



Employee Confidentiality

Protocol – Maintaining employee confidentiality in communications

This protocol establishes the key principles to be followed when communicating sensitive information with relevant parties (including colleagues, services users, councillors and media) in relation to an employee. It balances the need to inform parties of a situation, e.g. an employee absence with the need to ensure confidentiality for the employee.

By following this protocol, managers are ensuring the correct level of detail is shared with external parties without prejudicing an employee's right to confidentiality.

Relevant elements of the Council's Media protocol have been taken into account. You can access the Media protocol by visiting [Media Protocol Factsheet \(2023\)](#).

- Any individual who is absent for any reason has the right to confidentiality.
- Full consideration must be given to the parties that need to be informed and the level of detail to be shared in order to ensure confidentiality is maintained and no personal and sensitive data is disclosed.
- The reason for the absence must not be disclosed in any communication (unless agreed in advance with the individual).
- All communication to colleagues and external parties (i.e. parents, councillors and media) require approval by the relevant Head of Service or Service Director and Legal and People.
- Communications should be consistent – the media should receive no more information than parents or colleagues.
- It is possible that any communication might be picked up by the media. The Communications Team should be informed of any absence that might result in media attention in order that they can respond to any enquiries they might receive. In this instance they should also be involved in approving communication referred to above.
- Any media enquiries received by the service must be directed to the Communications Team for a response. No response should be given directly.



The following text should be used as a template in communications. In the case of a school this would include Parent Council, Colleagues, Parents, Media.

“xxxx will be absent for a period of time. Alternative arrangements are being put in place at (xxx location) to ensure consistent leadership / continued teaching (amend here appropriate dependant on role).”

Document Revision History

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Rev No.	Rev Date	Summary of Changes	Reviewing Team	Reviewers	Next Review Year
001	25/03/2024	New Format	HR Operational	M Chapman	
002					