



Confidentiality Policy

Responsible - SLT
Last review: April 2017
Next Review: 2020/2021

Confidentiality is defined for the purposes of this statement as “*something which is spoken or given in confidence; private, entrusted with another’s secret affairs.*”

Schools must be absolutely clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. A clear and explicit confidentiality policy that all staff, students and parents understand should ensure good practice throughout the school. There is no legislation relating specifically to confidentiality in schools. There is however government guidance on confidentiality but this is not legally binding.

The policy is to work in partnership with parents and carers in order to promote the welfare and education of children. The school aims to build up a relationship of trust between staff and students. Students and parents should be able to raise with the school private, personal and family matters, including concerns about safety and welfare, in the knowledge that these will be dealt with sensitively. Any information should be on a strictly need to know basis.

The confidentiality policy should:

- Reassure young people in the school that their best interests will be maintained. (Best interests are usually served by measures that offer the hope of prolonging life or preventing harm, or damage, to health.)
- Encourage young people to talk to their parents or carers and give them support to do so
- Ensure that young people in the school know that teachers and mentors cannot offer absolute confidentiality
- Reassure young people in the school that if confidentiality has to be broken they will first be informed and supported as appropriate
- If there is any danger to a another party such as siblings the school has a legal obligation to follow the school’s Child Protection Procedure
- Make sure that young people in the school are informed of sources of confidential help eg school nurse, counsellor, GP , local young persons advice service etc
- In exceptional circumstances seen by the designated safeguarding lead, the head teacher and governors should be able to monitor the frequency of such cases where the school has to handle sensitive information, with or without parental consent.

What is the Policy?

1. The school will operate on the presumption that anything imparted in confidence will be treated in confidence. This undertaking is subject to three qualifications

- a) A member of staff to whom something has been told in confidence has the right to seek advice, guidance or support of a senior colleague when he or she feels the need to do so. Where a member of staff feels beyond their level of competence it is proper for them to refer the matter to an appropriate senior colleague.
 - b) If serious concerns are being raised about the safety or welfare of a child, a member of staff must act within the schools Child Protection Policy and is required to refer concerns or allegations to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead who may then decide to involve outside agencies. A member of staff may only give an undertaking of confidentiality in so far as this is compatible with the principle that the child's welfare is paramount.
 - c) Whenever possible a member of staff will inform the student and parent/carer when they feel that they must pass on something told in confidence and will explain the reasons for doing so. This would apply in an emergency or where a child's safety or welfare would be seriously compromised.
2. The school will not pass on to other individuals or agencies information it has about its students or families, except with permission or where the information is already in the public domain, or where the school is obliged by law or court order to do so. When the student moves to another school, the student's file will be passed on as a matter of course.
 3. Once a student reaches the age of eighteen, the school will deal directly with the student as well as with his/her parents. Information given to staff by a post 18 student will not usually be communicated to their parents/carers without the student's permission, unless there are exceptional circumstances and that at least two members of senior staff agree to those circumstances.