

Coldstream ELC

Confidentiality Policy

Date: September 2024

Review Date: January 2026

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Coldstream ELC manages and protects confidential information. We aim to ensure that all personal information is handled respectfully and appropriately and used only to support the wellbeing and learning of the children in our care. This policy aligns with current national guidance and Scottish Borders Council (SBC) procedures.

2. Aim

Our aim is to respect the privacy of children, parents and carers while ensuring they receive high-quality Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). Information will be treated as confidential and shared only when necessary to support the child's welfare, safety or education.

3. Principles of Confidentiality

- Staff will not discuss personal information provided by parents/carers with others unless it is necessary to support the child's wellbeing or learning.
 - No personal details about the ELC, children or their families will be shared outside the ELC environment.
 - Staff may discuss information relating to *their key children only* and must not share or disclose information about any other child.
 - Students and volunteers will be informed of this policy during induction and are required to adhere to confidentiality expectations at all times.
 - Confidential information will be stored securely and accessed only by authorised staff.
 - All practices will comply with data protection legislation (e.g., GDPR and SBC data-handling procedures).
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4. Behaviour Incidents and Sensitive Discussions

- If a minor incident occurs during the ELC day, staff will speak with parents/carers in a quiet, private area whenever possible.
- If this is not feasible at collection time, the child's key worker will contact parents/carers by phone.

- For more serious, concerning or ongoing behavioural issues, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting within the ELC. This will normally include the Early Years Officer and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
 - Information regarding other children involved in an incident **will not** be shared.
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5. Child Protection

If a member of staff becomes aware of a child protection concern:

- They must immediately speak with the Designated Child Protection Officer, **Mrs Paterson, Head Teacher**, or, in her absence, **Mrs Douglas, Principal Teacher**.
 - Confidentiality cannot be maintained where there is a risk to the safety or wellbeing of a child.
 - Information will only be shared with relevant professionals in line with child protection procedures.
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6. Use of Children's Photographs

- Wall displays will use a child's **first name only**.
 - Parental permission is required for:
 - Use of photographs on the school/ELC website
 - Use for public relations or promotional purposes
 - Any internal or external video recordings
 - At ELC events (e.g., Christmas parties, sports days), parents/carers may photograph or film their **own child only**. They will be reminded not to share images of other children without permission.
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7. Lists of Children's Names

- Parents/carers sometimes request a list of children's names for purposes such as Christmas cards or party invitations.
 - Parents' permission will be sought before including their child's **first name** on a list to be distributed.
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8. Paramount Consideration

All aspects of this policy are subject to the overriding commitment of the ELC to protect the safety, wellbeing and best interests of every child.