

West Exmoor Federation



Confidentiality Policy

Reviewed March 2026

West Exmoor Federation Confidentiality Policy (based on DCC Policy)

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Human Rights Act 1998

Gives everyone the right to 'respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence'; unless this is overridden: by the pupil interest, for reasons of child protection; for the protection of public safety, pupil order, health or morals; or for the rights and freedoms of others.

Data Protection Act 1998

Applies to persona; data of living, identified viable individuals, not anonymised data: manual and electronic records. The federation will be clear, when collecting data, of the purposes it will be used and the federation has policies to clarify this to staff, pupils and parents.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Amends the Data Protection Act. Gives everyone the right to request any records a public body, including schools, holds about them. A school may withhold information it has if it is considered the information may damage the recipient, if disclosed. The federation's Data Protection Policy covers the requirements of the act.

Children's Act 2004

The children's Act 2004 sets out the following objectives under the Every Child Matters Agenda:

- Children and Young People are mentally and emotionally healthy;
- Children and Young People are sexually healthy;
- Children and Young People choose not to take illegal drugs;
- Children and Young People are safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation;
- Children and Young People have security, stability and are cared for.

AIMS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

- To provide clear guidance to all members of the federation community around confidentiality.
- To encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems.
- To ensure all adults working in the federation deal confidently with sensitive issues.

This confidentiality Policy impacts upon every other federation policy.

MORAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

The moral and values framework within which confidentiality is addressed should be consistent with the overarching aims of the federation and should be easily translated into practice in terms of:

- The curriculum content;
- The teaching methods;
- The relationships within our schools and across the federation.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The West Exmoor Federation is committed towards equal opportunities in all aspects of school life.

SECIFIC ISSUES

All Adults Working In Our Schools:

- Implement the Child Protection Policy;
- Encourage children to talk with their parents/carers;
- Keep anything seen or heard within school confidential to the federation;
- Who have a concern about a child, but do not feel they know the child's circumstances well enough to make a judgement about procedure should, at an appropriately place and time, discuss their concerns with the child's class teacher who will have greater knowledge of the child;
- Should adhere to and enforce the federation procedures for the taking of and use of drugs;
- Should only take photographs and film footage for school use;
- Will not give a child's personal details out over the telephone until the validity of the request has been ascertained via a returned call;

- Should never given unconditional confidentiality;
- If an adult receives external information that leads them to believe there is a child protection issue, they should refer the information to the child protection co-ordinator;
- No adult should discuss an individual child's behaviour in the presence of another child;
- No adult should enter into detailed discussion about a particular child's behaviour or academic progress with the other children or their parents.

Governors Meetings

- Governors, in particular those sitting on discipline committees, will not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to any person outside the meeting.
- Governors need to be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such papers should be marked confidential. These confidential papers should be destroyed. Governors must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children or parent/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 confidential.

Information About Children

- Information about children will be shared with parents/carers but only about their child. Parents/Carers will not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress statistics at any time, especially at parents evening. However, parents/carers should be aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school, if and when they change school.
- All personal information about children including social services records are regarded as confidential. The Executive Headteacher will decide who will have access and whether those concerned have access to all, or only selected information.
- Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEND reports, minutes of meetings, social care and health services will be shared before being securely filed away in accordance with our SEND provision.

In The Classroom

- Ground rules and distancing techniques will be used where sensitive issues are to be addressed e.g. Drugs Education, Relationships and Sex Education.
- Adults should not put pressure on children to disclose personal information and should discourage other children from applying any such pressure.
- All adults will remind children that some information they share in the classroom may need to be shared with other adults for their protection.
- Children will be reassured that, if information has to be shared, they will be informed first and then supported appropriately.
- If a child and his/her parent/carer wish to highlight an issue to a peer group then this will be carried out sensitively by the classteacher/executive headteacher/listener e.g. bereavement.

DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

All staff members, governors and adults working in the school (including voluntary helpers) will receive a copy of this policy. A copy will be kept in the Policy file for parents to read on request. A copy of the policy will be available on the school website.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The child protection co-ordinator will monitor the effectiveness of the policy throughout the year in consultation with the governor with responsibility for child protection.