



Confidentiality Policy

REVIEWED BY STAFF ON July 2024
(Review date July 2026)

_____ (Headteacher) date:

_____ (Chair of Governors) date:



This Policy sits in conjunction with the School's policies on Child Protection, Sex and Relationship, Education and Drugs.

Introduction

All schools are asked on occasions to keep information confidential. This can relate to a variety of issues including under age sexual activity, drugs use, abuse or other dangerous or illegal activities. It is important that the whole school follows the same clear and explicit policy. Pupils, parents and carers should be made aware of this and how it works in practice.

Aims

- To give clear guidance to all members of the school around confidentiality
- To encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are having problems
- To give staff confidence to deal with sensitive issues

In Lessons

- Ground rules and distancing techniques should be used where sensitive issues are to be addressed
- Staff should not put pressure on pupils to disclose personal information and should discourage fellow pupils from applying such pressure

Personal Disclosures

Disclosures from pupils may take place at an inappropriate place or time. If this happens, the member of staff should talk again individually to the pupil before the end of the school day. The member of staff may be able to discuss the issue with an appropriate colleague, to decide on suitable action, without giving the name of the pupil.

Key Points

- Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained.
- Pupils should know that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
- Pupils should be reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported appropriately.
- Pupils should be informed of sources of confidential help, for example, the school nurse, counsellor, GP or young person's advice service.
- Any personal information should be regarded as private and not passed on indiscriminately (for example during chats in the staff room).
- If a member of staff receives information that leads them to believe that there is a child protection issue, they should refer the case to a designated teacher or child protection officer following a discussion with the young person involved. At St Giles the designated person is the Headteacher and all staff must give a written, factual report using the forms provided. (In the absence of the Headteacher the Deputy Headteacher should be approached.)
- Pupils should be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers and given support to do so wherever possible.
- Government guidance requires professionals to consult as much as possible with parents about these children when referring to another agency. In general, parents should be asked if they wish to be referred to another agency, **UNLESS THERE IS A RISK THAT OBTAINING SUCH INFORMATION MAY PUT THE YOUNG PERSON AT RISK.** If the referral is about child abuse (or the risk of it) rather than 'children in need', it is good practice to consult Social Services **BEFORE** discussing the issue with parents, unless a parent has asked you to make a referral and is already aware of it. (Refer to Procedures for Monitoring, Recording and Reporting in the Child Protection Policy.)

Further Guidance

For all children, staff members and governors to enjoy privacy from gossip, for the school to be fair to all its community, and for children and adults to have disciplinary matters dealt with according to the school's own procedures and out of the eye of the wider school community, it is important that:

- **Staff do not discuss details of individual cases arising in staff meetings to any person without direct professional connection to and interest in the welfare and education of the individual concerned.**
- **No member of staff discusses an individual child's behaviour in the presence of another child in school.**
- **Staff do not enter into detailed discussion about a child's behaviour with other children or their parents.**
- **Governors, in particular those sitting on the Discipline Committee, do not divulge details about individuals (be they staff, families or individual children) to anyone outside of the meeting.**



- **Parents in school, working as volunteers, do not report cases of poor behaviour or pupil discipline to other parents in the school. This allows teachers to deal with such matters in line with school policy.**
- **At full Governing Body meetings matters such as a pupil exclusion, personnel issues and personal details of any member of the school community will be dealt with in the Headteacher's Report, which is confidential. This is not for persons outside the Governing Body meeting.**
- **Staff performance management will be carried out privately. Targets for individuals, named lesson observation sheets and other performance management data will be held by the Headteacher and the individual concerned. Other performance management team leaders need to provide the Headteacher with copies of such information for confidential storage.**
- **Matters of Child Protection are made known to staff on a 'need to know' basis.**
- **It is important that class teachers and support staff are aware of some confidential issues to support individuals. These staff will respect the sensitivity of such cases and not divulge information to people unconnected professionally with the individual concerned.**
- **When volunteers, such as parents and friends of the school, are working in classes they must not discuss educational matters outside the classroom (e.g. the specific use of Learning Support Assistant time for particular pupils, or group of pupils). Learning Support Assistants have different roles within a class, including the support of children with a special educational need. The provision and work with these children is for the teacher to discuss with the relevant parents or carers.**
- **Volunteers, students and supply teachers are asked to read this policy before working in the school.**

Equal Opportunities

Staff may wish to discuss an individual case with a class or group. For instance, it can support the inclusion of a child with Asperger's Syndrome or Autism, if their peers are made aware of the condition and so have some idea of what to expect. Similarly a child with visual impairment can be supported if his/her friends know how to look out for them in the playground. In such cases permission will be sought from the child and his/her parents or carers.

Health Professionals

Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality when working in a one to one situation. When working in a classroom, they are bound by the relevant school policies. In line with best practice guidance, like other school staff, they will seek to protect privacy and prevent inappropriate personal disclosures in a classroom setting, by negotiating ground rules and using distancing techniques.