



Confidentiality Policy

Mr Brooke

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Review Date	
Approved by which committee	Full Governing Body

<i>Admin use only</i>	
Location	
Website	
Learning Platform	
Policies File	
Staff room	
Headteacher's File	
Governor Hub	
Policies Log updated	





INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This school has a legal duty under the Education Act 2011 to work with other agencies in safeguarding and protecting them from 'significant harm'.

This school recognises that a clear confidentiality policy will support the school in meeting its obligations.

The staff seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children and young people as part of their general responsibility for pastoral care.

Staff hope that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns or worries which may affect educational progress and that they will see the school as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

This school recognises the following benefits of working to a Confidentiality Policy.

- It highlights the importance of pupils being able to talk to adults in the school to share their problems in a safe and supportive environment.
- It safeguards the well-being of those involved in the disclosure of confidential information.
- It builds trust between pupils and staff.
- It empowers each pupil to exercise control over the choices that will affect their life.
- It prevents the need to deal with each disclosure as a crisis in isolation. (see guidance on school specific information 1 - Appendix 1).

A DEFINITION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an understanding that any information shared with someone in trust can only be passed on to a third part with the agreement of the person disclosing it.

Please note, in this policy, a 'disclosure' is the sharing of any private/personal information. It is a general term and does not just relate to child protection issues.

THE LIMITS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff, pupils, parents/carers will be informed about the limits of confidentiality in this school. Some issues have to be shared with other people/agencies e.g. child protection.



Pupils 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.

This school recognises that confidential discussions need to take place in a confidential environment. Public places such as the staffroom, the classroom and the playground are not, in general, confidential environments.

This school will provide opportunities for its pupils to access confidential support on school premises through the school's Emotional Health and Well-Being Leader and other external agencies

Parents/carers and pupils 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 in Supporting information).

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

- Any child protection concerns

Responsibilities to parents/carers

- Members of staff are not legally obliged to inform parents/carers in many instances when personal information has been disclosed. (See guidance on school specific information 3 - Appendix 1).
- Where it is believed that the pupil may be at emotional or physical risk or in breach of the law, staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of the risks they face.
- Staff will encourage the pupil to inform and seek support from their parents/carers.
- In most cases, information provided by a pupil will only be passed to their parents/carers with the pupil'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.

Illegal activity



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

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff (teaching and non- teaching staff) will be made aware of the confidentiality policy and their entitlement to training and support in its implementation.

All staff are under a contractual obligation to uphold the policy as with all other school policies. Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary procedures being followed.

The confidentiality policy will be available to staff on the Learning Platform. At the start of every academic year, staff will be reminded of what is required of them re: confidentiality.

Staff can seek advice and support for themselves when dealing with a disclosure whilst keeping the individual's identity anonymous. The school will maintain an up to date list of appropriate contacts for staff so that they can seek support. This will include the following members of staff at this school

P. Scott	Headteacher
E. Wright- Jones	Deputy Headteacher
A Hanley	Family Liaison and Safeguarding Manager - Pastoral Manager

and include the following external agencies and LA support:

Locality Hub	Locality Manager
Child protection	Lead officer for child protection in Local Authority
Drugs and alcohol	Schools drug advisor, Healthy Schools Team
	YMCA Vulnerable Young Persons Officer
Pregnancy	Teenage Pregnancy Unit
Sexual health	SRE Advisor, Healthy Schools
	School Nursing Service
Crime/anti-social behaviour for G2 Wolverhampton East)	Police Young Persons Officer (G1 Wolverhampton West



WORKING WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

Anyone working with pupils from the school particularly on sensitive areas of the curriculum needs to be made aware of the school's Confidentiality Policy.

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

Staff will outline the sources of support available to any pupil who may wish to discuss the topics and/or their feelings further on a one-to-one basis e.g Bubble Time, class teacher/support staff.

This school acknowledges and supports the differences between the role of any non-school staff as educators, and as providers of information and support to pupils. 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 pupils.

RECORDING INFORMATION

The school acknowledges that:

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

Any information recorded about a pupil 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 the Schools Record Management Systems.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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



This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis in line with other policy documents.

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

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

The school will consider how best to involve pupils in communicating the policy to their peers, this will be done through the use of groups of children e.g. Peer Supporters, School Council.

The policy will be on the Learning Platform

The policy will be listed on the school's publication scheme (Freedom of Information Act 2000).



Appendix 1

GUIDANCE ON SCHOOL SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Examples of where a confidentiality policy might be of use:

- A pupil knows someone who is bullying others at the school but is unsure about whether or not to tell
- A pupil starts sharing something very personal in a classroom situation
- A school uses staff or peers as a support system for pupils e.g. listening, befriending
- A pupil tells a member of staff that they are pregnant or sexually active
- A pupil informs a lunchtime supervisor that their Dad is hitting their Mum
- A pupil talks to a member of staff about their knowledge of a crime e.g. shoplifting, assault

2. Exceptions to confidentiality

- Where there is a risk of serious harm or threat to life
- Where a pupil needs urgent medical treatment
- Where potential or actual serious crime (e.g. murder, rape) is involved
- Where safeguarding national security is involved e.g. terrorism

This must be consistent with other policies e.g. managing drug related incidents.

3. Age-related considerations

Confidentiality issues need to take into consideration the differing abilities of pupils to understand the

consequences of their choices. This understanding depends on the level of maturity of each individual, but there may be some correlation to their age.

The judge in the Victoria Gillick case gave the following general advice:-

"It is suggested that a child or young person's ability to make decisions about his/her life depends

on him/her having sufficient understanding and intelligence to be capable of making up his/her own mind".

Confidentiality policy



Before sharing any disclosed information with parents/carers, schools need to either obtain the consent of the pupil or consider the possible consequences of sharing the information, taking into account knowledge of family circumstances. This will need to be done on a case- by- case basis.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Board, and will be reviewed annually.

Signed:

Date: