



Dated: March 2023

Review Date: March 2024

Confidentiality Policy

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers, whilst ensuring that they access high quality early years' care and education in our setting.

Aim:

We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.

We meet the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998 with regard to protecting the individual's rights to a private and family life, home and correspondence. Our only justification to interfering with this right is where we believe that a child may be at risk of significant harm, to prevent a crime or disorder.

We meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 with regard to the information we gather from or about families, how we gather it, store it and use it. Our procedures enable us to meet these requirements.

We have regard to the Common-Law Duty of Confidentiality and only share information with other professionals or agencies on a 'need to know' basis, with consent from parents, or without their consent in specific circumstances to do with safeguarding children.

Personal records:

- These include registration and admissions forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters, incident and accident logs, care plans, behaviour plans etc.
- These confidential records are stored in a lockable file or cabinet and are kept secure by the person in charge in an office or other suitably safe place.
- Parents/Carers have access, in accordance with the access to records procedure, to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other student.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.

Information Sharing:

There are times when we are required to share information about a child or their family. These are when:

- There are concerns a child is or may be suffering significant harm
- The 'reasonable cause to believe' a child is or may be suffering significant harm is not clear
- There are concerns about 'serious harm to adults' (such as domestic violence or other matters affecting the welfare of parents).

We explain to families about our duty to share information for the above reasons. Where we have concerns, we would normally gain consent from families to share. This does not have to be in writing, but we record in the student's file that we have gained verbal consent as a result of discussing a concern that we need to refer to a social care agency.

We do not seek consent from parents/carers to share information where we believe that a student or sometimes a vulnerable adult, may be endangered by seeking to gain consent. For example, where we have cause to believe a parent/carer may try to cover up abuse or threaten a child. Where we take a decision to share information without consent this is recorded in the student's file and the reason for doing so is clearly stated. Where evidence to support our concerns is not clear we may seek advice from our local Social Care agency or the NSPCC. We only share relevant information that is accurate, factual, non-judgemental, and up to date.

Other Records:

Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.

When students on recognised qualifications and training are observing in the setting, they are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

Access to Personal Records:

Parents may request access to any records on their child and family following the procedure below:

- Any request to see the student's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the setting leader or Manager
- The setting leader informs the chairperson of the governing body and sends a written acknowledgement
- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days – although this may be extended.
- The setting leader or Manager and chairperson of the governing body prepare the file for viewing
- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. A copy of these letters is retained on the file
- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records
- It also includes workers from any other agency, including Social Care, the Health Authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter
- A photocopy of the complete file is taken
- The setting leader and chairperson of the governing body go through the file and remove any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file
- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the setting leader, so that it can be explained
- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency. All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the setting, which is to the safety and well-being of the child. Please see also our policy on safeguarding children and child protection.

Manorway Independent School
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY September 2021

STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

A clear, explicit, and well publicised confidentiality policy ensures good practice throughout the school which staff can easily understand. The school needs to be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities e.g., Child Protection procedures. Sometimes parents/carers and families may wish to disclose information confidentially to the school. The school needs to be clear about its position. It is important for the school to share information so that pupils can be safe, healthy, enjoy life and reach their potential but we need to do this in a way which meets our legal requirements and is understood by the school community.

This policy will be signed by all members of staff at the beginning of each academic year.

_____ Print name

_____ Signature of member of staff

_____ Position held within school

_____ Date

Manorway Independent School
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY September 2023

GOVERNOR CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Thank you for volunteering to be a Governor of this school. Your help and support in this role is greatly appreciated. In this role you are supporting the life of this school. This role carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters.

By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold our Manorway Independent School Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil / staff information with anyone other than those who are directly involved.

Examples of confidential information are:

- Information about staff and pupils.
- Information about actions of the Governing Body that are not published in Governing Body minutes.
- Information accessed by 'privilege' e.g., notices on the staff noticeboard.
- Information about future school plans / actions than have not been disclosed to parents.

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private.

I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in termination of my membership of the Governing Body.

_____ Print name

_____ Signature of Governor

_____ Date

_____ Signature of school representative

_____ Date

Manorway Independent School
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY September 2023

VOLUNTARY HELPER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Thank you for volunteering to be a helper at this school. Your help and support in this role is greatly appreciated. In this role you are supporting the life of this school. This role carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters. By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Manorway Independent School's Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil / staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are:

- Information about staff and pupils and events that occur in school. For example, a parent who knows you are a helper at the school may ask you how their child is getting on (e.g., academically / behaviour). To prevent any misunderstanding, it would be better to advise the parent to speak to the class teacher.
- Information accessed by 'privilege' e.g., notices on staff noticeboard / conversations.

If you see something in school that concerns you, please discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in me no longer being required to be a volunteer helper.

_____ Print name of helper

_____ Signature of helper

_____ Date

_____ Signature of school representative

_____ Date

Manorway Independent School Confidentiality Policy

Manorway Independent School
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY September 2023

STUDENT/WORK EXPERIENCE CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Please read the school's Confidentiality Policy.

This work placement/experience carries certain responsibilities on your part including the requirement to be confidential about school matters. By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Manorway Independent School Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil / staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are:

- Information about staff, pupils and events that occur in school.
- Information accessed by 'privilege' e.g., notices on staff noticeboard/conversations.

If you see something in school that concerns you, please discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

You must never use information about individual children outside the school without parental permission (photographs / names).

I understand that I may have access to confidential information and that it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of this information and to keep it private. I further understand that disclosure of confidential information may result in me no longer being allowed to continue my placement.

_____ Print name

_____ Signature of student/helper

_____ Date

_____ Signature of school representative

_____ Date