



East Sheen Primary School

Confidentiality Policy

This policy sets out to:

- define what levels of confidentiality are appropriate in different circumstances;
- communicate this information to parents / carers, staff, children and governors.

The policy is underpinned by appropriate staff training. Information regarding the confidentiality policy will form part of staff's induction training. The policy will be reviewed every three years.

All school staff members

We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and may wish to talk to a member of staff.

In these circumstances, staff should adhere to the following policy:

- when talking with pupils, it is important that they are aware of maintaining their professional boundaries
- they must make it clear to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue
- primary age pupils may need to be told that if a child is at risk of significant harm, staff are under a duty to inform the school's Headteacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead. Other agencies may have to be involved. It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the pupil that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to help
- in cases where staff feel that they have to break confidentiality with the pupil, they must inform the pupil, (unless there is a good reason not to inform them) and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained
- in talking with pupils, staff need to encourage them to talk to their parents/carers about the issue that may be troubling them and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate

Parents/Carers and Families

We recognise that sometimes there may be family issues which may affect a pupil and which the family will only disclose to us if they can be sure the information will be treated confidentially.

We 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 concern (see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).

Parents/carers should not seek to engage in any disclosure dialogue with pupils who are not their own. If they have a concern, they should refer it immediately to the class teacher or headship team. The headship team has training in dealing with disclosure and the procedure to follow in this instance. Also, any incidents in school should be referred to the class teacher or headship team to be investigated by a member of staff and not by a parent or carer.

Voluntary Helpers (please also see parent helper guidelines)

Voluntary helpers should:

- respect the confidentiality of pupils & staff at all times
- respect the privacy of professional documentation
- not make value judgements of pupils
- not engage with pupils in any 'disclosure' dialogue, when spoken to, but refer immediately to the class teacher, or headship team (if more appropriate) who are appropriately trained to handle these situations.

Staff and Governors

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

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

School staff

The headship team or senior staff in the school will liaise with parents/carers as appropriate in cases where a staff member has reported an issue over which they cannot offer confidentiality.

Staff will support pupils to inform their parents/carers about issues that are troubling them as appropriate. The Headteacher is ultimately responsible for deciding whether an issue needs to be taken beyond the school.

Approved by Governors: Autumn 2021

Next review date: Autumn 2024