

Lord Deramore's Primary School

Confidentiality Policy and Procedures

Aims and objectives of the policy

Aims:

To protect the child at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout the school which is understood by pupils, parents/carers and staff.

Objectives:

1. To provide consistent messages in school about handling information about children once it has been received
2. To foster an ethos of trust within the school
3. To ensure that staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's confidentiality policy and procedures
4. To reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained
5. To encourage children to talk to their parents and carers
6. To ensure that pupils and parents/carers know that school staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special educational needs
8. To ensure that if there is a child protection issues then the correct procedure is followed
9. To ensure that confidentiality is a whole school issue and that in lessons ground rules are set for the protection of all
10. To understand that health professionals are bound by different codes of conduct
11. To ensure that parents have a right of access to any records the school may hold on their child but not to any other child that they do not have parental responsibility for

Description of School / Background Information

This policy was developed and agreed in consultation with governors, senior management team, all staff, teaching and non-teaching, parents, pupils and other relevant outside agencies, e.g. PSHE Consultant and school nurses.

This school recognises its legal duty under Working Together to Safeguard Children - March 2015 to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and protecting them from "*significant harm*". This school recognises that a clear confidentiality policy will support the school in working together to safeguard children.

This policy has obvious links with other school policies and reference to which policies will be identified.

- Working together to safe guard children (2015)
- Family Early Help Assessment (2015)
- Freedom of Information Act (2000)
- Work within the guidelines of Local Safe Guarding Children's Board

- Data Protection
- Human Rights Act
- Safeguarding Policy 2015
- Sex and Relationship Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy

A Definition of Confidentiality

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

Values Framework

- Every student has a right to be treated with respect and dignity, as do the adults who work with them. They have a right to privacy, a safe environment and where appropriate, should be consulted and given the opportunity to express their views about decisions which may affect their lives
- We recognise that without these rights, our students may be unable or unwilling to talk about things which are frightening, worrying or hurting them and that confidentiality is fundamental to them feeling respected and safe¹
- At all times we will aim to respect our students' point of view and adopt a non - judgmental approach in our work with them
- Section 3[5] of the 1989 Children Act gives the school the right to:

'Do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare'.

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:-

'The wishes of a young person must be taken into account when considering their best interests.'

Please note, in this policy, a 'disclosure' is the sharing of any private/personal information.

It is a general term and does not relate to child protection issues

Procedures Regarding Disclosures

- These are outlined in our Safeguarding Policy 2015 and our School Code of Conduct 2015.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

Likely exceptions requiring consideration by the school might include:

- where there is 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 (refer to PREVENT).

Confidentiality and Parents

- Parents are entitled to have a confidential discussion with a member of staff regarding concerns about their child and the child does not have to be informed that this is taking place. In keeping with our policy however, the parent should be encouraged to talk to their child about their concerns
- During any discussion, staff are not able to offer unconditional confidentiality to parents and if they are informed during the course of the discussion of some behaviour of the parents [or of anyone else], which is likely to cause harm to their child or to other young persons, the member of staff must follow the school's Safeguarding procedures. If there is a concern regarding neglect or emotional abuse of the child, policy is for them to discuss their concerns with the Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.
- The member of staff must also ensure that the student's confidentiality is not breached during the discussion and the principles of the policy should be explained and discussed with the parent at an appropriate time.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

As part of their general responsibilities for management of the school, the governors have played a key role in the development of the schools policy for confidentiality. They will continue their involvement through regular monitoring and reviewing of it. All Governors are bound by the policy.

Name of lead governor for responsibility for this policy is Sue Perutz.

Senior Leadership Team

Senior Leadership Team takes overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation and for liaison with the governing body, parents, LA and appropriate outside agencies.

Ensure all staff (teachers, midday supervisors, clerical staff, teaching assistants etc), parents and pupils are aware of the content of this confidentiality policy and school code of conduct.

All Staff

All staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel that they cannot talk about it to their parents/carers. This can result in enormous stress for the individual which impacts on their education and health. Some pupils may feel that they can turn to teachers and other staff members for support and we want to be as helpful as we can whilst

recognising that there may be some potential difficulties in being supportive. You should adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and School Code of Conduct.

Teaching and Learning

Statement of ground rules to be used in lessons

(This should also be contained in any policies relating to the teaching of PSHE, including sex and relationship education and drug education)

We adopt ground rules to ensure a safe environment for teaching in particular in PSHE and Circle time. This reduces anxiety to pupils and staff and minimises unconsidered, unintended personal disclosures.

At the beginning of each PSHE lesson and Circle time, pupils are reminded of the ground rules by the teacher or outside visitor. The teacher establishes the ground rules together with the pupils at the beginning of Circle time.

PSHE Subject Leader

The Subject Leader together with the senior leadership team has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy. The PSHE Leader will provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to Sex and Relationship Education. They are responsible for identifying and providing good quality resources and in-service training. This forms part of their role and they have access to relevant senior leadership team meetings.

Parents and Families

School believes that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavour to keep parents/carers abreast of their child's progress at school, including any concerns about their progress or behaviour. However, we also need to maintain a balance so that our pupils can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a pupil does discuss a difficult personal matter with staff in school, they will be encouraged to also discuss the matter with their parent or carer themselves.

The safety, well being and protection of our pupils is the most important consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality.

Other Agencies

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 and safeguarding policy.

At the beginning of lessons school staff and staff from external agencies will establish if any potentially sensitive topics will be covered and strategies to deal with that and inform pupils that it 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.



Approved by Full Governing Body

Meeting Date 14 December 2015