

Sonning Common
Primary School

**CONFIDENTIALITY
POLICY**

POLICY No. 72 Version 1
Spring 2008

Confidentiality Policy

The overall meaning of a confidential relationship is openness and agreement about what will happen to information disclosed between two, or more, people. It may not have to take the form of total secrecy and in practice there are few situations where absolute confidentiality is offered. The boundaries of confidentiality should be made clear at the beginning of a conversation.

Aims and Objectives

All members of staff working on the school site are clear about the levels of confidentiality they can offer to the school community and expect themselves. Everyone involved in the school (staff and governors, pupils and parents) understand the varying levels of confidentiality which might be offered in different circumstances. This confidentiality policy is linked to the school's PSHCE, drug education, R.E, equal opportunities, sex education, child protection and anti-bullying policies.

Confidentiality and Pupils

We recognise that there are occasions when pupils are worried about something and feel they cannot talk to parents/carers about it. This can result in enormous stress for the child which has an impact on their education and health. Some pupils may feel that they can turn to teachers and other staff members for support and we aim to be as helpful as we can whilst recognising that there may be some potential difficulties in being supportive. Staff follow the guidelines below:

- Be clear to pupils that you cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.
- Warn pupils that if there is a child protection issue where the pupil, or others, are likely to be at risk of significant harm, you are legally required to inform the school's designated teacher who may have to involve other agencies.
- Warn pupils that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if the issue concerns illegal activities eg. drug trafficking, arson.
- In all cases where you feel that you have to break confidentiality with the pupil, inform the pupil and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- Encourage pupils to talk to their parents/carers about the issue troubling them and offer any appropriate support.
- Make pupils aware of any relevant specialist confidential services available in the school community eg school nurse, GP etc.

General School Confidentiality

There is an agreement between the governing body and everyone who works in the school to sign a declaration not to use any such information outside the school context and to share relevant information with other agencies in situations of child protection.

Confidentiality and Staff /Governors

All staff can 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.

Confidentiality and families

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

Confidentiality and Parent Helpers

In some instances parent helpers may become privy to personal information regarding pupils, parents and staff that is of a confidential nature. (See appendix A).

Lines of Responsibility and Referral

If a member of the school community receives information where they believe a child protection issue is addressed, they refer the case to our designated teacher. The staff member informs the pupil that they are passing on the information but that the information will remain confidential between them and the designated teacher. If confidentiality has to be broken, the child must be informed first.

A teacher does not have a general duty to inform the head teacher of disclosures by a pupil. The decision as to whether to do so is a matter for the teacher's discretion, having regard for child protection issues, unless the head teacher issues an instruction that they should be informed, in which case the teacher must comply.

Dissemination

This policy has been widely publicised to all in the school community. It is referred to in the staff handbook and at new staff induction. The policy is available to all on the school website.

APPENDIX A

Parent Helpers in the classroom

As an adult helper I understand that classroom matters are confidential and not to be discussed with any other parent, member of staff or governor.

If I have concerns I will usually raise them with the class teacher initially and then with the headteacher if necessary.

I understand that the class teacher is in charge of all activities and the discipline in the class. If I am asked to work with a group of children outside the classroom however, or in a discrete group in class, I can verbally discipline a child. I will not under any circumstances use physical force.

I understand that while I am working in school I am insured by the school in case of accidents, and that the school may initiate a routine CRB check on me in the interest of safety of children in the school.

Name:

Date:.....

Signed:.....

Class teacher:.....

