

St Mary and St Margaret's CE (Aided) Primary School



**Confidentiality Policy
February 2022**

Confidentiality Policy

School Values

Our Statement of School Values sets the ethos in which this policy is grounded:

“We believe that St Mary and St Margaret’s CE Primary School exists to enable every child to realise his or her potential to the fullest possible extent, whatever his or her particular needs and abilities.”

To this end we promote our agreed Values:

- Growing as a child of God.
- Loving learning.
- Caring.
- Achieving.
- Personal development.

Links with other policies and duties

This policy supports the duty upon schools and governing bodies, as laid down by the 2006 Education and Inspections Act, to promote the wellbeing of pupils.

The policy clearly links with the following policies in our school:

Relationships and Sex Education

Drug Education and the Managing Substance Related Incidents Policy

Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding

Links with the curriculum

At St Mary & St Margaret’s we understand that issues within the curriculum, particularly in Personal and Social Development, can be sensitive for children and for adults. It is therefore important that children have opportunity to talk with trusted adults. Whilst we do encourage our children to talk with their parents and families, we also give them opportunities to access a range of trusted adults who can support them whilst actively creating an emotionally safe environment for talking and for learning. We see this as laying the foundations to enable them to confidently access help and support as they grow older.

What confidentiality means in our school

Accessing help and support is often dependent upon a clear understanding of confidentiality. In our school, children understand that no adult can guarantee confidentiality if that adult is worried about their safety. This applies to the full range of adults working within our school and touching the lives of our children. However, where other professionals working 1:1 with a child work to their own professional codes of conduct e.g. school nurse, this must be made clear to that child from the outset. Adults within our school community need clarity of understanding about this.

At St Mary & St Margaret's, in line with our values (particularly around trust and respect) confidentiality means:

- We do provide a range of supportive opportunities for children to talk.
- As adults, we only talk in a professional manner about children and their families.
- All adults in school are bound by these principles. Where other professionals work to their own codes of practice, confidentiality must be clearly explained to pupils from the outset.
- If an adult is worried about a child's safety and needs to discuss this with another adult, the child would (where appropriate) be informed first and supported.
- All safeguarding issues e.g. sexual abuse, or any potential safeguarding issues, are always referred to the designated member of staff for Child Protection. At St Mary and St Margaret's that is the head teacher.
- All staff are aware that whilst they have duties to keep information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children; this may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate. All staff are aware they cannot promise confidentiality in situations which might compromise a child's safety or wellbeing.

What confidentiality looks like in our school

We place great importance upon a physically and emotionally safe and secure environment within which our children can learn effectively. Certain curriculum lessons (e.g. PSHE, RSE, RE) enable all of our children to be involved in discussing issues; these may in some instances emerge through suggestion/question boxes. Circle time/PSHE ground rules underpin the securing and maintenance of a safe learning environment. All classes should discuss confidentiality and what this means in circle time/PSHE and this should be continually reinforced. Confidentiality should be explicitly reflected in the ground rules that are negotiated with classes. Learning and teaching strategies used within the curriculum, and specifically in PSHE, include lots of opportunities to depersonalise issues e.g. through use of puppets, story characters. Children can be given opportunities to think carefully about what they are saying when sharing personal issues and, instead, to speak in the third person.

We encourage our children to talk to a range of trusted adults, in and out of school, including their families. We actively promote safe places and people to go to for help and support e.g. staff in school, Child and Family Mentors, family members, Childline etc.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or before if necessary.

Signed:

Date approved by governors:

Review date: