

12th December 2022

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

...everyone in our Trust.



Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you today regarding a recent data incident involving an issue with permissions on Microsoft SharePoint. In this letter I will explain what has happened, how it happened and what we have done to address the situation. I also want to reassure you that we have already taken appropriate steps to deal with this situation as a matter of urgency.

As a Trust, the safety, security and privacy of our students, families and staff is of the utmost importance to us, which is why we treat the very rare instance of a breach with the highest importance to ensure it is rectified as soon as possible, as has been done in this instance.

Unfortunately, despite the robust digital security measures we have in place, we ascertained the existence of a data protection breach last week due to an issue with permissions on Microsoft SharePoint. During class time at one of the Trust's schools, a student discovered that some of the Trust's files on SharePoint, which should only be accessible to specific staff, were also accessible to other staff and students. The student reported this to the class teacher who, having undertaken our mandatory data protection training, took the appropriate action internally to flag the issue to the Trust's data team. As soon as we became aware of the issue, we immediately removed access to the affected files, launched an internal investigation and liaised with relevant internal teams and external organisations to ensure the situation was handled in line with data protection requirements.

Our investigation into precisely which data was compromised is still underway, however, we apologise for this breach and have already notified the Information Commissioner's Office, scheduled additional data protection training for staff in January and are working closely with our digital security providers to ensure any further breach cannot occur. We are also seeking support from external providers to see what more we can do moving forward to prevent a repeat incident.

I want to reassure you that the Trust acted immediately to prevent a further breach, is taking all necessary actions and following all appropriate advice to resolve this situation. We remain fully committed to the safety, security and privacy of our students, families and staff and as such welcome those with specific individual concerns to raise those via email at feedback@dmatschools.org.uk.

Kind regards

Dan Morrow
Trust Leader & CEO

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