

# Confidentiality Policy



| Date           | Details of policy updates                                                 |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 2020 |                                                                           |
| May 2021       | Policy reviewed – change of wording from Governors to Trust Interim Board |
| September 2021 | Policy reviewed by Helen Willcox – no changes                             |
| June 2023      | Policy Reviewed by Ruth Lee                                               |

| Review Date | Version number | Reviewer/Owner<br>(post holder)                  | Approved by<br>(Committee) | Signature |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| May 2021    | 4              | Helen Willcox<br>Designated<br>Safeguarding Lead |                            |           |
| Sept 2021   | 4              | Helen Willcox<br>DSL                             |                            |           |
| June 2023   |                | Ruth Lee<br>Head Teacher                         |                            |           |
|             |                |                                                  |                            |           |

## **1. The Park Academy Trust Introduction**

The Trust intends and expects that all decisions around the use of Trust resources will be underpinned at all times by its vision and values:

Our aim:

- To create centres of educational excellence that inspire all pupils to turn their potential into performance
- To achieve this our schools will:
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that allows pupils to develop their talents and ambitions
- Deliver the highest quality learning opportunities facilitated by excellent teachers
- Inspire our pupils to become confident, motivated and respectful individuals ready to make a positive contribution to society

The Trust will support our schools by:

- Maximising the resources and expertise available to individual schools
- Providing a platform for the sharing of excellent practice
- Challenging and developing staff to turn their potential into performance

***The welfare and safeguarding of our children is paramount in all we do at Orchid Vale Primary School.***

**1. Aim**

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

**2. Rationale**

Orchid Vale Primary School puts children at the heart of the learning process and provides a safe and secure learning environment. It is committed to developing creative and positive ways for the child's voice to be heard whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. 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 all matters of confidentiality.

**3. Objectives**

- 3.1 To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- 3.2 To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- 3.3 To ensure that staff, parents and children are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures.
- 3.4 To reassure children that their best interests will be maintained.
- 3.5 To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
- 3.6 To ensure that children and parents know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- 3.7 To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
- 3.8 To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed as outlined in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- 3.9 To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that, in lessons, ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- 3.10 To understand that health professionals are bound by a different code of conduct.
- 3.11 To ensure that parents have a right of access to all records held on their own child(ren), except those relating to child protection issues

#### **4. Guidelines**

- 4.1 All information about individual children is private and only shared with those staff that have a need to know.
- 4.2 All social services, medical and personal information about a child is held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
- 4.3 There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection issues. (See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).
- 4.4 There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse. (See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).
- 4.5 Staff are aware that effective SRE which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
- 4.6 Staff are aware of the need to handle family issues in a sensitive and confidential manner, only sharing with other staff on a need-to-know basis.
- 4.7 Parents/carers and children are aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
- 4.8 Orchid Vale prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. We encourage children to discuss issues with their parents/carers that are causing them concern and may, in some cases, support the child in doing so. Where appropriate, child protection disclosures are shared with parents/carers as well as the correct authorities.
- 4.9 Parents/carers and children are reassured that only in exceptional circumstances is confidentiality broken
- 4.10 All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns, special educational needs, sexuality or any other protected characteristic.
- 4.11 Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules are set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationships and drugs.
- 4.12 Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff are aware of children with medical needs and a class information sheet is accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.
- 4.13 Photographs of children are not used without parents/carers permission. This permission is sought when a child first enters the school.
- 4.14 Information about individual children is only shared with their parents/carers. Parents/carers do not have access to any other child's books or information about their progress at any time.
- 4.15 Parents are aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. All personal information about children, including social services records, is regarded as confidential. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports are forwarded to the appropriate professionals in sealed envelopes and securely filed. Logs of administration of medication to children are kept secure and each child has their own

individual log. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children are not passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

4.16 The Local Advisory Board are mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff or children. All such papers are marked as confidential and destroyed after the meeting. The Local Advisory Board observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parents. Although decisions reached at Local Advisory Board meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based are regarded as confidential. Local Advisory Board members exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the Local Advisory Board.

## **5. Conclusion**

Orchid Vale Primary School has a duty of care and responsibility towards children, parents/carers and staff. It also needs to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

### **Links to Other Policies**

Safeguarding and child protection policy

Online Safety Policy

Acceptable Use Policy

Use of ICT Policy

Medical Needs Policy

Intimate Care Policy