



# Confidentiality Policy

2024 - 2026



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## Introduction

Waterton Academy Trust is committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of its pupils, staff, and community. This confidentiality policy outlines the principles and procedures to be followed by all staff, including temporary, voluntary, and agency staff, governors, trustees, volunteers, visitors on work experience placements, and parent helpers/PTA members.

## Aims

- To provide clear guidance to all members of Waterton Academy Trust regarding confidentiality.
- To encourage students to seek help from trusted adults when necessary.
- To give staff confidence in handling sensitive issues appropriately.
- To build trust within the school community.
- To ensure that confidentiality is maintained while safeguarding the welfare of pupils and staff.

## Key Principles

### Trust and Privacy

- Staff and volunteers must respect the privacy of pupils and colleagues and should not disclose personal information without consent, except in cases where disclosure is necessary to safeguard the welfare of an individual.
- Confidential matters, including staff performance and pupil behaviour, are to be discussed only with those who have a professional need to know.

### Disclosure Handling

- Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained and informed if confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- Staff must report any personal disclosures from pupils to the designated safeguarding officer. Further discussions, if necessary, will be conducted by the safeguarding officer and relevant staff before the end of the school day.

### Information Sharing:

- Information sharing is vital for identifying and addressing all forms of abuse and neglect. Staff should be proactive in sharing information with local agencies to safeguard children.
- Personal data should be processed and shared in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, ensuring that information is secure and shared only when necessary.

## Guidelines

### General Conduct:

Staff should not discuss individual cases in staff meetings or with persons outside the professional context.

Parents working as volunteers must not report cases of poor behaviour to other parents, allowing teachers to manage these issues appropriately.

### **Classroom and One-to-One Settings:**

Ground rules should be established in lessons to handle sensitive issues. Personal disclosures should not be encouraged in the classroom setting.

Staff must inform pupils that they cannot guarantee complete confidentiality if a pupil discloses information indicating they are at risk.

### **Health Professionals:**

Health professionals are bound by their professional codes and the school's policies. They must negotiate ground rules and use distancing techniques to maintain confidentiality in classroom settings.

### **Child Protection:**

Any concerns regarding a child's safety must be reported to the designated safeguarding officer immediately. Staff should follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, ensuring that necessary interventions are accessed promptly.

## **Limits of Confidentiality**

Absolute confidentiality is rare and cannot be guaranteed in cases where the safety or welfare of a pupil is at risk. Staff must exercise professional judgment to determine whether to maintain or break confidentiality, prioritizing the protection of the pupil.

## **Informing Parents/Carers**

The school fosters a partnership of trust with parents/carers and aims to inform them of their child's progress and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to share personal matters with their parents/carers, unless there is a child protection risk.

## **Data Protection**

All personal data must be processed in line with the Trust's Information Governance Policy, ensuring information is kept safe and secure. Staff should understand the legal framework governing data sharing and be confident in the conditions that allow for the sharing of sensitive personal data.

## **Policy Review**


This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Trust.

## **Dissemination**

The policy will be made available to all staff and parents via the school website and other appropriate channels.

## **Additional References:**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

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