Rise Multi Academy Trust: Confidentiality Policy 2025

Rise
Flourish & Succeed

Date of Policy: September 2025

Approved by the Trust Board: September 2025

Review Date: September 2027

Signed:

Aim
To ensure that confidentiality and data protection compliance are a natural part of good practice. To provide all staff, governors and others in any of our Trust schools or who work centrally with clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles. To make certain that the procedures throughout the schools and Trust can be easily understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Rationale
The schools and Trust hold a lot of confidential information about children, staff and sometimes parents and carers. Whilst it is important that we continue to develop positive ways to use that information, we all recognise that it is our responsibility to use, hold and safeguard information received.

The schools and Trust are mindful that it is placed in a position of trust by all stakeholders and there is a general expectation that a professional approach will be used in all matters of confidentiality. Our obligation to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Data Use and Access Act (2025), UK GDPR, including data and digital, and other legislation and statutory guidance underpins our management of data.

Objectives
- to provide consistent messages in the schools and Trust about handling information about children and adults once it has been received
- to foster an ethos of trust within the Trust and its schools
- to ensure that staff, governors, volunteers, parents, and pupils are aware of the school's and Trust's confidentiality policy and procedures
- to reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained
- to encourage pupils to talk to their parents/carers
- to ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- to ensure that if there are child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed
- to ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that everyone understands their personal responsibilities

Guidelines
- all information about individuals is private and should only be shared with those staff on a need-to-know basis
- all social services, medical and personal information about a child should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than school staff
- the schools and Trust continue to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual
- the safeguarding policy will be applied, and monitored by appropriate school personnel
- all children and adults have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns, and special educational needs

Day-to-day practice
Confidentiality is a whole Trust and its school within the Trust issue. Even when sensitive information appears to be widely known it should not be assumed by those immediately involved that it is appropriate to discuss or share this information further.

Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of children with medical needs and the class information sheet should be accessible to staff who need that information but not on general view to other parents/carers and children.

Information about children will be shared with parents and carers but only about their child. Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades at any time especially at parents evening.

All personal information about children including social services records should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information. Information regarding health reports such as speech therapy, medical reports, SEN reports, SEN minutes of meetings and social services minutes of meetings and reports will be circulated in envelopes / files and once read should be returned for secure filing.

In all other notes, briefing sheets etc. a child should not be able to be identified. Addresses and telephone numbers of parents and children will not be passed on except in exceptional circumstances or to a receiving school.

Staff should exercise prudence and consider the dignity of individuals during conversations on the school site, for example in the staff room, particularly if non - members of staff are present and in the presence of children.

Non-members of staff, for example, students and voluntary helpers, will be asked to follow the principles of the confidentiality policy and sign a confidentiality agreement, please see appendices below.

Governors/trustees
Governors/trustees need to be mindful that from time-to-time issues are discussed or brought to their attention about staff and children. All such papers should be marked as confidential and should be copied onto different coloured paper.

These confidential papers should be destroyed after use.

Governors/trustees must observe complete confidentiality when asked to do so by the governing body, especially in relation to matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents.

Governors/trustees will sign a confidentiality agreement annually.

Although decisions reached at governors' meetings are normally made public through the minutes or otherwise, the discussions on which decisions are based should be regarded as confidential.

Governors/trustees should exercise the highest degree of prudence when discussion of potentially contentious issues arises outside the governing body.

Monitoring and evaluation
The policy will be reviewed as part of the schools monitoring cycle within GDPR.

Conclusion Rise Multi Academy Trust and its schools has a duty of care and responsibility towards pupils, parents/carers, and staff. It also needs to work with a range of outside agencies and share information on a professional basis. The care and safety of the individual is the key issue behind this document.

Policy agreed by Rise Multi Academy Trust and shared with staff, volunteers and the school community.

Data Security and Digital Handling
All staff must ensure:

- Use of secure Trust systems only (e.g. MIS, safeguarding systems)
- Confidential information is not shared via personal email accounts
- Devices are password protected and locked when unattended
- Strong passwords are used and not shared
- Paper records are securely stored and disposed of appropriately

Remote Working and Off-Site Access
When working off-site:

- Confidential documents must not be visible to others
- Personal devices must only be used if authorised
- Information must not be downloaded or stored insecurely
- Conversations about confidential matters must not take place in public

Data Breaches
A data breach includes:

- Loss of personal data
- Unauthorised access or sharing
- Sending information to the wrong recipient

Training and Awareness

- All staff and volunteers will receive annual training on confidentiality and data protection
- Updates will be provided where legislation or guidance changes

Appendix 1

Governor/Trustee Confidentiality Agreement

First of all, thank you for volunteering to be a Governor/Trustee of Rise Multi Academy Trust or a Governor within one of its schools.

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

By signing this agreement, you agree to uphold Rise Multi Academy Trust Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil or staff information with anyone other than those who are directly involved.

Examples of confidential information are (but not limited to):

- 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 staff noticeboard
- information about future school plans or actions that 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 from the governing body.

If I breach confidentiality, I understand that I may be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and could face external sanctions.

Name of governor/trustee	
Signature of governor/trustee	
Date	
School representative	
Signature of school representative	
Date	

Appendix 2

Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

First of all, thank you for volunteering to be a volunteer at Rise Multi Academy Trust or in one of its schools.

Your help and support in this role are 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 Rise Multi Academy Trust's Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil or staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are (but are not limited to):

- information about staff, pupils, and events that occur in school
- for example, a parent/carer who knows you are a volunteer 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/carer 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.

If I breach confidentiality, I understand that I may be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and could face external sanctions.

Name of volunteer	
Signature of volunteer	
Date	
School representative	
Signature of school representative	
Date	

Appendix 3

Student work placement/experience Confidentiality Agreement

Please read Rise Multi Academy Trust'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 Rise Multi Academy Trust's Confidentiality Policy. This means you will not share pupil or staff information with anyone that breaches confidentiality.

Examples of confidential information are (but are not limited to):

- 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 able to complete my placement as a student and that this breach may be reported to those who arranged the placement or my course leader.

If I breach confidentiality, I understand that I may be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and could face external sanctions.

Name of student	
Signature of student	
Date	
School representative	
Signature of school representative	
Date	