



**Mission Statement:**

The Sacred Heart is a Community committed to the education of its pupils in a Catholic Christian ethos, where each person is invited to serve God and others in faith, hope and love.

**Aims:**

- To foster growth in Christian faith and values
- To value, appreciate and enjoy learning
- To encourage curiosity and creativity
- To work for excellence
- To aspire to high ideals
- To stimulate generous service of others

## **Safeguarding**

### **Information Sharing Policy**

The Sacred Heart School is committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment for children and recognises its responsibility to safeguard them from poor practice, abuse and bullying.

**General Principles:**

- The welfare of the child is the first consideration
- All children have the right to protection from abuse
- All staff have a responsibility to keep children safe
- All concerns will be taken seriously and managed accordingly
- Confidentiality will be upheld in line with legislation and government guidance
- A child is defined as anyone under 18. When decisions are taken to share information, the child's welfare is of paramount importance
- When sharing information, the Sacred Heart School will ensure that they clarify which information they are sharing is factual (to the best of our knowledge) and which is an expression of professional opinion
- Information will always be supported with a written report
- Where written information has been shared during the course of an investigation, outcomes will be shared with those to whom the information was originally sent

**Key Points**

- Information will be shared when the school deems it necessary to protect a child
- The school will explain at the outset what information could, or will, be shared and seek agreement, except where doing so puts the child or others at risk of harm
- The Sacred Heart School will share no more information than is necessary for the specific purpose of sharing that relevant information
- Records will be kept of decisions to share, or not share, information and reasons for this decision
- Information that is shared will be up to date and accurate, shared only with those with a need to see it and shared securely
- Child Protection Records must be passed on to the next organisation when a child leaves

**Government Guidance and Legislation**

This policy takes into account:

- European Convention on Human Rights
- Human Rights Act 1988
- Common Law Duty of Confidentiality
- Data Protection Act 1988

**Specific Safeguarding Acts:**

Every Child Matters  
Children Act 2004  
Working together to Safeguard Children 2006  
Information Sharing Guidance CPSU 2006  
Criminal Records Bureau Guidance

*Prepared August 2008 DPW/ HK; Reviewed SG Nov 2011 /Review due:- Nov 2013*

## **Appendix A:**

### **Type of information that will be shared –**

- Information relating to safeguarding/welfare/child protection concerns which meet the threshold for referral to external agencies will be shared in all cases (Children's Social Care Services or Police)
- Information arising from CRB disclosures. The threshold that will apply is that the school believes that an individual is unsuitable to work with children
- Information indicating safeguarding/child protection concerns, but which is not acted on by statutory agencies e.g. where prosecution is not possible or has been unsuccessful; where a referral has been bounced back by Police or CSCS, but the school remains concerned
- Information relating to poor practice cases, such as a breach of conduct or ethics, which involves a perceived risk to children, but that does not reach the threshold for referring to external agencies
- The school has suspended or excluded an individual, or, has put in place special arrangement or monitoring to ensure children's welfare as a result of its disciplinary process

### **Process for information sharing and receiving information:**

- ▲ The school will decide which information needs to be shared, based on the level of concern and on a 'need to know' basis
- The school will identify who is the appropriate person within the organisation to whom a referral should be made (determined by the individual's role and responsibilities in relation to child protection/safeguarding concerns)
- Where concerns are about a child within their family, the school will refer to the statutory agencies in the area where the child lives (Police and/or CSCS)
- Where concerns are about possible or actual abuse of a child by someone within the school, the School will refer this to the statutory agencies where the alleged abuse may have taken place
- Where it is known that the person against whom the allegation is made works with children elsewhere, the school will seek the advice of the statutory agencies regarding whether information should be shared, and if so, by whom.
- If the school has deemed someone unsuitable to work with children as an outcome of its disciplinary process it will refer that person's name to the Protection of Children Act list. Information about the outcomes of a disciplinary process will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis both within the school and with external agencies.
- The outcome of disciplinary processes will be shared within the school strictly on a need to know basis.
- The outcome of disciplinary processes would not normally be shared with external agencies except where the individual has given consent, for example for the purpose of providing a reference
- The school has in place policies and procedures that ensure the appropriate recruitment and selection processes are applied that reflect the need to protect children.
- The school uses an umbrella organisation to access Criminal Records Bureau information.
- It is unlawful to share the contents of a CRB disclosure with other organisations, so any decision to share information must be directed through the statutory agency from which the information was sourced. However, a disciplinary decision can be shared if the principles of the attached flowchart have been applied
- All information held regarding complaints about poor practice will usually be shared with the consent of the individual against whom the complaint has been made, for instance, when an individual has consented to a reference being taken up by another organisation.
- Information held about complaints of poor practice will only be shared within the school on a need to know basis.
- When information need to be shared quickly in order to enable statutory agencies to act, information may initially be shared verbally, but will be followed up in writing
- The reason to share, or not to share, information will always be recorded by the school

### **Recording, Storage and Disposal of information:**

- Information about different individuals will be recorded separately
- Written information, in whatever form, will be stored securely in accordance with data protection legislation
- All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure safe receipt of information
- Written communication will clarify to what extent information should be shared within the school
- Consent to share information will be sought from the individual unless this:
  - Puts children at risk
  - Refusal is unreasonable or not in the public interest
  - Consent cannot be obtained

The organisation is advised not to do so by a statutory agency

- Information is safely stored and only available to authorised individuals.
- Additional copies of information for a specific purpose, such as a disciplinary hearing, will be shredded after use