

<b>POLICY TITLE</b>	<b>Confidentiality Policy</b>
<b>Policy Area</b>	Safeguarding
<b>Author</b>	DS
<b>Relevant Statutory Regulations</b>	Keeping children safe in education (DfE, 2021) Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
<b>Senior Team Lead</b>	Head of School
<b>Version</b>	2022.1
<b>Last Updated</b>	June 2023
<b>Review Date</b>	June 2024
<b>Reviewed by</b>	Sarah Thorne



### **Aim of Policy**

The best interests of the children are at the heart of all the activities in The London Acorn School (TLAS). It is our aim to protect children at all times, 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/guardians and staff.

In addition, we are 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.

### **Objectives of Policy**

1. To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
2. To further foster our ethos of trust within the school community.
3. To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school'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 and carers.
6. To ensure that children/parents know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
7. To ensure that if there are child protection issues the correct procedure is followed.
8. 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.

### **Guidelines**

1. All information about individual children is private and only shared with those staff on a 'need to know' basis.
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 and only on a need to have



access.



3. The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
  - There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have training on child protection issues.
  - There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
  - Staff are aware of the need to handle family issues (e.g. same sex parents) in a sensitive manner.
  - Any intolerance about gender, faith, race culture or sexuality is unacceptable and is sanctioned in line with TLAS behaviour policy.
  
4. Parents/guardians and children are aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and the school has a duty to report child protection issues.
  
5. TLAS's prides itself on good communication with parents, guardians and staff are always available to talk to children, parents/guardians about issues that are causing concern. We encourage children to discuss issues with their parents/ guardians that are causing them concern and may, in some cases, support the child in doing so. If appropriate, child protection disclosures are shared with parents/guardians as well as the correct authorities.
  
6. Parents/guardians and children are reassured that only in exceptional circumstances is confidentiality broken.
  
7. All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A lot of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children are not identified.
  
8. TLAS has appointed senior members of staff as Child Protection Lead Teachers. Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken at least every three years for all staff.
  
9. Photographs of children are not used without parents/guardians permission.
  
10. 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.



11. TLAS Directors and Governors are mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. Directors and Governors are asked to sign a confidentiality agreement and observe complete confidentiality on all sensitive information handled, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parents. Although decisions reached at Directors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based are regarded as confidential. Directors and Governors exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussing potentially contentious issues.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of TLAS's monitoring cycle.
- The Head of School and Safeguarding Lead have responsibility for monitoring this policy.