

Confidentiality, Privacy and Whistleblowing Policy

Aim

The aim of this policy is to establish clear expectations for confidentiality, privacy, professional information handling and whistleblowing at Brighton International Academy. It ensures that personal information is protected, safeguarding information is handled securely, and all adults know how to raise concerns about unsafe practice, misconduct or behaviour that may place students at risk.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, leaders, volunteers, contractors, visitors and adults working with or on behalf of Brighton International Academy. It applies during the school day, school activities, educational visits, meetings, parent communication, administrative work, safeguarding practice and any situation where school information, student welfare, professional conduct or personal data may be affected.

Policy Statement

Brighton International Academy respects the privacy and dignity of students, parents/guardians, staff, governors and the wider school community. Confidential information must only be accessed, discussed, recorded or shared where there is a legitimate professional need. Student safeguarding and child protection concerns must be reported immediately through Section 10.2 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Allegations and concerns about school adults must follow Section 14 of that policy and the reporting routes below.

Staff must never allow confidentiality to prevent action where a child may be at risk of harm.

Key Principles

- Student safety, welfare and best interests are the first priority.
- Confidential information is shared only on a strict need-to-know basis.
- Staff must not promise secrecy to students, parents or colleagues.
- Safeguarding records must be factual, dated, secure and accessible only to authorised staff.
- Concerns about adults, unsafe practice or misconduct must be reported without delay.
- Concerns raised in good faith will be treated seriously, confidentially and without victimisation.
- All staff must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Data and Privacy Policy and related procedures.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing Procedure

Step	Required action
1. Receive or notice a concern	Listen calmly, take the concern seriously and avoid judgement. Do not investigate, ask leading questions or make promises of secrecy.
2. Record factually	Write the date, time, place, people involved, exact words used where possible, visible facts and your name/signature. Separate fact from opinion.
3. Report promptly	Report student safeguarding concerns immediately to Ms. Amany Al Sheikh. If she is unavailable, report directly to Ms. Eman Omar or another DDSL. Report concerns about school adults directly to Ms. Eman Omar. Concerns involving Ms. Eman Omar must go directly to the CEO or designated Board Member without informing her. Do not delay reporting to complete the written record.
4. Share only what is needed	Information must be shared only with those who need it to protect, support or make decisions for the child or school community.
5. Store securely	Records must be kept in secure school systems or locked confidential files. Access must be limited to authorised staff.
6. Follow direction	Staff must follow DSL, Principal, HR or CEO/Board instructions and must not discuss the matter informally with others.

Safeguarding Confidentiality

Student safeguarding information must be shared immediately through Section 10.2 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Information concerning allegations or concerns about school adults must follow Section 14.

- Staff must never investigate a safeguarding concern themselves or delay reporting while seeking further proof.
- Students must be reassured that they have done the right thing by speaking, but staff must not promise to keep a concern secret.
- Information may be shared with parents/guardians, external agencies or authorities where this is necessary, lawful and in the best interests of the child.
- Safeguarding files must be kept separate from general school records and accessed only by authorised staff.
- All conversations about safeguarding must take place privately and professionally, away from students, parents, visitors and unauthorised staff.

Confidential Records, Privacy and Data Handling

- Personal information must be accurate, relevant, secure and used only for legitimate school purposes.
- Student, parent, staff, medical, safeguarding, HR and financial information must not be discussed casually or shared informally.
- Confidential documents must not be left unattended in classrooms, reception areas, printers, meeting rooms or shared spaces.
- Access to files, passwords and systems must not be shared with unauthorised individuals.
- Information must be disposed of securely when no longer required, in line with school retention procedures.
- Any suspected loss, unauthorised access, mistaken disclosure or breach of confidentiality must be reported immediately to the Principal/DSL and HR where relevant.

Professional Conversations and Meetings

- Staff must speak respectfully and professionally about students, parents, colleagues and school matters.
- Sensitive discussions must be held in appropriate private spaces and must not be overheard by students, parents or visitors.
- Meeting notes, minutes and action points must be factual and stored securely when they include confidential information.
- Staff must not seek confidential information unless it is necessary for their role.
- Where a member of staff is unsure whether information can be shared, they must seek advice from the Principal/DSL or HR before sharing.

Whistleblowing, Allegations and Low-Level Concerns

Brighton International Academy takes all allegations, low-level concerns and whistleblowing concerns seriously. This includes concerns about any member of staff, volunteer, contractor, leader or adult whose behaviour has harmed, may have harmed, or may pose a risk to a child, whether the concern relates to conduct inside or outside school.

Whistleblowing includes raising concerns about unsafe practice, poor safeguarding practice, misconduct, breaches of confidentiality, failure to follow procedures, misuse of school resources, serious health and safety risks, dishonest conduct, abuse of authority, cover-up of wrongdoing or behaviour that may place students or staff at risk.

How to Raise a Whistleblowing Concern

1. Report the concern using the correct route below as soon as possible.
2. Record what you saw, heard or were told, including dates, times, names, locations and any immediate action taken.
3. Do not investigate, question witnesses, alert the person of concern or discuss the matter informally.
4. If you believe a child is at immediate risk, treat the matter as urgent and escalate immediately.
5. Concerns raised in good faith will be handled confidentially and staff will be protected from victimisation or retaliation.

Reporting Routes

Concern relates to	Report to
Safeguarding concern about a student	Ms. Amany Al Sheikh, DDSL and main safeguarding contact. If she is unavailable, report immediately to Ms. Eman Omar, Principal/DSL, or another DDSL. Do not delay reporting or wait to complete a form.
Concern about a member of staff, volunteer or contractor	Principal / DSL - Ms. Eman Omar
Concern about the Principal / DSL	CEO - Mr. Khalid Essa Al Mannai / Board Member - Dr. Ahmad Qabbary, without informing the Principal
Serious or urgent risk	DSL/DDSL and appropriate external authority or emergency services as required
Confidentiality breach or suspected data breach	Principal / DSL and Human Resources, with safeguarding escalation where a student may be affected

How Concerns Will Be Managed

- The receiving leader will acknowledge the concern, consider immediate safety needs and decide the next steps.
- Safeguarding concerns will be referred to the DSL/DDSL and handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff conduct concerns may involve HR, the CEO/Board or external advice depending on the nature and seriousness of the concern.
- Records will be kept confidential, factual and secure, with access limited to those who need to know.
- The person raising the concern may not be given full details of the outcome where this would breach confidentiality, but they should be reassured that the matter has been received and considered.
- Suspension is not automatic. It may be considered where necessary to protect students, preserve evidence or allow a fair process.

False, Malicious or Vexatious Concerns

Staff will never be penalised for raising a concern in good faith, even if the concern is not substantiated. However, deliberately false, malicious or vexatious allegations may be treated as a disciplinary matter. The school will consider the difference between a mistaken concern raised honestly and a concern raised with intent to harm.

Breaches of Confidentiality

- Any breach or suspected breach must be reported immediately to the Principal/DSL and HR where relevant.
- The school will act to contain the breach, protect affected individuals, retrieve or secure information where possible and record action taken.
- Where a breach involves safeguarding information, the DSL will decide whether further safeguarding action or external advice is required.
- Serious or repeated breaches may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be referred to external authorities where required.

Training and Communication

- All staff will receive safeguarding, confidentiality and reporting expectations through induction and regular training.
- Staff must confirm that they have read and understood this policy and related procedures.
- Leaders will remind staff regularly that confidentiality does not prevent safeguarding reporting.
- This policy will be made available to staff and reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, guidance, safeguarding practice or school procedures change.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored through safeguarding review, HR records, staff training records, safeguarding audits, incident review, whistleblowing records and leadership oversight. Patterns, concerns or repeated breaches will be used to improve training, supervision, systems and policy implementation.

Related Policies and Documents

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data and Privacy Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Online Safety Policy

- Health and Safety Policy

Policy Management and Review

Area	Details
Policy Created By:	Sairoze Tarmohamed
Reviewed by:	DSL/Principal - Ms. Eman Omar
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