

Confidentiality and Handling Sensitive Issues for Pupils and Parents Policy

This policy is a statement the provision made for dealing with confidentiality and handling sensitive issues for pupils and parents at Taddington and Priestcliffe C of E (A) Primary School.

Why do we need a Confidentiality Policy?

There are situations in which confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. The types of occasions when confidentiality cannot be guaranteed & the resulting procedures need to be made clear to staff, pupils & parents/carers.

How is confidentiality communicated in practice?

It is this school's policy that staff cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality, and will act in accordance with the best interests of the pupil at all times. This applies to parents as well as pupils.

Any pupil or parent with concerns will always be given the opportunity to speak to a member of staff or an appropriate outside agency.

Ground rules for PSHE will be in place. When lessons concerning Sex and Relationship Education or Drug Education and Substance Abuse are taught, ground rules for discussion and behaviour will also be confirmed and referred to again in subsequent lessons.

Staff will understand that it is inappropriate to disclose personal information. The ground rules that ensure that pupils agree not to pressure one another to answer questions about their own experiences also apply to staff. Pupils will be reassured that the reasons for this are in their best interests, and these rules will be maintained in all events.

It will be made clear that, although most information can be kept confidential, some may need to be passed on in the pupil's best interests. However, a pupil will be informed when this has to happen, and what will be done with the information and who has access to it. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers and be given support to do so.

There may be rare occasions when disclosures from pupils take place at an inappropriate time or place. If this happens, the member of staff will talk again, individually to the pupil before the end of the school day. The member of staff will follow the school's confidentiality policy if they feel it is necessary to discuss the issue raised.

Incident Management (see Safeguarding Children/Child Protection)

If confidentiality has to be broken, the pupil will be told first and supported. If there is any possibility of abuse, the school's child protection procedure will be followed and the pupil will be informed of sources of confidential help, for example, the school nurse, GP and/or child support agencies.

In such cases, the procedure for dealing with the situation is as follows:

The member of staff should approach the designated member of staff, James Handley (Headteacher). In the absence of James Handley, Sarah Bellecoso will be informed and

carry out the duties of the designated staff member.

The designated member of staff will make appropriate arrangements. They will decide, in discussion with Social Services, whether it is appropriate for the parents or carers to be informed at this stage.

The designated member of staff should consider the safeguarding children (children protection) issues, and ensure help is provided for the pupil and family.

Information about pupils will not be passed on indiscriminately at any time. Other members of staff will only be informed on a need-to-know basis, where i.e., the identified issue affects the daily life of the pupil in school.

Staff will not be obliged to pass on information about pupils to their parents. However, where a member of staff believes the pupil to be at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, they will ensure the pupil is aware of the risks and encourage them to seek support from their parents.

Working with & referrals to outside agencies

Outside agencies such as the school community nurse, which provide support for the school's PSHE programme, will be aware of, and abide by, the school's policy about disclosures and confidentiality. Where outside agencies are involved in one-to-one situations, either through a referral or through an extended school service, the outside agency staff will work within their own professional confidentiality codes of practice, apart from where there are child protection issues.

In the case of illegal activity, action will be taken in the best interests of the pupil and the pupil should always be informed of what action is to take place.

Parent helpers & other classroom support volunteers

Parent helpers & other classroom support volunteers will be made aware of, & abide by, the school's policy on disclosures and confidentiality.

If they have any concerns they must refer them to a member of staff. Any disclosure must be passed onto a member of staff.

It is essential that they understand why anything seen & heard in school must remain confidential. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the invitation to help if they fail to comply with this policy.

Personnel

The member of staff responsible for safeguarding children needs to monitor practice & ensure all staff receive appropriate training.

The Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) co-ordinator is James Handley (Headteacher).

Policy Development & Review

This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including pupils, parents, school staff, Governors, LEA representatives and local Healthy School Standards representative.

This document is freely available to the entire school community via the school office or the school website (www.taddingtonpriestcliffe.derbyshire.sch.uk).