

Title	CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY
Cross References	<p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 175 Education Act 2002 <p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🍑 Data Protection Policy 🍑 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Date	October 2025

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Apricot Online recognises its legal duty under section 175 Education Act 2002 to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from “significant harm.” We seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children and young people as part of our general responsibility for pastoral care. We hope that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns or worries that may affect educational progress or, even, the safety of our online provision.

THE LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff, students and parents/carers will be informed about the limits of our confidentiality. Some issues have to be shared with other people/agencies (e.g., child protection). Students will be advised (wherever possible prior to a disclosure) what kinds of disclosure will require information to be shared, what will be done with the information and who else will have access to it. Members of staff will be made aware of who (if anyone) to inform in the event of different types of disclosures of a personal nature.

We will provide opportunities for its students to access confidential support in the following ways:

- 🍑 Feedback forms
- 🍑 Advertising National Helpline sources on our platform and within our *Online Safety* module

Parents/carers and students have the right to view educational records upon written request. It is, therefore, not possible to guarantee the confidentiality of recorded information (see *Recording of Information* below).

Staff are required to pass on confidential information in the following circumstances:

- 🍑 Child protection

Responsibilities to Parents/Carers

- 🍊 Members of staff are not legally obliged to inform parents/carers in many instances when personal information has been disclosed.
- 🍊 Where it is believed that the student may be at emotional or physical risk, or in breach of the law, staff will ensure that the student is aware of the risks they face.
- 🍊 Staff will encourage the student to inform and seek support from their parents/carers.
- 🍊 In most cases information provided by a student will only be passed to their parents/carers with the student's consent.
- 🍊 When the school chooses to inform parents/carers it will only be done if it is in the best interests of the child.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) will be made aware of the confidentiality policy. All staff are under a contractual obligation to uphold the policy as with all other Apricot Online policies. Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary procedures. Staff will be made aware of confidentiality procedures during initial training and subsequently via bulletins and CPD.

Staff can seek advice and support for themselves from Apricot when dealing with a disclosure while keeping the individual's identity anonymous. The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Amy Smith and Jodie Butler, who are responsible for safeguarding children needs and in monitoring practice & ensuring all staff receive appropriate training.

WORKING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Anyone working with students, particularly on sensitive areas of the curriculum, needs to be made aware of Apricot's Confidentiality Policy.

Apricot staff, and any staff from external agencies, will establish at the beginning of lessons dealing with potentially sensitive topics that it is inappropriate to disclose personal information during the lesson. Ground rules need to be agreed that ensure individuals do not pressure one another to answer questions about their own experiences.

Staff will outline the sources of support available to any student who may wish to discuss the topics and/or their feelings further on a one-to-one basis.

Apricot acknowledges and supports the differences between the role of any non-school staff as educators, and as providers of information and support to students. The boundaries between these roles will be clarified and agreed prior to involvement. Any distinctions in terms of confidentiality need to be made clear to students.

Illegal Activity

- 🍊 Members of staff are not obliged to inform the police on most matters relating to illegal activity (e.g., illegal drugs activity, assaults)
- 🍊 In the case of illegal activity, Apricot will discuss the possible consequences with the student and seek the course of action with the most positive outcomes for the student.

RECORDING INFORMATION

We acknowledge that:

- 🍊 Students and their parents/carers have a right to gain access to *processed* information upon written request.
- 🍊 Agencies such as the Police and Social Services Dept. may be able to get a court order to gain access to *processed* information, which we deem confidential. This can also include the Commissioning Local Authority's legal department and insurers, as well as other solicitors (e.g., in custody cases).

Any information recorded about a student will be written in a way that assumes it will be read by either the subject or their parents/carers.

In order to comply with the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records (issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000), any *processed* information will be stored in accordance with Apricot's Record Management Systems.

The policy will be reviewed after each significant disclosure to ensure that the policy and procedures work appropriately.

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

The policy will be communicated to all school staff, parents/carers, partner agencies and relevant visitors.

The policy is available on our platform.

The Safeguarding Flow Chart for how to deal with confidential disclosures will be issued to all staff. This document is freely available to all partners and stakeholders.

Authorised by: Jodie Phillips, Operations Director

Date: October 2024

Review Date: October 2025