



Townlands C of E Primary Academy

Confidentiality Policy

Approved by: Rachael Johnson (Chair of Governors)

Date: January 2025

Next review due by: January 2028

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Introduction

At Townlands, we aim to protect the child at all times and to give all stakeholders involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the Academy which is understood by Staff, Pupils, Volunteers, Students, Work Experience, Parents/Carers, Governors, and Visitors to Academy.

The Academy respects everyone's right to privacy; great care and due consideration is taken over decisions to break confidentiality.

We aim to ensure that confidentiality and data protection compliance are a natural part of good practice.

Rationale

Townlands holds a lot of confidential information about children, staff and sometimes parents and carers. Whilst it is important that we continue to develop positive ways to use that information, we all recognise that it is our responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.

Townlands 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. Our obligation is to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK GDPR and other legislation and statutory guidance underpins our management of data.

Principles

Townlands seeks to put the child at the heart of the learning process and to provide 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 Academy 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 at Townlands when handling pupil information.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the Academy.
3. To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the Academy's confidentiality policy and procedures.
4. To ensure that pupils best interests will be maintained.
5. To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that Academy staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
6. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
7. To ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed in accordance with our safeguarding / child protection policy.
8. To ensure that confidentiality is a whole Academy issue and that in lessons 'rules' are set for the protection of all.

9. To understand that health professionals who visit the Academy could be bound by different codes of conduct.
10. To ensure that parents/carers have a right of access to records the Academy may hold on their child but not regarding any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for.

Guidelines for staff, volunteers, governors and visitors

1. All information about individual pupils is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a pupil should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than Academy staff.
3. The Academy continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
4. The Academy has appointed Designated Senior Leads for child protection who receive regular training. Parents/carers and children need to be aware that the Academy cannot guarantee total confidentiality, and the Academy has a duty to report child protection issues.
5. There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents, and all staff have regular training on child protection issues.
6. There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of abuse.
7. Staff are aware that effective sex and relationship education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.
8. Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
9. Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow the Academy's Disciplinary Policy.
10. The Academy prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both pupils and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. The Academy encourages pupils to talk to their parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the child to talk to their parent/carer.
11. Health professionals have their own code of practice when dealing with confidentiality.
12. Photographs of children should not be used without parents/carers permission. At no time should the pupil's name be used with a photograph so that the pupil could be identified. The Academy gives clear guidance to parents about the use of cameras and videos during public Academy events.
13. Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress data at any time.
14. Data /CPOMs information about their child will be shared with the receiving Academy when there is a change of school.
15. Logs of administration of medication to pupils should be kept secure and each pupil should have their own individual log.
16. From time-to-time issues may be discussed/brought to the attention of Governors about staff and children. All such papers will be treated as confidential. Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence if there are discussions of potentially contentious issues which arise outside the governing body.

External Visitors

Visitors are reminded that any general information that they may hear, read or observe whilst being at the Academy should not be discussed with anyone else outside of the Academy, such as children's data, comments, behaviour etc. All visitors should treat all matters related to Academy with complete confidentiality. It is unacceptable to discuss matters relating to Townlands outside of Academy under any circumstances. If a visitor breaks this confidentiality, then he/she will not be permitted to work at Townlands in the future.

If a visitor is told by a child or overhears a child protection issue, then absolute confidentiality is required, and they must only discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Links to Other Policies

Parent Code of Conduct

Staff Code of Conduct

Staff Handbook

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Disciplinary Policy

PSHE/RSE Policy

Volunteer Policy



Appendix 1

Governor/Trustee Confidentiality Agreement

Thank you for volunteering to be a Governor at Townlands.

Your help and support in this role is greatly appreciated. In this role you are supporting the life of this school. This role carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about the academy in all matters.

By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Townlands Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil, parent or staff information with anyone other than those who are directly involved.

Examples of confidential information are (but not limited to):

- information about staff, parents and pupils
- information about actions of the governing body that are not published in governing body minutes
- information accessed by 'privilege' e.g. notices on staff noticeboard
- information about future school plans or actions that have not been disclosed to parents

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in termination of my membership from the governing body.

If I breach confidentiality, I understand that I may be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and could face external sanctions.

Name of governor/trustee	
Signature of governor/trustee	
Date	
School representative	
Signature of school representative	
Date	



Appendix 2

Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

Thank you for volunteering to be a volunteer at Townlands.

Your help and support in this role is greatly appreciated. In this role you are supporting the life of this school. This role carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters.

By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Townlands Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil or staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are (but are not limited to):

- information about staff, parents, pupils, and events that occur in school
- for example, a parent/carer who knows you are a volunteer at the school may ask you how their child is getting on (e.g. academically/behaviour). To prevent any misunderstanding, it would be better to advise the parent/carer to speak to the class teacher
- information accessed by 'privilege' e.g. notices on staff noticeboard /conversations
- if you see something in school that concerns you, please discuss the matter with the headteacher

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in me no longer being required to be a volunteer.

If I breach confidentiality, I understand that I may be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and could face external sanctions.

Name of volunteer	
Signature of volunteer	
Date	
School representative	
Signature of school representative	
Date	



Appendix 3

Student work placement/experience Confidentiality Agreement

Please read Townlands Confidentiality Policy.

This work placement/experience carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about Townlands in all matters.

By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Townlands Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil, parent or staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are (but are not limited to):

- information about staff, parents and pupils, and events that occur in school
- information accessed by 'privilege' e.g. notices on staff noticeboard/conversations
- if you see something in school that concerns you, please discuss the matter with the headteacher
- you must never use information about individual children outside the school without parental permission (photographs/names)

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in me no longer being able to complete my placement as a student and that this breach may be reported to those who arranged the placement or my course leader.

If I breach confidentiality, I understand that I may be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and could face external sanctions.

Name of student	
Signature of student	
Date	
School representative	
Signature of school representative	
Date	