

Confidentiality Policy & Procedures

Date ratified: Oct 2018

Period: Oct 18- Oct 20

Head of Centre Signature: Lynsay Falkingham

Chair of Governors Signature: Kathy East

Extended Services: Joss King

Review Date: Oct 2020

Aim

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

Rationale

- Lanterns Nursery School & Extended Services seeks to put the child 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.
- Lanterns is committed to valuing the rights of the child whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust.
- Lanterns 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.

Objectives:

1. To provide consistent messages in the centre about handling information about children once it has been received.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
3. To ensure that all stakeholders (staff, families, visitors) are aware of the centre's confidentiality, policy and procedures.
4. To reassure children that their best interest will be maintained.
5. To encourage children to talk to their parents/carers.
6. To ensure that children and parents/carers and other stakeholders know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.

7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
8. To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed.
9. To ensure that parents are informed of their rights of access to records through the fair processing procedures.

Guidelines

1. All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff who have a need to know.
2. All social care, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than centre staff.
3. The centre continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
 - a) The Head of Centre is responsible for child protection and receives regular training. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for all staff with updates by the DSL as necessary, including on induction.
 - b) In the absence of the Head of Centre the staff report to the deputy DSL (See Child Protection Policy).
 - c) There is clear guidance for procedures for the handling of child protection incidents.
 - d) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of inappropriate conduct. (see Child Protection policy)
 - e) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
 - f) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the centre discipline policy.
 - g) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another without prior permission from the person concerned.
4. Parents/carers need to be aware that regarding child protection the **centre cannot guarantee total confidentiality and that the Centre has a duty to report child protection issues.**
5. The centre prides itself on good communication with parents and carers. Staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. The centre staff would facilitate children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents.
6. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns or special educational needs.
7. Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules are in place for keeping any information concerning children.
8. Health professionals have their own code of practice when dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and this

information should be accessible to staff who need general information but not on view to other parents/carers and children.

9. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission especially in the press and on the internet. At no time should a child's name be used with a photograph so that they can be identified. Any parent/visitor should seek permission before taking any photographs in the Centre. (see Photography Policy & Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy)
10. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. In the case of absent parents we ensure both parents receive information according to parental responsibility .However parents should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school. All personal information about children including social care records should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who access it.
11. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes and reports will be circulated to a senior member of the nursery teams and once read should be returned for secure filing. The member of staff has a duty to share on a need to know basis with practitioners working closely with the child concerned.
Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log.
12. Social network sites must not be used to exchange confidential information about the centre, either directly by name or implication, including information about children/ staff/ /parents/ governors/ organisation and procedures. (for further information please see acceptable use of ICT Policy, Code of Practice.
13. In all other notes, briefing sheets etc a child should not be able to be identified. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents will not be passed on.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The policy will be reviewed as part of the school's monitoring cycle every two years.
2. The Head teacher has a responsibility for monitoring this policy on behalf of the Governors.

Lanterns 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 in accordance with the document 'Safeguarding practioners information sharing advice 2018'. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

Procedures for Staff

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that all personal and sensitive information concerning individuals should be kept safely. Confidential information includes:

- * Any information that has a child's address/telephone number on it
- * Reports/letters with information concerning a child/family
- * Memos/notes with information concerning a child/family

In order to ensure we are keeping information safely the following should be adhered to by all Centre staff:

The Purple SEN Files & Green Family Support Folders

These files should not be taken off site

Laptops

Sensitive information should not be kept on the hard drive. Laptops should be locked in the car boot whilst in transit and then kept in a safe place at home.

Memory sticks

Word documents containing children's reports or any sensitive information should be password protected on a memory stick. The information should be deleted at the end of the academic year.

Reports/memos/notes

Reports should not be left lying around in the classrooms or on view

Personal folders

Information kept in staff personal folders/files should be kept safely both in the Centre and at home. If carrying the folder in a car it should be left in a locked boot. In public the use of a locked bag should be considered.

Reception desk

If leaving a report or personal information in reception make sure admin staff are aware of what is being left. If admin staff have left at the end of the day ensure information is put out of sight safely & inform a member of the admin team the following day.

Staff Office

Information should not be left lying on the desks. Any information to go into staff trays should be put in a folder or face down.

Information sharing

Confidential information about children or families should not be shared outside the Centre including on social networking sites.

Social network sites must not be used to exchange information about the centre, either directly by name or implication, including information about children/ staff/ /parents/ governors/ organisation and procedures.

Be aware that students/volunteers/visitors may be able to overhear confidential information about children or families.

Never give out personal information about a child or family without first checking that it is appropriate to do so.

The only exception is if the information concerns child protection when procedures set out in the Centre's Safeguarding policy should be followed.

Letters

Always ensure personal letters to parents, in a named envelope, are given to the correct person.

Emails

Ensure that initials of a child and/ or parent are used in the title of an email and not their full name.