

## **Confidentiality Policy**

*"A prudent man conceals knowledge." Proverbs 12:23*

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies which ensure that all members of the school community at Crookham CE (Aided) Infant School are clear about the levels of confidentiality they can offer to others and expect themselves. It is underpinned by our commitment to our values of Love God, Love Others, Love Learning.

### **Introduction and Aims**

Crookham CE Aided Infant School is committed to protecting children at all times in a safe and secure learning environment. We expect all members of our school community to uphold the highest professional standards in matters of confidentiality, recognizing our responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information appropriately in fulfilling our legal, professional and voluntary roles. This policy therefore applies to:

- Employees of the school
- Governors
- Visitors to the school
- Parents and other volunteers
- Depending on their contractual agreements, staff from external agencies delivering services on the school site

### **Provision**

#### **Confidentiality and pupils - All school staff**

There are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it to their parents/carers. This can feel stressful to the child and impact their health and education. We encourage children to share their experiences and difficulties in a supportive environment, always being mindful of the following:

- When talking to pupils we are kind, supportive and at all times maintain professional boundaries.
- We make it clear to the child that we cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- We encourage children to talk to parents/carers when this is appropriate and provide support to enable this to happen.
- We encourage children to talk to other professionals when appropriate and offer support to enable this to happen.

If a child confides information where there is the risk of a Child Protection/Safeguarding issue (the child is a child in need or at risk of significant harm) the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Headteacher) is informed immediately and the school's Safeguarding policy is followed.

## **Confidentiality and the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)**

It can be helpful for children to talk over troubling issues with an ELSA. The detail of these discussions is generally kept confidential between the child and the ELSA unless there is a Child Protection issue or other significant risk to the child's health, well-being and education. Information about general themes covered in the programme may be shared with parents or other professionals if it is in the best interests of the child to do so.

## **Confidentiality and School Nurse/school based health services:**

The requirement to offer a confidential service is within the professional Code of Practice for school nurses and other health service staff. Health professionals like everyone else must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead where there is a Child Protection/Safeguarding concern.

## **Confidentiality and parents/carers/families**

Sometimes there may be family issues which affect a pupil and which the family will only disclose to the school if they are certain the information will be treated confidentially. We respect the wishes of the family. Where it is felt necessary to share the information given to us, this is discussed with the parents/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding Child Protection or Safeguarding concern.

## **Confidentiality and Staff/Governors**

Staff/Governors can expect their personal situations and health to remain confidential unless:

- it impinges on their terms of contract or relates to matters covered by the staff code of conduct
- it endangers pupils or other members of staff/Governors
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information
- it is necessary for legal proceedings
- despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

## **Data Protection**

The school will ensure that it is compliant with current legislation regarding data protection, currently the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation and the 2000 Freedom of Information Act.

## **Volunteers**

All volunteers at the school are required to sign a *Volunteer Agreement* which ensures that all volunteers are clear about the levels of confidentiality expected.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The effectiveness of this policy is reviewed bi-annually by the *Governing Body*. It is accessible to all members of the school community through:

- the school website
- applicant and induction information for staff and volunteers
- posters, leaflets or agreements with other agencies working on the school site
- through assemblies and the work of the school council
- articles in the newsletter

## **The role of parents**

We recognize the role of parents as primary educators. We encourage all our parents to work in close partnership with the school in matters of confidentiality as in all aspects of their child's education.

## **Guidance and Support**

This policy has been written following consultation with current statutory and Local Authority Guidance including:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* September 2021 and updated 31 May 2022 for 1 September 2022
- *Working together to safeguard children* updated 1 July 2022
- *Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners* updated 4 July 2018 from GOV.UK