

STOKE PARK INFANT SCHOOL



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

1. Introduction

The Staff and Governors at Stoke Park Infant School are conscious that a clear, explicit and well publicised confidentiality policy ensures good practice throughout the school which staff (including those from external agencies) parents/carers and pupils can easily understand. All members of the school community should be clear about the levels of confidentiality that they can offer to other members of the community and expect for themselves. The policy has been developed through discussion by the whole staff team and members of the Governing Body.

2. Aims

We aim:

- To be transparent about the process for developing and reviewing this policy.
- For everyone to understand the varying levels of confidentiality which might be offered in different circumstances (see para 4)

3. Policy into Practice

- The school will be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities e.g. Child Protection/ safeguarding procedures.
- Sometimes parents/carers and families may wish to disclose information confidentially to the school. The schools will be clear about their position.

The policy has been developed with reference to the documents encouraging the development of confidentiality policies. These include:

- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused Department of Health (Ref 31553/"What to do if you're worried a child is being abused")
- Keeping Children Safe In Education - DfE September 2022

- Working Together to Safeguard Children - DfE
- Guidance to schools on Sex and Relationships Education Department for Education and Skills (Ref DfES 0116/2000)

- **Reporting concerns**
 - Hampshire Children's Services: 0300 555 1384
 - Isle of Wight Children's Services: 01983 814 545
 - Portsmouth Children's Services: 0845 671 0271
 - Southampton Children's Services: 02380 833 336

4. Where and to whom the policy applies.

The policy applies to:

- All teaching and non-teaching members of staff working in the school.
- Governors
- Visiting staff from external agencies (see appendix 1)
- Parents and other volunteers working in school

5. Staff support and training

Training and support will be offered to all staff in the school through

- Staff induction
- Training offered by Hampshire Children's services
- School based INSET sessions

6. Policy

All school staff members

It is recognised 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 staff will want to be as helpful as possible whilst recognising that there may be some potential difficulties in being supportive. Staff will adhere to the following policy:

- When talking with pupils, it is important to be aware of maintaining professional boundaries. Whilst being supportive, distancing techniques should be used when appropriate and pupils encouraged or

supported to access the confidential services offered on the school site.

- It must be clear to pupils that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.
- In all cases where confidentiality needs to be broken with the pupil, that pupil must be informed, (unless there is a good reason not to inform them e.g. risk of harm) and reassure them that best interests will be maintained.
- In talking with pupils, they must be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issue that may be troubling them and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate.

The school has a Child Protection officer who as a result of her work with pupils can become involved in a confidential discussion. The officer cannot offer confidentiality over a child protection issue but sometimes it is helpful for a pupil to be able to talk about troubling issues in order to help the pupil through their situation. We do not require our Child Protection officer to inform staff about conversations unless there is a child protection issue or other significant risk.

The school nurse:

The requirement to offer a confidential service is within the professional Code of Practice for school nurses and other health service staff. The government has also signed up to international legislation and charters which entitle young people to access health services.

However, health professionals like everyone else, must inform appropriate services if they become aware of a child protection/ safeguarding issue in discussions with a young person.

Parents/carers and Families:

It is recognised that sometimes there may be family issues which might affect a pupil and which the family will only disclose to the school if they can be sure the information will be treated confidentially. The school will respect the wishes of the family and where it is felt necessary to share the information given to us, this will be discussed with the parents/carers first unless a pupil is considered to be at immediate risk and/or there is an overriding child protection/ safeguarding concern.

Staff and Governors

All staff can normally expect that their personal situations and health will remain confidential unless

- it impinges on their terms of contract or
- endangers pupils or other members of staff or
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information or
- it is necessary for legal proceedings or
- despite the duty of confidence, the staff member's interest or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

Linked Policies

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the policies on Safeguarding

PSHE Policy including appendices on Sex and Relationships and Drugs education

Single Equality Scheme

Special Educational Needs Policy

Behaviour management Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Freedom of Information publication scheme

Dissemination

This policy will be widely publicised to all in the school community

- through the school prospectus
- through posters and leaflets or agreements with other agencies working on the school site,
- through assemblies and the school council
- on the school website
- by emphasising links to the school's anti-bullying policy and child protection/ safeguarding policy and procedures.

The policy has been written in such a way as to be accessible to pupils, teachers, parents/carers and the wider community.

Monitoring and evaluation

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor the effectiveness of the Confidentiality Policy through the school Self Evaluation procedures.

Agreed : September 2022

Review: September 2023

Appendix 1

Suggested service level agreement for use with agencies working with pupils

Organisation: School:

Named contact:

Tel: Fax:

Reason for visit:

Year group:

The teacher will be responsible for the behaviour of the pupils.

Aims of sessions:

-
-

Expected learning outcomes:

-
-

Before the visit, the school will:

Before the session, the visitor will:

The visitor should be aware that the school staff are responsible for the pupils whilst they are in school:

- any materials to be given out should be shared with school staff
- the school has important policies that visitors should be aware of and have read, such as the confidentiality policy and equal opportunities policy.

Equipment required on the day:

Date of sessions:

Signed – *school*: Date:

I have had/am willing to undergo a police check.

Signed – *organisation*: Date: