



Reviewed on:	February 2020
Next Review:	February 2022
Staff Responsibility	Head Teacher
Governor responsibility	FGB
Signed by Chair	

Confidentiality Policy

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils and staff by ensuring that:

- The school's attitude to confidentiality is clearly understood
- The boundaries of confidentiality are clearly defined
- The consequences of breaking confidentiality are documented

Guidelines

Staff at the school make decisions regarding confidentiality on a regular basis. The appropriate sharing of information is an important part of ensuring the wellbeing of pupils. There will be occasions when complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; such as child protection issues. Staff at the school will strive to build an ethos of trust within the school community.

The following points are guidelines on confidentiality, it is by no means an exhaustive list and the final decision on any matter will rest with the Head Teacher for staff and the Chair of Governors or Governing Body. Parents, students and volunteers working in school are deemed to be staff for the purposes of confidentiality.

Confidentiality concerning children

- Staff will not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings to any person without a direct professional connection to and/or interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.
- Staff will not enter into detailed discussions about a particular child's circumstances or behaviour with other children or with parents/carers other than those directly responsible for the child.
- Staff will not email any confidential items unless using a secured system.
- If any members of staff wish to raise a confidential concern please use a 'Disclosure form' from the staff room and pass to the Head or Deputy Head.
- Matters of child protection will be made known to staff on a 'need to know' basis only.
- It is important that class teachers and support staff are made aware of some confidential matters in order to support some individual pupils. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.
- Inclusion. Where it is deemed that discussing an individual case with a class or a group will support the inclusion of that child, permission will be sought from the child (where appropriate) and the parents/carers of that child before any such discussions take place.
- Any parents or volunteers (including 'Friends of Barton' members) working in any part of the school will not report any incidents, for example poor behaviour, to any other parents. This allows the teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy or, in some cases, allows the child to put the matter right without parental involvement.
- Any parents, students or volunteers working in classrooms should not discuss matters outside of the classroom. If concerns need to be raised they should discuss matters with the Head Teacher.

- At Governing Body meetings no child should be individually named. If it is likely that an individual pupil could be identified or they need to be named then the Head Teacher will request that this section of the minutes be confidential. Confidential minutes are not made public like other minutes. Governors will be expected to keep this confidentiality within the Governing Body and no discussion should take place outside of the meeting room. Please see the [Governors Code of Conduct](#).

Confidentiality concerning staff and governors

- Governors sitting on Disciplinary or Appeal Panels, including at other schools, will maintain complete confidentiality on any matters discussed and will not divulge or discuss any details with any other person outside of the meeting.
- Governors who are involved with staff pay discussions will maintain complete confidentiality about those discussions. Staff governors will be expected to withdraw from that part of the meeting which discusses the pay of another staff member. The Head Teacher may remain for discussion of pay matters except theirs at the discretion of the Pay Committee.
- Staff and Governors will not communicate any school information over public networking sites (e.g. Facebook). Information will only be published via the school's own sites and accounts. Please see the [E-safety Policy](#).
- Staff will respect the confidentiality of other staff members and not place comments or pictures on social media or in any other format that could harm the reputation of any staff member and by association, the school.
- Staff Performance Management will be carried out privately. All data will be held securely in the Head Teacher's office and a copy will be given only to the staff member concerned.

Transgression of Guidelines

Where inappropriate disclosure of confidential matters is thought to have occurred it will be investigated by the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors.

If the matter is deemed to require action then the Head Teacher will follow procedures laid out in the [Staff Disciplinary Procedures Policy](#).

The Chair of Governors will report any findings regarding inappropriate disclosure by a governor to the Governing Body and any measures taken will follow the procedures set out in the [Governors Handbook](#).

If a volunteer is found to have made an inappropriate disclosure the Head Teacher may terminate the voluntary arrangement as set out in the [Volunteers, Students and Agencies in School Policy](#).

Please also see the [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies and related policies](#). Copies are available in the staffroom and on the school website.