Cornerstone Learning CIC

Confidentiality Policy

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1. Policy Statement

At Cornerstone Learning CIC, we recognise the importance of confidentiality in building trust between pupils, families, and staff. We are committed to protecting personal and sensitive information while ensuring that children's safety and wellbeing remain our highest priority.

Confidentiality will never be used as a reason to withhold information that may place a child at risk of harm. Safeguarding concerns will always be shared with the appropriate agencies in line with statutory requirements.

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2. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Provide a clear framework for how confidentiality is maintained and when it may need to be broken.
- Ensure that staff understand their responsibilities regarding sensitive information.
- Promote trust and transparency with pupils, parents, and professionals.
- Support compliance with safeguarding duties, the Data Protection Act 2018, and GDPR.

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3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, directors, volunteers, contractors, and visitors at Cornerstone Learning CIC. It covers verbal communication, written records, electronic data, and all other forms of personal information.

4. Principles of Confidentiality

- **Respect for privacy**: Information about pupils, families, or staff will only be shared when necessary and with appropriate people.
- **Child-centred practice**: The safety, rights, and needs of the child come first.
- **Transparency**: Pupils and families will be informed about what information is held, why, and who it may be shared with, unless this would put a child at risk.
- **Accountability**: All staff are responsible for handling information securely and professionally.
- **Compliance**: Confidentiality will be managed in line with safeguarding, data protection, and GDPR requirements.

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5. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Directors**: Ensures a clear policy is in place and adhered to.
- **Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team**: Ensures procedures support confidentiality while safeguarding pupils.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**: Decides when it is necessary to share information without consent for safeguarding reasons.
- **Data Protection Officer (DPO)**: Oversees data handling, GDPR compliance, and subject access requests.
- **All Staff**: Must respect confidentiality, follow policy, and seek guidance when unsure.

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6. Confidentiality in Practice

6.1 With Pupils

- Pupils may disclose personal or sensitive information to staff. Staff must listen respectfully and supportively.
- Staff must never promise absolute confidentiality. Pupils should be told sensitively that information may need to be shared to keep them safe.
- Where a safeguarding concern is raised, staff must pass information immediately to the DSL.

6.2 With Parents and Carers

- Staff will respect the privacy of families but will share relevant information to safeguard and support children.
- Parents will be informed when information is shared, unless it would put the child at greater risk.

6.3 With External Agencies

- Information will be shared with external professionals (e.g., social care, police, health, SEN specialists) on a need-to-know basis.
- Consent will be sought where appropriate, but not where a child's safety would be compromised.

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7. Situations Where Confidentiality Cannot Be Maintained

Confidentiality may need to be broken if:

- A child is at risk of significant harm.
- An adult is at risk of serious harm.
- A crime has been or may be committed.
- There is a legal obligation to disclose information.

In such cases, staff must inform the DSL immediately. The DSL will determine the appropriate course of action.

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8. Secure Handling of Information

- Written records must be stored securely in locked cabinets or password-protected systems.
- Digital records must be stored on secure servers with restricted access.
- Staff must not discuss confidential information in public places or via personal devices.
- Emails containing sensitive data must be sent securely (encrypted or via secure portals).

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9. Training and Awareness

- All staff will receive confidentiality and safeguarding training during induction and regular updates.
- The DSL and DPO will provide additional guidance on complex cases.

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10. Review and Updates

This Policy will be reviewed annually or when necessary to ensure it remains in line with best practices and legal requirements.

Acknowledgment

All staff members are required to read, understand, and adhere to this Policy .

By signing below, you confirm that you have read, understood, and agree to comply with the Cornerstone Learning CIC Staff Policy.

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant. Feedback from children, parents, and staff will be considered in the review process.

Quality Assurance

Cornerstone Learning will ensure that systems are in place to monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy and accompanying procedures.

The directors will ensure action is taken to swiftly remedy any identified weaknesses within its procedures.

Policy Dates

Date of Policy Implementation: 4/02/2025
Date of Next Review: 04/02/2026
Approved by: Carina Greening