



PRIORY SCHOOL
EDGBASTON

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

(STATUTORY)

Trustee Committee:	Risk & Compliance		
Date Approved:	November 2025		
Next of Review:	November 2028		
Member of Staff Responsible:	B Doherty, Headteacher		
Trustee Overseer:	S. Brereton, Chair of the Governing Council		
Intended Audience:	Employees, Volunteers, Parents, Pupils and Visitors		
Relevance:	Whole School	Yes	
Access:	Website	Yes/No	(please delete as necessary)
	Internal	Yes/No	(please delete as necessary)
	Restricted	Yes/No	(please delete as necessary)

Our Mission Statement

Priory School is a thriving, co-educational independent school founded upon a rich Catholic heritage which welcomes those from all faiths and none.

In partnership with parents and guardians we provide a nurturing, family-based ethos, alongside high-standards of teaching and learning, enabling all pupils to achieve their potential.

We embrace diversity and interfaith understanding alongside awareness of environmental and global issues, in response to the needs of our time.

Generic Policy Statement:

The Governors and staff at Priory School are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors, regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional or cultural needs.

The Governors, staff and pupils are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff.

To meet the needs of our school community, all our policies, including this policy, can be made available on different formats such as different font sizes or styles, colour, or alternate languages.

The Governing Council understands it has responsibility for ensuring the effective oversight of this policy and will assess, evaluate and review as necessary.

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1. Introduction

The governors and staff of Priory School are committed to providing a fully accessible environment which values and includes all pupils, staff, parents and visitors regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, spiritual, emotional or cultural needs.

The staff, governors and pupils are committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils and staff.

To meet the needs of our school community all our policies, including this one, can be made available in different formats to help meet your needs such as different font sizes or styles, colour or alternative languages.

2. Principles

At Priory School we believe that:

- The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils are the paramount considerations in all decisions staff make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between staff is an essential element in ensuring our pupils' wellbeing and safety.
- It is an essential part of the ethos of our school that trust is established to enable pupils, staff, and parents to seek help both within and outside the school and minimise the number of situations when personal information is shared to ensure pupils and staff are supported and safe.
- Pupils, parents, and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.
- Limits of confidentiality are necessary to enable staff to make informed decisions about the most appropriate action to take in a given situation.
- The confidentiality principles associated with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) have been adopted by Priory School. These principles are incorporated in the Privacy Notices which have been developed for the various strands of the school community:
 - Parents and carers
 - Staff and Volunteers, including Governing Council Members
 - Pupils
- Summary Privacy Notices are published on the school website. Detailed Privacy Notices are available via headteacher@prioryschool.net.
- For younger children, generally under the age of twelve, the Privacy Notice is addressed to Parents, while the data protection rights of older pupils are set out in a separate notice

3. In practice

Definition of Confidentiality: *Confidentiality is something which is spoken that is of a private nature and entrusted to another.*

The confider is asking for the content of a conversation to be kept secret. In practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is in the best interest of the child, as help from other professionals is likely to be needed for a solution or remedy to be found.

This means that in most cases what is on offer is limited confidentiality. Disclosure of the content of a conversation could be discussed with professional colleagues but not with any other persons.

Staff should make clear to a child that there are limits to confidentiality, at the beginning of the conversation. They should explain that the limits relate to ensuring that child's safety and wellbeing. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason and will be encouraged to do this for themselves whenever this is possible.

Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances.

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(A) In the classroom and in the course of a lesson:

- Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, setting the climate and establishing ground-rules to ensure confidential disclosures are not made or handled sensitively if they occur. It should be made clear to pupils that this is not the time or place to disclose confidential, personal information.
- ***When a health professional is contributing to a school health education programme in a classroom setting, they are working with the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.***
- An example of ground rules for a KS3/4 class:
 - We will not ask each other or the teacher any personal questions
 - We will respect each other and not laugh, tease, or hurt others.
 - We will not say things we want to keep confidential
 - We can ask to pass or opt out if an issue under discussion makes us feel uncomfortable
 - If we do find out things about other pupils, which are personal and private, we will not talk about it outside the lesson
 - If we are worried about someone else's safety, we will tell a teacher

(B) One to one disclosures to members of school staff:

- Staff should encourage pupils to discuss difficult issues with their parents or another professional within the school.
- The needs of the pupil are paramount, and Priory School will not automatically share information about the pupil with their parents unless it is considered to be in the child's best interests.
- Serious concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Senior Person in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

(C) Disclosures to a counsellor, school nurse or health professional operating a confidential service in the school:

- Health professionals such as school nurses can give confidential medical advice to pupils provided, they are competent to do so and follow the Fraser Guidelines (guidelines for doctors and health professionals on giving medical advice to under 16s).
- ***The needs of the pupil are paramount, and the school nurse will not insist that a pupil's parents are informed about any advice or treatment they give.***

The Department of Health has issued guidance (July 2004) which clarifies and confirms that health professionals owe young people under 16 the same duty of care and confidentiality as older people. It sets out principles of good practice in providing contraception and sexual health advice to under 16s. The duty of care and confidentiality applies to all under 16s. Whether a young person is competent to consent to treatment or is in serious danger is judged by the health professional on the circumstances of each individual case, not solely on the age of the patient. However, the younger the child the greater the concern that they may be being abused or exploited. The Guidance makes it clear that health professionals must make time to explore whether there may be coercion or abuse. Cases of concern would be referred through child protection procedures.

(D) Parents and Carers

- Priory School believes that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and we endeavour to keep parents abreast of their child's progress at school, including any concerns about their behaviour. However, we also need to maintain a balance so that our pupils can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a pupil does discuss a difficult personal matter, they will

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be encouraged to also discuss the matter with their parent or carer themselves. Its intention is to promote a safe environment for teaching, reduce anxiety in pupils and staff and minimise ill considered, unintended personal disclosures.

- This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's policies on:
 - PSHEE (Personal, Social and Health Education)
 - Drugs
 - Sex and Relationships
 - Child Protection
 - Anti Bullying

4. Monitoring and Review

This policy is constantly being reviewed to take account of educational initiatives and respond to the future priorities of the school.

This policy will be monitored by the Deputy Head, who will report to the Head on its implementation on a regular basis.