



DANES HILL SCHOOL

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Rationale

- The safety and protection of our pupils is of paramount consideration when staff make decisions about confidentiality. Absolute confidentiality, therefore, cannot be guaranteed, (see the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.)

Confidentiality is defined as 'something which is spoken or given in private, entrusted with another's secret affairs'.

The confider is asking for the content of the conversation to be kept secret. Anyone offering absolute confidentiality to someone else would be offering to keep the content of his or her conversation completely secret and to discuss it with no-one.

In practise there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality can or should be offered. We aim to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of our pupils and staff and ensuring that there is an ethos of trust amongst the whole school community. This means that in most cases what is offered is limited confidentiality.

Disclosure of the content of a conversation could, for example, be discussed with professional colleagues, but the confider would not necessarily be identified.

Staff should make it clear from the outset that there are limits to confidentiality when engaging in a conversation with a parent, pupil or member of staff. These limits are necessary in order to ensure the safety and well-being of our children.

Different levels of confidentiality are appropriate for different circumstances:

In the classroom

- Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, especially sex and relationship education in science or PSHE. It is important to establish ground rules and it should be made clear to pupils that this is neither the time nor the place to disclose confidential personal information. When a health professional is contributing to the school's health education programme, they are working within the same boundaries of confidentiality as a teacher.
- One-to-one disclosures to members of staff, including the school nurse
- It is essential that all members of staff know the limits of confidentiality they can offer both pupils and parents and that they understand the correct procedure for passing on any serious concerns. (See the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

The Legal Position for Staff

- The safety, well-being and protection of our pupils is of paramount consideration when staff are faced with issues of confidentiality.
- Staff should not promise confidentiality.
- Staff are obliged to break confidentiality when child protection is or may be an issue
- All teachers at school receive regular training in child protection and are expected to follow the school's child protection policy and procedures.

Parents

Our hope is that staff and parents work in partnership over any issues relating to the children's welfare.

Under normal circumstances, staff will contact parents if a concern arises but they are expected to seek advice from the relevant Head of Section or Head of Pastoral Care if the issue is of a more serious nature.

Designated Persons:

The school's Child Protection Officers are:

- Miss J C Taylor (Main School) DSL
- Mr R Andrews (Deputy Head)
- Mrs R Samson (Bevendean)

Links With Other Policies

This policy has links with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- PSHEE
- Sex and Relationships Education
- Anti-Bullying

Dissemination

A copy of this policy can be found on the staff intranet and also on the school website.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary.

Date of Policy: 1 February 2015 Reviewed January 2017

FULL Date of Policy: 26 January 2018

Date of Policy renewal: 1 February 2019

JCT