



Confidentiality Policy

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Staff responsible for review:	Emily Sidhu
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Introduction and Aims

Key members of staff: Headteacher – Joe Creswick

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Emily Sidhu

Business Manager – Hannah Doran

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Agreed by Joe Creswick

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Data Protection policy, the Safeguarding policy and the Whistleblowing policy.

Note: Children include everyone under the age of 18. At Ivel Valley, our young people may stay in our college provision until they are 19 years of age. Due to their vulnerability, this policy will continue to be used until they leave Ivel Valley. When we refer to ‘children’ and ‘school’ in this policy, we also cover ‘young adults’ and ‘college’. This policy also applies to pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stages (EYFS).

The purpose of this policy

WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: WHY IS CONFIDENTIALITY IMPORTANT?

Ivel Valley seeks to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all the children and young adults who attend our school and college. We are committed to developing creative and positive ways for the pupils’ voices to be heard, whilst recognising the responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received. Sharing information unnecessarily is an erosion of trust. We are placed in a position of trust by the whole Ivel Valley community and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality. Confidentiality is a whole school issue, and we all need to understand these important messages.

Roles and Responsibilities

WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: WHAT ARE OUR KEY MESSAGES?

All pupils have a right to the same level of confidentiality, irrespective of gender, race, age, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs or disabilities. All personal information about children should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it. It should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.



Pupils might want to share confidential information about themselves with others. It is important that the appropriateness of this is considered based on assessment of the nature of the information, who they are sharing it with, and where they are sharing it. Staff support might need to be given to help them consider their actions; this can be discussed with the safeguarding team if needed.

Staff must also be incredibly mindful about discussing information about pupils in front of other pupils – this is not appropriate to do. We do need to be proactive with information sharing, so pupils feel supported, but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known, it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further; in particular, child protection information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Staff must not share personal details about pupils with others who do not need to know, especially outside of the school setting.

Using images of pupils can be a sensitive issue for a number of reasons, including:

- Some children must not have their image put online for legal reasons.
- Some people do not want their images online for personal or religious reasons.
- Some children and staff may have a complex family background which means that sharing their image online can have unforeseen consequences.

We seek permission from families to use photos and videos of pupils in a number of different scenarios; it is vital that staff are aware of these permissions and follow them accurately, especially in the press and internet. If any events are held with parents/carers present who might take photographs, they must be reminded that photos and videos should only be taken for personal use, and must not be distributed or put online. It is important that this policy is considered alongside our Data Protection policy, as this gives advice on storing and sharing information safely, and processes to follow if there is a data breach.

WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: DOES THIS CHANGE WHEN OUR PUPILS BECOME ADULTS?

It is important that we continue to maintain our expectations of confidentiality and that we follow this policy when our pupils become adults.

An important part of Preparing for Adulthood is helping all pupils to advocate for themselves, and to make decisions about their lives. Where appropriate, young adults should be supported to be part of information sharing. If a young adult does not give consent to information being shared, but staff feel it is important, a Mental Capacity assessment might need to be considered. Support from the relevant local authority might need to be sought.



WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: HOW DO WE SHARE INFORMATION WITH PROFESSIONALS?

All social care, medical and personal information about a pupil will be held in safe and secure places which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.

We use CPOMS to securely record information from social care, and details of significant interactions with families and professionals.

Information from health professionals are stored in individual pupil files on our Google Drive. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality.

Significant information is shared between Ivel Valley and relevant health professionals, as per the safeguarding policy. Staff should be aware of pupils with medical needs in order to support them appropriately and safely.

Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and each child should have their own individual log. These will be shared with the nursing team as appropriate.

Therapists have their own safeguarding policy, but they also adhere to the Ivel Valley safeguarding policy. They maintain confidentiality within their sessions, unless there is a need to share information for safeguarding purposes.

WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: HOW DO WE SHARE INFORMATION WITH OR ABOUT PARENTS/CARERS?

At Ivel Valley, we work hard to maintain good communication with parents/carers, using a combination of Class Dojo, ParentMail, telephone call, emails and face-to-face meetings.

Staff are always available to talk to both pupils and parents/carers about any issues that are causing concern. Parents/carers and pupils need to be aware that the school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and that we have a duty to report child protection issues.

Where appropriate, we share with parents/carers any child protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities, but confidentiality might be broken in exceptional circumstances. Information about pupils will be shared with parents/carers, but only about their child. Parents/carers should not have access to any other child's work or data at any time. If a pupil changes school, parents/carers should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents/carers and pupils will not be passed on, except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

Generally, we will share information with the people with Parental Responsibility for our pupils. There are some situations where this is not straightforward, or it is a little more sensitive. It is



important that our Designated Safeguarding Lead is made aware of these circumstances, and that this is shared with the class team.

WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: HOW DO GOVERNORS MANAGE CONFIDENTIALITY?

Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. 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/carers.

Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.

WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF: HOW DOES IVEL VALLEY PROMOTE A CULTURE OF RESPECT?

Confidentiality is a whole school issue. To support this, we continue to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:

- There is clear guidance for the handling of safeguarding and child protection incidents. All staff have regular training and updates on safeguarding;
- We have a trained safeguarding team, a Family Support team for school-aged pupils, and a Preparing for Adulthood team for college-aged students;
- There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is alleged to have acted inappropriately;
- Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner;
- Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable; o Teachers are aware that clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work dealing with sensitive issues such as relationships and sex.

Links with other policies

Equalities and Inclusion

Safeguarding Implications

Ivel Valley has a duty of care and responsibility towards all pupils, parents/carers and staff. We need to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. We



must be very mindful of the way that we share information about pupils, especially outside of school. If someone is ever unsure whether they should share information, they should always start by considering the best interests of the pupil. The care and safety of the individual needs to drive any decisions about confidentiality.