

Vision statement
BRIDGE is a family of schools committed to high performance. We embrace a universal culture of excellence in the learning communities we build.
Aims
To continue building a Multi Academy Trust that promotes strong values, an excellent education for all children, develops highly effective School Teams, is financially secure, and ensures effective governance.
To nurture, support and encourage aspirations by providing excellent learning opportunities, inspiring teaching environments, and a creative approach to curriculum subjects that secures engagement from all our learners resulting in high levels of academic progress and outcomes.
To develop outstanding leadership, teaching and support teams by valuing committed, reflective staff, and providing rigorous and challenging professional development for continual School Improvement.
To develop hubs as centres of learning excellence to disseminate best practice, firstly within and then beyond, the Trust.
To successfully engage and communicate with parents/carers in our local communities, supporting the children's progress, well-being and achievement.

Staff Confidentiality Policy

Purpose
Through the implementation of our Confidentiality Policy we will ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders are protected at all times. • All staff and visitors have clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles. • Good practice is shared and understood by all stakeholders.

September 2021

Policy Version	V1.1	Next Review Date	09/24
-----------------------	-------------	-------------------------	--------------

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Related Legislation:

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 ‘public interest’, e.g. for reasons of Child Protection, for the protection of public safety, public order, health or morals or for the rights and freedoms of others.

Data Protection Act 1998: Applies to: personal data of living, identifiable individuals (not anonymised data); manual and electronic records. Schools need to be clear, when collecting personal data, of the purposes for which it will be used and should have policies to clarify this to staff, children and parents/carers.

Freedom of Information Act 2000: Amends the Data Protection Act. Gives everyone the right to request any record 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. Schools’ data or record keeping policy should also cover the requirements of this Act.

Rationale

We are committed to the provision of a safe and secure learning environment for every child and respect every individual’s and family’s right to privacy whilst ensuring that we offer high quality care and education. All of our staff and visitors are expected to work within the guidelines of this policy which conform to recent legislation and government guidelines.

We recognise our responsibilities relating to holding, using and safeguarding information received. In practice this means:

- Making it clear that information is shared on a ‘need to know’ basis.
- Not discussing personal information relating to any of our stakeholders (i.e. those who are connected with our school and multi-academy trust member schools) in a general way or where it may be overheard.
- Keeping all personal records confidential.
- Using teaching methods which protect confidentiality.

Objectives

Through the implementation of our Confidentiality Policy we will ensure that:

- Stakeholders are protected at all times.
- All staff and visitors have clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles.
- Good practice is shared and understood by all stakeholders.

We will achieve our objectives through:

- Issuing clearly defined procedures.
- Providing consistent messages in our school relating to handling information, once it has been received, providing training where necessary.
- Fostering an ethos of trust within our school.
- Publishing our Confidentiality Policy.

Procedures:

1. All information about individual stakeholders, however obtained (e.g. from personal records/through observation/through meetings/through situations that arise during class, playtime or outside our premises), is private and will only be shared with those who have a need to know (i.e. those who need the information in their professional capacity). Information which relates to any individual stakeholder or brings our school into disrepute will never be posted or shared online, through any means including all areas of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter). Staff, regular visitors and volunteers understand that this is a requirement during and after their time at our school and confirm this through signing a statement of confidentiality (*Appendix B within 'Welcome and Induction Pack'*).
2. Even when information appears to be widely known, it will not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.
3. All social services, medical and personal information will be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than nominated school staff. It will be considered whether the staff concerned have access to all, or only some, of the information.
4. Personal information such as social services reports, speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, minutes of meetings etc. will be circulated, where necessary, in sealed envelopes and once read will be returned to the appropriate person for secure filing.
5. Correspondence to parents/carers relating to social services, medical and personal information will be handed directly to the parent/carer, not via book bags.
6. Confidentiality will be maintained when distributing class information.
7. Logs of administration of medication to children will be kept secure and each child will have their own individual log.
8. An appointed Child Protection Officer receives regular training. Child protection procedures are understood by all staff and training is undertaken regularly.
9. Adults are aware of the procedures relating to allegations against a member of staff.
10. Staff are always available within the working day to talk to both children and parents/carers about issues that are causing concern. We also encourage children to talk to parents/carers about issues and may, in some cases, support children to talk to their parents/carers.
11. Parents/carers and children will be made aware that our school cannot guarantee total confidentiality and we have a duty to report child protection issues. Any child protection disclosure will be shared with parents/carers before we inform the correct authorities unless we believe that this puts the child at greater risk.
12. Data generated by our school will be anonymised where necessary to ensure confidentiality. Information collected for one purpose will not be used for another.
13. Where staff need to take personal data off-site, this will be either be stored on encrypted USB keys or where files are accessed remotely via the server they will be protected by individual login and password details.

14. Clear ground rules will be set for any classroom work such as circle time and other PHSE sessions dealing with sensitive issues such as sex and relationship and drugs. Staff are aware that effective sex and relationships education which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Strategies are in place for dealing with sensitive information which may fall outside the boundaries of child protection procedures. Staff will be proactive so children feel supported but information is not unnecessarily revealed in a public arena.
15. Photographs or video of children will not be used without parents/carers permission and our policy on the use of images of children will be adhered to at all times.
16. We ensure that parents/carers have a right of access to any records the school or children's centre may hold on their child, within legislative requirements. Parents/carers will not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time. Parents/carers will be made aware that information about their child will be shared with the receiving school setting when they change school setting.
17. Only those identified in our MIS as having parental responsibility will be contacted in relation to their child. Should there be any concerns, this will be referred to the CPO before a parent/carer is contacted.
18. Governors will be mindful that from time to time issues are discussed, or will be brought to their attention, about staff and children. All papers will be marked as confidential. These confidential papers will be destroyed after meetings. Governors will observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the Governing Body/Board of Trustees, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, children 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 will be regarded as confidential. Governors should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside Governing Body meetings.
19. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality.
20. All requests for information (about our school or stakeholders) by an outside agency or the media will not be commented on by the person to whom the request was made, but will be referred immediately to the Headteacher and Chief Executive of Bridge Schools.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. This policy will be reviewed by the Trust Board, as part of its monitoring cycle.