



Windsor Park CE Middle School

Learning for Life
“Teach me good judgement and knowledge”
Psalm 119:66

Confidentiality Policy

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Respect & Resilience & Responsibility

OUR VISION

Learning for Life

*"Teach me good judgement and knowledge"
Psalm 119:66*

As an inclusive Church of England school, who aim to provide transformational experiences for all God's children within our care, the teachings of Jesus are at the heart of all we do. Whilst striving for excellence, we celebrate achievement in all its forms encouraging pupils and staff to live life in all its glory and flourish.

OUR MISSION

1. Encourage all children irrespective of background or ability to fulfil their God-given potential and flourish. Our broad and balanced curriculum takes a holistic approach to education ensuring that spirituality, emotional intelligence, physical development, academic excellence and social skills are developed creatively across a range of school subjects.
2. Deliver a safe space for children to develop philosophical and theological thinking through Religious Education as a core subject; delivering inspirational lessons which bestow upon pupils the skills to understand Christianity as a living and diverse faith, whilst teaching a knowledge and respect of other faiths and world views.
3. Value education is its widest sense; building on our history and Christian foundations, making the most of today in order that we can make even more of tomorrow and the days, weeks, months and years that lie ahead. This is Learning for Life: 'teach me good judgement and knowledge' Psalm 119:66
4. Foster respect for all God's children; embracing difference and diversity and teaching all to live well together in an inclusive, welcoming community, supporting each other to remove or cross barriers and live with dignity and respect.
5. Reinforce the Christian values and beliefs that will make our children good people: kind, honest, forgiving and courageous.
6. Care deeply about our pupils' and staff wellbeing and mental health, appreciating that it is the genuine quality of relationships that matter. We strive to support each other to flourish, achieving happiness and fulfilment.
7. Encourage our pupils to approach local and global communities with a deep sense of integrity, justice, responsibility and courageous advocacy; identifying and challenging injustice.
8. Collaborate primarily with St Mary the Virgin church to share the teachings of Jesus through inspirational collective worship. Develop, deliver and evaluate opportunities for pupils and adults to express spirituality through varied worship experiences.
9. Encourage and nurture exploration, creativity and compassion with unlimited and unbounded energy. At Windsor Park learning is not a spectator sport.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Windsor Park aims to protect children attending the school at all times and to give all staff involved clean, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles. It will also strive to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.
- 1.2 Windsor Park seeks to put children at the heart of the learning process and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. It seeks to implement the underlying principles of the Every Child Matters agenda and to address the issues which may arise about confidentiality. We are committed to developing ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.
- 1.3 Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust.
- 1.4 The school is mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in manner of confidentiality.
- 1.5 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that 'the wishes of a young person must be taken in account when considering their best interests'.
- 1.6 Children at Windsor Park span the age range of 9-13 years. When considering making a judgment about their best interests, the member of staff should also take into account the age and maturity of the student and subsequently, their ability to make an informed decision about their life.

2. THE SCHOOL

- 2.1 The principles of confidentiality rest upon:
 - Providing consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
 - Fostering an ethos of trust within the school.
 - Ensuring that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures
 - Reassuring pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
 - Encouraging children to talk to their parents and carers.
 - Ensuring that pupils and parent/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
 - Ensuring that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed
 - Ensuring that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all
 - Understanding that health professionals are bound by a different code of conduct.
 - Ensuring that parents have a right to access to any reports that school may hold on their child by not to any other children for whom they do not have parental responsibility.
- 2.2 The school's aims identify us as a community which develops a positive atmosphere in which young people learn to value themselves, each other and the world in which they live. As such:
 - Every child has a right to be treated with respect and dignity, as do the adults who work with them. They have a right to privacy, a safe environment and, where appropriate, should be consulted and given the opportunity to express their views about decisions which may affect their lives.
 - We recognise that without these rights, pupils may be unable or unwilling to talk about things which are frightening, worrying or hurting them and that confidentiality is fundamental to them feeling respected and safe.
 - At all times we aim to adopt a non-judgemental approach in our work with them.
 - We recognise that the duty of confidentiality owed to a person under the age of 16 is as great as the duty owed to any other person. We believe that all children are entitled to request a confidential meeting with any adult employed by the school.

Respect & Resilience & Responsibility

- Staff do not have to agree to such a request but should bear in mind that the children may not feel comfortable talking to any other adult at that particular time and that they may have been chosen as a confidante for a particular reason.
- Children must be made aware that staff cannot offer or guarantee unconditional confidentiality. This includes any information relating to a Child Protection issue or which places doubt about a person's health and safety.

3. STAFF

- 3.1 The school has appointed a senior lead teacher for child protection and a deputy officer, who receive regular training. All staff receive regular updates on child protection. There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. With regards to the disclosure of information, the policy is always to seek the consent of the child wherever possible and to discuss with them the exact course of action to be taken. However, the child will be informed that even without their consent, the member staff has a duty to refer information where necessary. Whenever a member of staff feels it may be necessary to breach confidentiality, this should first be discussed with the Child Protection Lead Teacher.
- 3.2 There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse (see policy on allegations against staff policy).
- 3.3 There is a programme for relationship and sex education (RSE), which bring an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship and can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
- 3.4 Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about difference types of families in a sensitive manner.
- 3.5 Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture, disability or sexuality are unacceptable and follow-up action will adhere to the school's behaviour policy.
- 3.6 Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. Photographs of children are not used without parent/carers permissions.
- 3.7 Staff cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
- 3.8 The school has an excellent and rapid system for communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both children and parent/carers about issues that are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may, in some cases, support the child(ren) to talk to their parents. The school may share with parent a child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities.
- 3.9 Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other Learning for Life (L4L) sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex & relationships and drugs. Strategies are in place and all children are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures.
- 3.10 Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings are kept in a secure place.
- 3.11 Logs of the administration of medication to children are kept secure.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Teachers are not obliged to pass on all information about children to their parents. Staff should seek advice from the CP teacher or Headteacher as to whether or not parents need to be informed about an issue. Where a member of staff believes the pupil to be at moral or physical risk, or in breach of the law, they must ensure that the pupil is aware of the risks and encourage them to seek support from their parents/carers.

5. PARENTS

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- 5.1 Parent/carers and children should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
- 5.2 Parents are entitled to have a confidential discussion with a member of staff regarding concerns about their child and the child does not have to be informed that this is taking place. In keeping with our policy however, the parents should be encouraged to talk to their child about their concerns.
- 5.3 During any discussion, staff are not able to offer unconditional confidentiality to parents and if they are informed during the course of the discussion of some behaviour of the parents (or of anyone else), which is likely to cause harm to their child or to other young persons, the member of staff must follow the school's child protection procedures. If there is a concern regarding neglect or emotional abuse of the child, the policy is for them to discuss their concerns with the CP teacher or Headteacher in the first instance.
- 5.4 Information about children will be shared with parents, but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's book, marks and progress grades. However, parents will be made aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.

6. REQUESTS FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

- 6.1 The Data Protection Act 2018 requires that personal information is 'obtained and processed fairly and lawfully; is only disclosed in appropriate circumstances; is accurate, relevant, not held longer than necessary and is kept securely.' There may be occasions when a request for confidential information regarding a particular child is made, from an individual, an agency or an organisation. The usual course of action would be to seek advice from the CP teacher or Headteacher before any information is shared.
- 6.2 Where information is released, this should usually be in the form of a written report, limited to relevant information only. Where possible the report should be shared with the student, except where doing so may compromise the safety and welfare of the student.
- 6.3 If a student leaves for another school, the Child Protection file and any other confidential documentation, which may not necessarily be of a child protection nature, should be sent directly to the CP lead at the new school. Verbal contact should take place between the Headteacher at Windsor Park and the new CP lead prior to this happening.

7. GOVERNORS

- 7.1 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 identified as confidential and should be copied onto different coloured paper. These confidential papers should be collected in and destroyed after the meeting. Suitable minute, respecting confidentiality, should be made of such meetings.
- 7.2 Governors must observe confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. Although decisions reached at governors meeting are normally made public through the minutes, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arise outside the governing body.

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KEEPING, DISCLOSURE AND TRANSFER OF EDUCATIONAL PUPIL RECORDS

The Education Act 1996 Chapter 56 states that all schools are responsible for:

The keeping, disclosure and transfer of educational records about persons receiving education at schools to which this section applies; and

The supply of copies of such records to such personal, and in such circumstances, as may be determined by or under regulations.

For information: A pupils' educational file should contain the following:

- Copies of all reports and records on pupil's achievements
- Any document relation to interventions around behaviour and/or attendance concerns
- Exchange of letters between parents and school
- Any information that the school has regarding pupil's education from the Local Authority
- Any change in educational provision, ie: college, etc.
- Any medical conditions/medication required, etc.
- Other information regarding family background/history, etc. may be included by this is not compulsory

A child protection file may also be held on a child with clean cross referencing details on the child's main school file. Where there are Child Protection concerns and the child moves school/provision, the outgoing school's Designated Child Protection teacher must discuss the child with the Designated Child Protection teacher at the pupil's new school/provision.

Use of the S2S website and Common Transfer File (CTF) process and notified by the LA database teacher should apply in all pupil transfers. The DfE School to School (S2S) website is used by schools to transfer pupil data electronically. It is a statutory requirement for schools to transfer pupil data electronically rather than using paper. The S2S website is now accessed through the DfE Secure Access Portal.

<https://www.schoolbusinessservices.co.uk/school-business-video-tutorials> These instructions cover creating and uploading a CTF, and downloading and importing a CTF. These are the instructions you would use for a standard data transfer to or from a named school.

<https://www.schoolbusinessservices.co.uk/school-business-video-tutorials> These instructions should be used to create a CTF for a leaver who is moving abroad, going to an independent school, or choosing to be home educated.

If a pupil is admitted to school outside normal transition times, details are given to the School Nurse. This is in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children where agencies should communicate with each other.

There is also a facility for secure messaging on the S2S website. This is similar to e-mail, but personal details of children can be included in any messages.

Schools can use this website:

- to request a Common Transfer File from a school
- to confirm a child is at the school before sending a CTF themselves
- to confirm receipt of a CTF

The majority of these documents are now held electronically using the SIMS database.