policy this may result in disciplinary action including dismissal

Records

Parents will have access to the files and records for their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.

Records are kept for the purpose of maintaining our business. These include health and safety records, development plans, financial records, contractual documentation, and employment records of staff, students and volunteers.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Developmental records – My Learning Journal – These records include observations of children in the EYFS, photographs, samples of children's work and summary developmental reports. These records are kept in the school office and can be accessed by staff, children and the child's parents during the day.

The Whole School

Personal records - These include registration and consent forms, an on-going record of any relevant contact with parents, correspondence concerning the child or family from other agencies, observations by staff on any confidential matter such as developmental or safeguarding concerns. These are stored in a lockable cabinet inside the school office, which is locked at night. Parents have access to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child. We also keep records relating to the child's educational progress in reception and Key Stages 1 to 4 inclusive.

Access to records

Parents may request access to any confidential records held on their child and family following the procedure below:

- Request to see the child's personal file by a parent must be made to the Principal.
- If third parties request information about a child, permission will be sought from the child's parents before any information is given.

Information sharing procedures

Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will be shared with appropriate staff. It will only be shared with others when it is felt necessary (safeguarding the child). Only

those staff that 'need to know' will be informed. The staff concerned share the responsibility of keeping this information confidential.

Information Sharing Advice (DfE 2015) provides a framework to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately. The circumstances in which information can be shared are explained to parents at registration and parents sign a consent form. We are obliged to share confidential information without authorisation from the person who provided it or whom it relates to if it is in the public interest. This is to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have happened or to prevent harm to a child or adult, or not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

The decision is made by the Principal, who is the designated safeguarding officer for the whole school, in consultation with the appropriate deputy designated safeguarding officers as well as Mrs McCaughley & Miss Connor. The criteria are as follows:

- where there is evidence that the child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm;
- where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm;
- to prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime;

Information shared must be accurate and up to date, necessary for the purpose it is being shared for, shared only with those who need to know and shared securely. We will record decisions made and the reasons why information will be shared and to whom. Our safeguarding policy sets out how and where information should be recorded.

Working in partnership with other agencies

We work in partnership with local and national agencies to promote the well-being of children.

- When working in partnership with staff from other agencies, we make those individuals welcome in the setting and their professional roles are respected.
- We follow protocols for working with agencies, for example with regard to safeguarding
- Information shared by other agencies with us is regarded as third party information. This is also kept in confidence and not shared without consent from that agency.
- Staff from other agencies do not have unsupervised access to the child they are visiting in the school and do not have any access to any other children during their visit.
- We may consult with local and national agencies for advice and information to help us develop understanding of issues and signpost us for support.