



Bude Park Primary School

**Countersigning Documents & Passport
Applications Policy**

Policy created: 3rd February 2026

Next review: 3rd February 2028

Reviewed by: D. James – Executive Head

1. Purpose of the Policy

Parents/carers occasionally request that school staff provide written verification or act as countersignatories for official documents, including passport applications. This policy outlines how Bude Park Primary School will respond to such requests.

2. Legal Requirements

The school must follow HM Passport Office rules regarding countersignatures. Countersignatures must have known the parent/carer for at least two years, be able to verify their identity, and understand that they are confirming the accuracy of the information provided. Staff must only sign if they can confidently meet these requirements.

3. School Approach

The school may provide countersignatures depending on individual family circumstances, the professional capacity of staff, and the school's ability to verify the information provided. The school prioritises safeguarding, accuracy, and legal compliance when deciding whether it is appropriate to complete a countersignature request.

4. Who May Countersign

The following staff may act as countersignatures when appropriate:

- **Headteacher**
- **Deputy Headteacher**
- **Assistant Headteacher or another designated senior leader**

These staff members may only sign when verification is possible and when doing so does not compromise their duties or workload.

5. Documents the School May Sign

The Headteacher or designated senior staff may sign specific documents **when the information can be verified through school records**. These may include:

5.1 Proof of Admittance

Confirmation letters or forms stating:

- The date a child was admitted to the school
- The year group or class at the point of admission
- Any relevant supporting information held on record

5.2 Proof of Attendance or Enrolment

Documents confirming:

- Current enrolment status
- The child's dates of attendance
- Verification that the child is a pupil at the school

5.3 Proof of Attendance for Leavers

For pupils who have left the school, the school may provide:

- A letter confirming their last date on roll
- Attendance summaries covering the period of enrolment
- Confirmation of the date their place was formally terminated within school systems

5.4 Other Administrative Documents

When appropriate, the school may also sign:

- Immigration-related forms requiring school confirmation of pupil attendance/admittance
- Housing or council documents requiring proof of school placement
- Form-based requests for verification of family identity *only* when legally permitted and when the parent/carer relationship can be verified
- Replacement or renewal documents (e.g., passport countersignatures), depending on legal compliance and staff knowledge of the parent/carer

Documents the School Will Not Sign

To maintain safeguarding and legal compliance, the school will not sign:

- Financial or banking documents
- Character references unrelated to school matters

- Documents requiring verification the school cannot confidently provide
 - Statements regarding parental behaviour, personal history, or any non-school-related claims
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6. What the School Will Do When Signing

When staff agree to sign a document, they will:

- Examine the form to ensure that the school can legally and accurately complete it
 - Confirm the length of the relationship with the parent/carer where required
 - Check that all information aligns with school records
 - Complete any declarations truthfully and within the limits of school-held information
 - Decline to complete any sections that fall outside the school's remit or knowledge
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7. When the School May Decline

The school may refuse a request if:

- Staff do not know the parent/carer well enough to meet legal requirements
- They cannot verify the information requested
- The request involves inaccurate, missing, or unverifiable details
- Staff workload does not permit sufficient time for checking and signing
- The document requires statements that fall outside the school's professional knowledge or remit

A refusal is not a reflection on the parent/carer; it is a safeguarding and compliance decision.

8. Exceptional Circumstances

In rare or urgent circumstances, the Headteacher may review requests individually and decide whether the school can assist. This decision will be based on both the accuracy of information and the capacity of staff.

9. Notice Required

Parents/carers should allow **at least 5 working days** for the school to process requests. More time may be required during busy periods or when verification is complex.

10. Communications

This policy will be available on the school website and through the school office. Printed or emailed copies can be provided on request. Any updates or changes to the policy will be communicated to parents and carers via the school's usual communication channels.

11. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed **every 2 years**, or earlier if national guidance, HM Passport Office requirements, or safeguarding expectations change. The Headteacher and senior leadership team will be responsible for overseeing updates to ensure the policy remains accurate and compliant.