



DANES HILL SCHOOL
STRONG & SAGACIOUS

DATE: 1ST SEPTEMBER 2021
REVIEW DATE: 1ST SEPTEMBER 2022
AUTHOR: ASSISTANT HEAD PASTORAL

SAFEGUARDING AND CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Rationale and statement on the importance of confidentiality

We believe that:

- The safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils are the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. The appropriate sharing of information between school staff and volunteers in school is an essential element in ensuring our pupils well-being and safety.
- Whilst we recognise that social media is used by many parents, parents should only post photographs of their own children, and always seek permission from parents if other children are included in the photographs. Parents should be aware that not all parents or carers want photos of their children out in the public domain for a number of reasons, which could include safe guarding.
- Pupils, parents/carers 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.
- The school's attitude to confidentiality is open and easily understood and everyone should be able to trust, respect and comply with the boundaries of confidentiality operating within the school.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know that no one can offer absolute confidentiality.
- Everyone in the school community needs to know the limits of confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community so they can make informed decisions about the most appropriate person to talk to about any health, sex and relationship or other personal issue they want to discuss.

Definition Of Confidentiality

The safety and protection of our pupils is of paramount consideration when staff make decisions about confidentiality. Absolute confidentiality, therefore, cannot be offered by any member of staff, (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:

The general rule is that staff should make clear that there are limits to confidentiality, at the beginning of the conversation. These limits relate to ensuring childrens' safety and wellbeing. The pupil will be informed when a confidence has to be broken for this reason.

In the classroom

- Careful thought needs to be given to the content of the lesson, especially sex and relationship education in science or PSHEE. 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

School staff (including non-teaching and voluntary staff) should not promise confidentiality. No member of this school's staff can or should give such a promise of confidentiality. The safety, wellbeing and protection of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff at this school make about confidentiality. At Danes Hill we believe it is important that staff are able to share their concerns about pupils with colleagues in a professional and supportive way, on a need to know basis, to ensure staff receive the guidance and support they need and the pupils' safety and wellbeing is maintained. School staff should discuss such concerns with the Assistant Head Pastoral/ DSL.

- 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 the Assistant Head, (Pastoral) or appropriate body, if the issue is of a more serious nature.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is Miss Nicola Harris (Assistant Head Pastoral) 01372 842509
Nharris@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk
(Direct Line 01372 849250)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mr Rob Andrews (Acting Head) 01372 842509 Randrews@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk

Mrs Ruth Samson (Head of Bevendean) 01372 842546

Rsamson@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk

Mrs Stacey Craddock 01372 842546 Scraddock@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk

Governors

Governor responsible for Safeguarding is Dr Heather Patel

Hpatel@daneshill.surrey.sch.uk

Links to other school policies and procedures:

This policy is intended to be used in conjunction with the school's ethos, practice and procedures, including explicit and implicit learning and teaching and by example, with regards to the following:

Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
E-Safety policy Safeguarding and Child Protection
Relationship and Sex Education policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Whistle Blowing policy

Danes Hill School recognises our duty to establish equality for all children, families and staff within our school community. Confidentiality is of primary importance for all stakeholders in our school, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability or age. Sensitivity and respect towards our differences is of paramount importance in our diverse community.

Breaches of confidence and the procedures for doing so:

The school recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The designated safeguarding lead will decide what information needs to be shared, with whom, how when and whether consent needs to be gained for this process. The DSL will disclose information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. Where this does not apply and you are still concerned and unsure of whether the information should be passed on or other action taken you should speak to the Assistant Head Pastoral/DSL.

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

Recording information

The school acknowledges that:

Pupils and their parents/carers have a right to gain access to processed information upon written request.

Agencies such as the Police and Social Services Dept. may be able to get a court order to gain access to processed information, which the school deems confidential. This can also include the Local Authority's legal department and insurers, as well as other solicitors e.g. in custody cases.

Any information recorded about a pupil will be written in a way that assumes it will be read by the social workers, police offices, in a court of law, the pupil or their parents/carers.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as necessary.