



# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

Where every child is special

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Policy compiled by:

Headteacher

Last reviewed:

February 2018

Review Date:

February 2021

The  
**CHILD**



The whole  
**CHILD**

Nothing but  
the **CHILD**

### OUR SHARED VISION

*Every child* at St Thomas of Canterbury is special and will achieve their full potential academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally through the provision of a loving community and rich and varied learning opportunities and the highest quality teaching and learning.

*Every staff member* at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to provide the opportunities that we want for our children and to do so as part of a loving community which has the highest expectations of and for all.

*Every Governor* at St Thomas of Canterbury will feel valued and enabled to act as a critical friend to the School and to be accountable for the School's strategy. They will play a visible role supporting all children, their parents and staff at School and in the wider community, to provide the best environment possible for learning and spiritual growth.

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*God's love is at the heart of our Catholic School family.*

*We show this in our respect, kindness and love for others and by treating other people as we wish to be treated ourselves.*

*We will encourage everyone to be the best that we can be.*

### OUR AIMS

- To guide our children to grow in the love of God and build relationships that will enable them to make a positive contribution to the school and society.
- To develop an exciting, challenging and creative curriculum that produces confident and successful learners who are the best that they can be.
- To develop high quality learning that enables every child to flourish, to discover their talents and be lifelong learners.
- To establish a teaching and learning environment that encourages everyone to enjoy, to achieve, to be inclusive, to be healthy, and to stay safe.
- To nurture a strong partnership between home and school.



- To have respect and understanding for our school, our community and our world, helping our children to become responsible citizens and good role models.

## **OUR GOLDEN RULE**

We treat others as we would like to be treated

### **Aim of this Policy:**

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

### **Rationale:**

- St Thomas of Canterbury School 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 school 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:**

- To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received.
- To foster an ethos of trust within the school.
- To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality, policy and procedures.
- To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained.
- To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers.
- To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs.
- To ensure that correct procedures are followed in the case of any child protection issues.
- To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all.
- To understand that health professionals are bound by different code of conduct.
- To ensure that parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to any other child for whom they do not have parental responsibility.

### **Guidelines**

- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with those staff that have a need to know.
- There is an expectation that all information shared will be treated with professional sensitivity.
- All social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff.
- The school continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual.
- The school has appointed Designated Safeguarding Leads from its senior Leadership and they receive regular training.
- There is clear guidance for the handling of child protection incidents. All staff have regular training on child protection issues and weekly updates.



- 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.
- 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 and should follow the schools behaviour and discipline policy.
- Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.

The school prides itself on good communication with parents and carers and staff are always available to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. The school encourages children to talk to parents/carers about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the children to talk to their parents.

All children have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs. A significant amount of data is generated in schools by these categories but individual children should not be able to be identified.

Child protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every year for all staff (see Child Protection Policy).

Confidentiality is a whole school issue. Clear ground rules must be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PSHE sessions. Strategies are in place and all staff are aware of them for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. The school needs to be proactive so children feel supported and confident that information will not unnecessarily be 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.

Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.

Please see the Photographic Images (Using) Policy for guidance on the use of photographs/ video etc.

Information about children will be shared with parents but only about their child. Parents should not access any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents evening. However parents are made aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school when they change school.

All personal information about children including social services records are regarded as confidential.

Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in envelopes and once read should be returned for secure filing.

Logs of administration of medication to children should be kept secure and shared only with relevant staff as necessary. All confidential records are kept in a secure unit in the Headteacher's office.

All information held on a computer must be securely protected.



On entry into St Thomas of Canterbury, parents are asked for their consent to pass on their addresses and telephone numbers to the PTA. If this consent is withheld, their contact details are deleted from the class lists that the PTA class reps collate.

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 as confidential. These confidential papers should be collected by the Headteacher or his/her representative at the end of the meeting.

Governors are expected to commit to complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the Headteacher or any member of the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents. 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.

When prospective parents approach St Thomas of Canterbury School with a view to moving their child from a local school, the Headteacher retains the right to contact the child's current school to inform them of any visit that has taken place.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

**The policy will be reviewed as part of the school's monitoring cycle.**

The Headteacher, together with the Resources committee have the responsibility for monitoring this policy.

## **Conclusion**

The staff at St Thomas of Canterbury School understand they have a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers and staff. They also understand the need to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

*This policy of St Thomas of Canterbury School upholds the school's ethos and Mission Statement. It must be read in conjunction with and implemented in accordance to the school's policies for Health & Safety Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Safeguarding. Copies of these policies are available from the school website.*