

Little Hill Primary School Confidentiality Policy

This policy covers all Governors, staff, pupils and visitors to the school.

Rationale

At Little Hill we believe that:

- The safety and well-being of our pupils is paramount in all decisions taken about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff is an element in ensuring pupils' well being and safety.
- Pupils, parents and staff need to know the boundaries of confidentiality in order to feel safe and comfortable in discussing personal issues and concerns including sex and relationships.
- Pupils, parents and staff need to know and be able to trust the boundaries of confidentiality within school.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know that no-one can offer absolute confidentiality, and what the limits of confidentiality are so that they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health, sex and relationship, or other personal issue.

Aims

- To provide guidance about the boundaries of legal and professional roles and responsibilities of staff with regard to confidentiality.
- To ensure good practice in school which pupils and parents understand.
- To encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems.
- To give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues.

Confidentiality in lessons

- Ground Rules should be used where sensitive issues are to be addressed.
- Staff should not put pressure, or allow fellow pupils to put pressure, on a pupil to disclose personal information.
- If a personal disclosure is made at an inappropriate time, the member of staff should talk individually to the pupil **before the end of the school day**. It may be possible to discuss the issue with an appropriate colleague without giving the name of the pupil.

Key points

- Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained.
- Pupils must know staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- Pupils should be reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and appropriately supported.
- Pupils should be informed of sources of help e.g. school nurse (Lindsey Frank).

- Any personal information should be regarded as private and not passed on indiscriminately e.g. in staff room.
- If a member of staff receives information that may indicate a Child Protection issue they should follow the Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedure.
- Pupils should be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers and be given support to do so whenever possible.
- When referring pupils to another agency, parents should be asked if they wish to be referred, **unless there is reason to believe that obtaining such consent may put the child at risk.** In this case talk to the designated Child Protection officer.

Further guidance

To ensure fairness to the whole school community it is important that:

- Staff do not discuss details of individual cases with anyone unless they have direct involvement in the welfare of the individual concerned.
- No member of staff discusses an individual's behaviour in the presence of another child.
- Staff do not enter into a detailed discussion about a child's behaviour with other children or with other children's parents.
- Governors do not divulge personal details discussed in any meeting to any person outside the meeting.
- Parents in school working as volunteers do not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents.
- At full Governing Body meetings, sensitive issues will be dealt with in the head teacher's report under Part 2, Confidential. Minutes in Part 2 are recorded separately and not published.
- Staff Performance Management will be carried out privately. Individual targets, lesson observations and other performance data will be in the head teacher's office and electronic records only available from the head teacher's computer.
- Matters of child protection are made known to staff on a need to know basis.
- Class teachers and teaching assistants need to know some confidential matters in order to support individuals, but will not divulge information to people not professionally connected to the individual.
- Volunteers such as parents and work experience students should not discuss any educational matters outside the classroom.
- Volunteers, students and supply teachers should be made aware of this policy.

Equal Opportunities

Staff may wish to discuss an individual case with a class or group so that a child's peers can support the inclusion of an individual e.g. a child with special needs. In such cases permission will be sought from the parent/carer.

Health Professionals

Health professionals such as school nurses may give confidential medical advice to pupils if they are competent to do so and follow the Fraser Guidelines. They are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality when working in a one-to-one situation. When working in a class situation they are bound by relevant school policies and will seek to prevent inappropriate disclosures by using Ground Rules.

Linked Policies

SRE Policy

Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy

PSHE/C Policy

Drug Education Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy